

Select Board Meeting  
Monday May 12, 2025  
6:50 PM  
Nowak Room, Town Offices  
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Clerk Nancy Belanger, Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand

Absent: Vice-Chair Molly Cowan

Town Manager Russ Dean and Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy were also 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 interviews.

2. Board Interviews

- a. Nick Drinker for the River Advisory 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

Ms. Belanger read the proclamation for National Public Works Week:

WHEREAS, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities, and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life, and well-being of the people of the Town of Exeter; and, WHEREAS, these infrastructure, facilities, and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers, and employees at all levels of government and the private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our nation's transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and, WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders, and children in Exeter to gain knowledge of and maintain an ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and, WHEREAS, the year 2025 marks the 65th annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association, NOW, THEREFORE, our Select Board Chair of the Town of Exeter does hereby proclaim and affirm May 18-24, 2025, as National Public Works Week within the town of

Exeter, New Hampshire. All people are hereby called upon to promote gratitude, respect, and support for our dedicated public works professionals, recognizing the substantial contributions they make to protecting our health, safety, and advancing quality of life for all.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. Goal Setting Meeting: April 21, 2025

Corrections: Ms. Belanger said in section 3, she had volunteered to follow up with the Arts Commission regarding the 250th Celebration and speak with Mr. Cronin about painting crosswalks.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of April 21, 2025 as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

b. Regular Meeting: April 28, 2025

Corrections: Mr. Papakonstantis said in lines 111 and 114, David Loch's address is 46 Drinkwater Road.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of April 28, 2025 as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

6. Appointments

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Nick Drinker to the River Advisory Committee as a regular voting member, term to expire April 2026. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

7. Discussion/Action Items

a. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading - Ordinance 101.2 - No Parking - Presentation by David Loch

DPW Director Steven Cronin was present for this discussion.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the amendment to Chapter 1, Parking Regulations. This would add the following to 101.2, Parking Prohibited on Specific Streets: Drinkwater Road, both sides of the street from High Street to the Town Line; Pickpocket Road, north side of the street for a distance of 450 feet west of Kingston Road; and Swasey Parkway, west side of the street from Newfields Road to the turnaround. "No parking" is already in play for Swasey Parkway and Pickpocket Road, but Drinkwater Road has not been done.

He opened the discussion to the public. He said after the first reading, we tasked Public Safety and the Police Department to take up some suggestions, which we will discuss. Then Mr. Loch would like to give a presentation.

Mr. Cronin said given the feedback at the last meeting, we re-evaluated the area, and it might make the most sense to limit "no parking" to the section of the road adjacent to the PEA property. This is where we have the biggest issue with parking on the road and creating a safety hazard. Some vehicles parking there use driveways to turn around and cause property damage. We looked at the possibility of limiting the "no parking" area on the other side of the street but felt it would create an enforcement issue. We're proposing a limit on parking on both sides for 4,000 feet.

Mr. Chartrand asked if we spoke to the Academy. Mr. Dean said he

reached out to Mr. Leighton and the Academy is ok with the town's consideration of "no parking" along the street. From 25 Drinkwater up to High Street, the shoulder is narrower, and Police regulations already don't allow parking in the travel lane. Mr. Chartrand asked if we can reach out to the residents who were at the last meeting, and Mr. Dean said yes. Mr. Chartrand asked if we've contacted all of the neighbors in this area. Mr. Dean said Public Works put door knockers on every door. Mr. Cronin said we have not heard from anyone directly. Mr. Papakonstantis said we have some communications in the packet. It's not positive for putting up "no parking" signs. Mr. Dean said there's been one email that suggested not doing it. We could do one more round of door knockers. Mr. Papakonstantis suggested putting the third reading on the agenda for June 2 instead of next week.

David Loch of 46 Drinkwater Road said about 20 years ago, people started parking on this road from dawn till dusk every day of the year. People stand in the travel lane with their doors open. Cars park dangerously in the travel lane. Cars block mailboxes and turn in residents' driveways. The danger to the public is the reason this activity needs to be prevented. He didn't propose having "no parking" along the entire road, but he understands the rationale behind it. Parking needs to be restricted on both sides to be effective. There need to be exemptions for official activities which use orange work signs, flagging, or Police details. There are other, safer places where people can go.

Mr. Loch showed the Board pictures and videos of people parking in the area unsafely. He said he thinks social media has increased the activity of parking there and hiking the trails, but there are other places people can go.

Mr. Chartrand asked if we go ahead and do this, will Mr. Loch be happy. Mr. Loch said yes. That will make it safer for people to travel the road and for people who live along the road.

Mr. Dean said one thing we saw were joggers and cyclists in the road. There are other modes of transportation. Mr. Chartrand asked if we're not talking about banning that, just banning parking. Mr. Dean said yes, just parking.

Mr. Cronin said we hope to pave Drinkwater Road this construction season. We will review the width of the road, but it can't support bike paths, it doesn't have the shoulder width available. That would be a substantial alteration and may involve property taken. That's not in the forecast right now. Ms. Belanger said once the road gets fixed, the speeding might get worse.

Keith Whitehouse of 61 Westside Drive said Smith-Page access is right on Drinkwater Road. The PEA woods can be accessed from the other side, but to access Smith-Page, an Exeter conservation area, you need to park there. If you need to do maintenance there, you would have to walk a mile with a chainsaw. What is the parking plan for this area? Mr. Chartrand asked for more details, and Mr. Whitehouse said the area is on the opposite side of Drinkwater Road, beyond the PEA area. Public lands need to be open to the public. This is not PEA land, it's Town of Exeter land. On Park Street, there's a bump out to get some parking there. Something similar needs to be in place for this area. Ms. Belanger asked if Mr. Whitehouse is one of the people who maintains the trails. Mr. Whitehouse said yes, he has in the past. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if he's parking on Drinkwater Road, and Mr. Whitehouse said yes. Mr. Dean said that's a conversation with the Conservation Commission to create parking. Mr. Whitehouse said the abutter's property line and the pond are right there. There couldn't be a parking area. Ms. Gilman said the Conservation Commission has

had the same issue at some other trails, but they haven't taken a look at finding a solution. This needs to be considered for all of our trails. Mr. Dean said he can speak with Kristen Murphy.

Catherine Ganley of 25 Drinkwater Road said we're used to students from the Academy on bikes or jogging coming out of the trail and through their property. There are lots of bikers, walkers, and runners in that area. If the signs go up that say no parking, both of the entryways are so inviting, so how is it clarified that there's no access? Mr. Chartrand said we'll have to figure that out. He added that he appreciates that they allow people to pass through their property.

Ms. Gilman asked if Drinkwater has sharrows on the pavement. Mr. Cronin said he thinks it does not. He said we try to support multi-modal transportation around town even if the road can't support it. We need to find a balance. Ms. Belanger suggested looking at sharrows following the paving.

Mr. Chartrand said this is a major crossing for amphibians. There's a good solution for that in Newmarket with markings on the road. Mr. Cronin said he has talked to Kristen Murphy about seasonal signage.

Mr. Loch said regarding Smith-Page, there's no parking lot. He talked to Kristen Murphy about the issue with parking there and suggested creating a parking lot behind the pond. It's important to get people off the side of the road.

Mr. Papakonstantis closed the second public reading.

## 8. Regular Business

### a. Permits & Approvals

DPW Director Steve Cronin and Water Sewer Superintendent Steve Dalton were present to request \$17,000 from the Civil Reserve Fund for a sludge pump for the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Mr. Dalton said we had to remove the pump and send it back to the factory. We received a quote for \$9,000 to rebuild it or \$16,000 to replace it with a new pump with a warranty. We looked at alternative methods to replace the pump and found an alternative, the "Penn Valley Pump," that is a different technology with less maintenance. Unfortunately this type has an 8-week lead time, and we need it now. The organisms in the waste start multiplying in the warm weather. We need to process it soon into biosolids, so we decided to stick with the type that's there. This pump is 6 years old.

Mr. Cronin said we feel the second pump isn't far behind. The long-term solution is to go with the Penn Valley Pump. In budget development for 2026, we'll look at a capital outlay request for a Penn Valley Pump.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the warranty on the current type of pump, and Mr. Dalton said it is one year.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to release \$17,000 from the Sewer Reserve Fund to replace one of the two Boerger biosolid sludge pumps. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve a Timber Tax for 103/5 in the amount of \$107.33 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/413 in the amount of \$217.04 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 81/38 in the amount of \$53.37 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 69/3/302 in the amount of \$238.39 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 96/1 in the amount of \$569.28 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 74/11 in the amount of \$727.61 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 85/50 in the amount of \$750.74 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/363 in the amount of \$330.89 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 65/80 in the amount of \$370.03 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve a Jeopardy Tax for 87/14/5B in the amount of \$1,173.00 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. The Memorial Day parade is May 26.
- ii. The Eagle Scout Retired Flag drop box was installed outside.
- iii. Dave Sharples will give an update on June 2 on the Police Station and Fire Substation project. There's been substantial progress.

- iv. The groundwater easement is going through a review appraisal. It's already had a PEA appraisal. He will come to the Board with recommendations.
  - v. The HR Director's office is complete and we're taking applications.
  - vi. We're re-advertising the Senior Coordinator position.
  - vii. Paul McGoon, the new carpenter, Rebecca Riley, a part-time Custodian, and Chadwick Dean, a new Parks Laborer, started this week.
  - viii. We're waiting for Pickpocket Dam grant applications. There are two with NOAA and one at National Fish and Game.
  - ix. The Westside Drive project bid opening is June 16. Director Cronin has been working with one neighbor on an easement.
  - x. He has a conference this week. Both he and Ms. Roy are at a Primex conference Wednesday and Thursday. Corey Stevens will be here.
  - xi. Ms. Belanger said she'd already seen some Flag Box activity.
- d. Select Board Committee Reports
- i. Ms. Gilman attended two meetings of the 250th Celebration commission. We came up with a calendar with something every month. We'd like a big activity on the 4th of July in addition to the Independence Festival. One thing we'd like to do is show the 1776 movie. We discussed putting out bookmark-size handouts at events this year. We had an idea for the Beer & Chili fest to make Johnnycakes/cornbread to go with the chili. We're working with SST to come up with the logo for the 250th.
  - ii. Ms. Belanger said she attended a webinar on conservation and housing. There are a lot of webinars available to our volunteers. She and Mr. Chartrand attended the ADA Forum, which was not televised. There were a lot of good points. Some ideas and concerns from the public and survey included Pairpoint Park accessibility; Town Hall audio; school facilities; the Stewart Park step; the plowing of streets blocking sidewalks and crossing buttons; the crossing at Water/Franklin; the navigation of sidewalks in winter; wheelchair van parking; the safety of the handicapped spaces near the Town Offices; the front doors at the Town Offices; more crosswalks and more audible crosswalks; installing a pedestrian signal at Main Street and LSS; closed captioning for public meetings, which we have on YouTube but not Channel 22; allowing disabled kids to attend recreation camp should allow disabled kids to attend; wheelchair charging downtown; and the need for the public to be aware of our studies, which was suggested by Dan Chartrand. She said some of us don't have limitations and we don't consider what we take for granted; sometimes we just need a little reminder. There was a discussion about budget limitations but once we get the list solidified we can check things off as money becomes available.

Mr. Papakonstantis said we have \$80,000 in the ADA fund and that appropriation needs to continue. We need to involve the DPW with that team on crosswalks and safety.

Ms. Belanger said the Planning Board was cancelled because there were no applications. At Housing Advisory, they discussed that this is the last funding year for the Housing Championship grant, due May 31. Housing Advisory applied. She also attended a “Home for All” event in Portsmouth on Thursday.

- iii. Mr. Chartrand had no report.
- iv. Mr. Papakonstantis had no report. He walked the border of Exeter and Brentwood for perambulations.

e. Correspondence

- i. A notice from Rockingham County Board of Commissioners with Public hearing for budget, which was held May 9th. Ms. Gilman said regarding headlines about the Sheriff's Office signing on with ICE, there's some confusion on whether they've signed. Upcoming input dates are May 23 for Executive Committee, June 4 for the public hearing, and June 18 is the County Convention for State Reps for Rockingham County.
- ii. An email from Meredith Jordan expressing opposition to the Rockingham County collaboration with ICE. Mr. Papakonstantis said he spoke with Ms. Jordan. He suggested the Board write a letter to the Executive Council. Mr. Chartrand said in the letter, he would like to ask for more transparency on what is being funded. Mr. Dean said it should be done by the public hearing on May 23. Mr. Chartrand said he would like to add something to the effect that if there is funding being accepted, we're very skeptical about that and would like to register our disapproval. Mr. Dean said Chief Poulin responded to Judy Rowan about our involvement with ICE, and Chief Poulin said we have a policy on Fair and Impartial Policing. We enforce NH State Laws; we're not the entity to enforce Federal laws or policies and will not join the ICE task force. Mr. Papakonstantis said he, Chief Poulin, and Ms. Roy can put together a letter by the next meeting.
- iii. An email from Unital regarding electric distribution rates.
- iv. A letter regarding parking on Drinkwater Road.
- v. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin.
- vi. An email from Meredith Jordan mentioned previously.
- vii. A letter of thanks from Big Brothers Big Sisters for a donation.
- viii. A DRA Administration notification of the acceptance of the 2024 total equalized valuations.

9. Other business

- a. Ms. Belanger said she did not attend the Alewife Festival but Kristen Murphy put a lot of work into it. It was indoors due to weather but had good attendance.

- b. Ms. Gilman said regarding SB 105, mandated budget caps on towns, there was an amendment to enable it so that our voters would have to vote on a budget cap. We were strongly opposed to it.

10. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are May 19, June 2, June 16, June 30, July 14, July 28, and August 11.

11. Non-Public Session

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A3II(a) and c). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0. The meeting entered non-public at 8:35 PM.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0 via roll call.

**MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until the matter is resolved. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

12. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0 and the meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary