

Select Board Meeting  
Monday January 30, 2023  
6:50 PM  
Nowak Room, Town Offices  
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Lovey Roundtree Oliff, Niko Papakonstantis, Nancy Belanger, Town Manager Russ Dean, and Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:50 PM.

The Board went downstairs to the Wheelwright Room for an interview.

2. Board Interviews

- a. Ryan Jean for the Sustainability Committee

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7 PM.

3. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this time.

4. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations or recognitions.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: January 17, 2023

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of January 17, 2023 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Oliff abstained, as she was not present at the Jan 17 meeting. The motion passed 4-0-1.

6. Appointments

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Ryan Jean to the Sustainability Committee as a regular member, term to expire April 30, 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

7. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Helpsy Textile Recycling Program Presentation

Jordan Ziese and Terra Hix of Helpsy were present via Zoom. Ms. Zeise answered questions previously asked by the Board. Where do the clothes go? We have a warehouse in Woburn MA that we bring the clothes to. 95% of everything collected is salvageable: 75% is reusable, 20% is recyclable. What are best practices for scheduling pickups? Pickups can be scheduled on the website, and residents can follow a link on the Exeter town website. We ask a minimum of three bags in order to do pickups. Are tax receipts provided? No, Helpsy is not a non-profit. What do they suggest for community outreach? We

suggest hosting a pop-up drive at community events like revolutionary day, household hazardous waste day. We're looking to connect with the Sustainability Committee for social media updates and announcements. Ms. Belanger suggested an Earth Day event. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested putting bins at the transfer station, and asked Mr. Dean to follow up on that idea. Ms. Gilman said she usually donates materials to non-profits. Ms. Ziese said she should feel free to continue to donate items to non-profits, we just don't want materials in the trash. Ms. Hix said Helpsy also donates items to non-profits.

b. Single Use Plastics Policy

Conservation and Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy and Chris Zigmont of the Sustainability Committee were present to discuss the single use plastics ordinance/policy.

Ms. Murphy said it was requested that the committee consider a single-use plastics policy, so she took the ordinance and re-drafted it following the Select Board policy format. The majority of the language is identical. The purpose remains the same. She added Departments and Individuals Affected, specifying that it excludes town streets unless a special permit is issued. She revised the definition of reusable bags to include only those made of cloth, because it's the better option. Trash bags used for disposing of waste are excluded, so it doesn't apply to pet waystations. The length of time to distribute remaining inventory was changed to 12 months. She added an implementation support section that says to direct questions to the Conservation and Sustainability Planner.

Ms. Murphy said DPW told her they may provide recycling bins on request, but this service is contingent on oversight to ensure proper recycling. They don't have the capacity to do compost. Ms. Belanger asked how to do the monitoring part. Would there be a town employee at events? Ms. Murphy said she thought it would function similarly to littering. Monitoring of the bins would be a commitment from the permittee. James Murray could inform permittees when he inspects the events. Ms. Murphy said she's not committing to attend the events. Ms. Oliff said she has faith that if we propose something that promotes the environment, the majority of community members will do the right thing. People in town are vocal when things aren't going well. She's less concerned with how we police it than that we have the pieces of the puzzle in place to support it.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Board is in support of doing something here, we just have to dot the i's and cross the t's. We would need to have clarification about who on town staff could cite violations. Ms. Gilman asked if DPW staff could look into the recycling. Ms. Murphy suggested having volunteers monitor recycling bins. Mr. Papakonstantis said the point of this is not recycling bins, it's to eliminate plastics.

Mr. Zigmont said the Sustainability Committee voted unanimously to pursue an ordinance instead of a policy because of the issue of enforcement. He

presented a list of things the proposed ordinance would and wouldn't do. He said this has been through several iterations and has received letters of support from the public. Town water is less than 2 pennies per gallon, while bottles of water have both economic and environmental costs. The town spends \$500,000 on recycling. Most items in recycling bins have no market value and end up in landfills. The only major change in this draft is that Departments have until December 31st, 2023 to use their existing supplies instead of 9 months.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment.

Mary Tegel of 9 Union Street asked about using biodegradable stuff. The Farmer's Market in Eugene Oregon had composting bins. She would like to see the ordinance framed in something lofty, like "doing our town's share of saving the planet" and "aspiring to zero waste." She would like to see more marketing and have certain events be zero waste. She added that she is in favor of passing the ordinance.

Ms. Cowan asked what happens to the Citizens' Petition if we pass the policy. Mr. Dean said if the Board passes an ordinance and the Citizens' Petition passes, and there were differences, the Citizens' Petition would probably prevail. Ms. Cowan said if there's something on the ballot that would supersede what we do here, she'd rather just wait. If the Citizens Petition doesn't pass, we have this work as a starting point. This is just a small subset of what we want to do, but it's what we're allowed to do. We're hurting our food trucks and not other businesses. If the Citizens Petition passes, then we know what the voters want.

Mr. Zigmont said the wording of the Citizens Petition and what we presented tonight should be identical. Mr. Papakonstantis said regarding oversight, the ordinance in the packet is more specific than the petition. Mr. Zigmont said it was just copied and pasted. Something was lost between the Clerk's Office and the warrant. The intention is for them to be identical. Mr. Dean said he will investigate that further.

Ms. Gilman said she would be comfortable letting this go to the voters.

Ms. Belanger said the Board supports this, but we have to make sure other issues, such as Parks and Rec costs, are covered.

Mr. Papakonstantis thanked Ms. Murphy and the Committee for their work on this proposal. It may seem like the Board is moving slowly, but we need to make sure we have the details right. He's confident this will pass with the voters. He would have preferred starting with a policy to be worked into an ordinance once we ironed out the wrinkles. There's a Citizens Petition, so we'll wait and hear from the voters. There are still some unknowns within it. The word "reasonable" will have to be more tightly defined. He's hoping we can work collaboratively to educate.

Ms. Gilman said HB 226 would give towns the authority to regulate single-use plastics further.

- c. NHDES ARPA Cybersecurity Implementation Grant - \$100,000

Mr. Dean said we've had a cybersecurity action plan done for the Water/Sewer areas. This will install hardware and software upgrades, make configuration changes, and implement improvements in security. This is from the State Department of Environmental Services. Stephen Dalton of the DPW was responsible for getting the grant.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the State ARPA grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$100,000 to the Town of Exeter and to authorize the Town Manager to sign the associated paperwork with such agreement on behalf of the Town. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- d. NHDES Lead Service Line, Sampling Plan, and Replacement Plan Grant - \$50,000

Mr. Dean said this is an NH DES grant for lead work. We were seeking alternate funding to supplement our budget on this. Stephen Dalton of the DPW was responsible for getting this grant as well.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the Lead Service Line, Sampling Plan, and Replacement Plan Grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$50,000 to the Town of Exeter and to authorize the Town Manager to sign the associated paperwork with such agreement on behalf of the Town. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- e. Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Grant - \$9,999.75

Fire Chief Eric Wilking said this is for updating the town's hazard mitigation plan, which is required for FEMA grants and reimbursements for storms. This is a 75/25 grant; we commit \$3333.25, but it's in salaries and time, not money. Ms. Gilman asked how we calculate our contribution, and Chief Wilking said it's "fully loaded," so it includes all salary and benefits such as retirement contributions of anyone working on it. We can offset future grants with any extra work.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the Emergency Management performance grant from NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management in the amount of \$9,999.75 for the required five year update to the national hazards mitigation plan. and to further authorize the Town Manager to sign the associated paperwork with such agreement on behalf of the Town. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The Select Board, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities as presented in the amount of \$9999.75 for updating the local hazard mitigation plan. Furthermore, the Board acknowledged that the total cost of this project will be \$13,333.00, in which the town will be responsible for a 25% match (\$3,333.25). Town Manager Russ Dean is authorized to sign all documents related to the grant.

- f. Omniballot Update

Mr. Papakonstantis said a year ago, the Board authorized funds to purchase the OmniBallot apparatus, but it has not yet been purchased. Mr. Dean said in January of last year, there were some issues raised about the proposed contract with Democracy Live/OmniBallot by Primex and the Mitchell Municipal Group. This product is considered by the Secretary of State as an “accessibility machine,” not a “ballot machine.” If it were a ballot machine, it would have required a bond. The moderator felt there were too many issues associated. Democracy Live came back this year for a meeting on Jan 25. We also called the Concord City Manager and had correspondence with the Town Moderator and Concord City Clerk. We can no longer order less than 100 units, but Democracy Live is working on providing a single test unit for us. Mr. Papakonstantis said we’d be the first NH town after Concord to have this product, so maybe by selling us one machine it would help the product spread throughout the State. Mr. Dean said Concord has had no problems with the Democracy Live system. The city has no contract. They bought 10 tablets and pay a fee each year. The city did not have to get approval from the BLC because the Commission has no jurisdiction over ballot marking systems. He’s continuing to work with Democracy Live regarding the OmniBallot system.

#### 8. Regular Business

##### a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 110/2/33 in the amount of \$133.83 for tax year 2022. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 11/18/22 in the amount of \$15,500 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 81/30 in the amount of \$13,000 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit for 81/30, 72/83, and 81/19 in the amount of \$500 each for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Disability Exemption for 95/64/96 in the amount of \$125,000 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 72/17/6 in the amount of \$183,751 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 64/105/45 in the amount of \$152,251 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 104/79/604 in the amount of \$236,251 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 103/13/17 in the amount of \$152,251 for tax year 2023. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

Deputy Fire Chief Jason Fritz was present to discuss a street request. PEA has asked the town to approve a private way as part of PEA's new project at Gilman Lane. PEA will maintain the road. Regarding access, there will be a gate for vehicle traffic, but pedestrian traffic will be allowed.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept Stuckey Place as a new private way, located off Gilman Lane. Ms. Gilman seconded. Ms. Oliff abstained. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Mr. Dean said a writ of possession has been procured on a mobile home, and the town can't collect taxes. This is for 2021 and 2022. It includes the principal and interest.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to abate the real estate tax principal and interest due for 104/80/1 for tax years 2021, 2022 for \$4,413.74. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. We have received the signed Acceptance of Service form back from the Director of Charitable Trust. We should have a revised proposed draft decree back tomorrow. Attorney Mitchell was optimistic that the process would be complete before too long. Regarding the Citizens' Petition, his understanding is that if this process is completed by the Court prior to the vote on March 14th, what's done is done. If it's not complete, the Citizens Petition article could take effect. Ms. Cowan said 63% of the town voted for this and we've put it in motion. The Citizens' Petition shouldn't stop anything.
- ii. The siphons project at Swasey is underway. There was an issue with the gyro device in the drill and we had to order a new one. It was expected to be delivered this afternoon.
- iii. Preparations are being made for Deliberative Session. He should be finished tomorrow. Deliberative is on Saturday at the HS at 9 AM.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Oliff had no report.
- ii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- iii. Ms. Gilman attended a Heritage Commission meeting. We pay dues to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, so we have access to their learning tools and resources. She also discussed several State bills.
- iv. Ms. Belanger attended a Planning Board meeting on Jan 26. There was a unanimous recommendation for Article 2 on amending the flood plain ordinance. There was discussion on replacement of the Zoning

ordinances. For workforce housing, the Housing Advisory Committee has discussed having oversight and yearly reporting.

- v. Mr. Papakonstantis attended a Swasey Park Trustees meeting, where they talked about the recent flooding and discussed pruning trees.
- e. Correspondence
  - i. A memo from Attorney Mitchell on the single use plastics ordinance.

9. Review Board Calendar

- a. Deliberative Session is Saturday Feb 4. The All-Boards meeting is Feb 8 at 6 PM at the Library. The next Board meetings are Feb 13, Feb 27, and March 6.
- b. Ms. Belanger said the Board received a letter from Darren Winham on Town of Exeter business outreach that should be added to the next packet.

10. Non-Public Session

- a. There was no non-public session at this time.

11. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary