

Select Board Meeting
Monday May 19, 2025
5:30 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Vice-Chair Molly Cowan, Clerk Nancy Belanger, Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, 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 5:30 PM.

2. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A3II(I). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0. The meeting entered into non-public session at 5:30 PM.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public session. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and the non-public session ended at 6:51 PM.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until the matter is resolved. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

3. Board Interviews

- a. Amanda Kelly for the Historic District Commission

4. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. Ms. Belanger read the proclamation for ALS Awareness Month:

Whereas, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a progressive fatal neurodegenerative disease in which a person's brain loses connection with their muscles, slowly reducing a person's ability to walk, talk, eat and eventually breathe; and

Whereas, thousands of new ALS cases are reported every year, and estimates show that every 90 minutes someone is diagnosed with and someone passes away from ALS; and

Whereas, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS survive only two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

Whereas, the exact causes of ALS are unknown and there is no known cure for ALS; and Whereas, people who have served in the military are more likely to develop ALS and die from the disease than those with no history of military service; and

Whereas, securing access to new therapies, durable medical equipment, and communication technologies is of vital importance to people living with ALS; and

Whereas, clinical trials play a pivotal role in evaluating new treatments, enhancing quality of life. and fostering assistive technologies for those living with ALS; and
Whereas, the ALS Association is the largest philanthropic funder of ALS research globally and has committed more than \$154 million to support more than 550 projects across the United States and 18 other countries; and
Whereas, ALS Awareness Month provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of the dire circumstances of people living with ALS. acknowledge the impact this disease has on individuals and their families. and support research to eradicate this disease.
Now, therefore, Niko Papakonstantis, the Exeter Select Board Chair, proclaims the month of May 2025 as ALS Awareness Month within the Town of Exeter, NH. All people are hereby called upon to support ALS research, advocate for increased funding and stand in solidarity with those affected by this relentless disease.

- b. Ms. Gilman said the NH Commission on Aging celebrates an older adult volunteer in each county, and Pam Gjettum was honored this year.

5. Public Comment

- a. Sally Ward of 72 Park Street spoke regarding the Park Street bridge. It has been out for some time, and the issue hasn't been updated on the website in two months. It's a State project so the town doesn't have direct control, but she's concerned about the public having input on what will happen with the bridge. She heard a rumor that the bridge would be taken down. It would be undesirable to get rid of that asset. There is increased traffic on Wadleigh, Salem, and Oak Street. If the bridge disappeared, that would be permanent, which would be undesirable.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he hasn't heard that removal is being considered. Mr. Dean agreed. Mr. Papakonstantis said he will reach out to the Public Works Director to come to a meeting to speak about it. Members of the public could come and ask questions about it.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: May 12, 2025

Mr. Chartrand said he made comments during the second hearing that he would like to review. He asked to table the minutes until then.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to table the minutes until June 2. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

7. Appointments

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Amanda Kelly to the Historic District Commission as a full voting member, term to expire April 2028. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

88 8. Discussion/Action Items

89 a. Public Hearing – RSA 31:95-b, III(a) – Foam Recycling Coalition Grant

90 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing under RSA 31:95-b, III(a). Mr.
91 Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

92 Natural Resources and Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy said a warrant
93 article passed in March for purchasing a styrofoam densifier unit at the Transfer Station.
94 The \$30,000 town contribution was contingent on securing a \$50,000 grant. We were
95 awarded that grant, so the next step is to hold this public hearing. We hope to receive
96 recommendation for executing the paperwork. We have the potential of diverting lots of
97 styrofoam from our waste stream, and we could potentially expand it to a regional
98 program.

99 Mr. Chartrand thanked Ms. Murphy for discovering this opportunity. Mr.
100 Papakonstantis said he's appreciative of the voters for approving this as well as Ms.
101 Murphy and the Sustainability Advisory Committee for the work they put in.

102 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

103 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion
104 passed 5-0.

105
106 **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to authorize the Town Manager or their designee, acting on the
107 Select Board's behalf, to execute any and all related agreements for acceptance of grant
108 funding in support of the Foam Densifier purchase. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed
109 5-0.

110
111 9. Regular Business

112 a. Permits & Approvals

113 i. Application for Charitable Exemption - Hero Pups, Inc

114 Finance Director Corey Stevens said there were some questions
115 after the April 28 meeting, and he looked at this issue with Assessing.
116 There's new information from the applicant. The applicant at the last
117 meeting provided a letter and comments about the good that the
118 organization does for the public. We brought that to Legal Counsel and
119 had some discussion around past court cases. Counsel's advice was still
120 to deny the application. The purpose for which the organization was
121 established, in the eyes of the State, does not qualify for an exemption
122 that we could defend if challenged. Counsel suggested that the applicant
123 could amend their articles of incorporation to reflect what it is they say
124 they do on the property with the State, and then we may be able to
125 provide the charitable exemption. He received an email that the applicant
126 filed an amended article to the State, which he forwarded to Counsel and
127 now we're waiting for their reply.

128 Laura Barker of Beech Hill Road [representing Hero Pups Inc]
129 said she didn't receive notice that this would be considered until Saturday
130 morning. She spent most of the day in Concord today with many different
131 divisions and bureaus. She hopes this will satisfy the exemption.

Mr. Stevens said the Board has to grant the exemption before July 1 when the first tax bill is due. Mr. Papakonstantis said we discussed taking up the case on Thursday to give everyone plenty of time to review further.

Mr. Chartrand asked how quickly the State said it would be addressed. Ms. Barker said they were very interested in moving her forward. Everything is already done. Mr. Papakonstantis said the State is vigorously investigating exemptions by Towns, so we want to make sure we're covered and don't set a precedent. We will have it on the agenda again when we have the information we need, and Mr. Papakonstantis said he will personally reach out to her about the next meeting.

Mr. Stevens said there was a reference to 990 form from 2013, but there is a 2023 on file. Ms. Barker said she misspoke about that. Mr. Stevens said they filed the 2024 form and we gave that to Counsel.

Mr. Stevens said the information from North Hampton mentioned previously was created by MRI and was regarding State rules. It's just canned information. This year we put it on Exeter letterhead. It had a North Hampton email address but all the information was related to the State. The updated version is now on our website for the public.

Mr. Stevens said regarding the information related to an outdated RSA, that was a typo that appeared in a few places. It said RSA 76:23, but should have been RSA 72:23.

ii. Tax Collector's Warrant

Mr. Dean said the tax warrant is ready to be signed by the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the tax collector's warrant for the first half of 2025 in the amount of \$32,350,115. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 87/14/24B in the amount of \$139.51 for tax year 2022. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 63/41/4 in the amount of \$811.22 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/615 in the amount of \$396.72 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/610 in the amount of \$386.04 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 64/105/95 in the amount of \$514.13 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

176 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 64/105/81 in the amount of
177 \$419.84 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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179 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/234 in the amount of
180 \$560.39 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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182 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/290 in the amount of
183 \$405.61 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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185 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/302 in the amount of
186 \$681.36 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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188 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/335 in the amount of
189 \$202.81 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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191 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 64/105/73 in the amount of
192 \$823.68 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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194 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/950 in the amount of
195 \$455.42 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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197 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 108/10 in the amount of \$1,263.09
198 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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200 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 19/16/42 in the amount of \$412.73
201 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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203 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/392 in the amount of \$21.35
204 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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206 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 95/64/350 in the amount of
207 \$124.53 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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209 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 28/20 in the amount of \$875.27 for
210 tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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212 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 54/4/117 in the amount of \$124.53
213 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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215 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 87/14/5B in the amount of \$586.00
216 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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218 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to deny an abatement for 21/25, 104/79/402, 64/105/24, 72/187,
219 and 19/16/16 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to deny an interest refund request for 90/29. Ms. Gilman seconded. Mr. Papakonstantis asked for more information. Mr. Dean said he didn't have it. Ms. Belanger withdrew the motion and Ms. Gilman withdrew her second. The matter will be reconsidered at the June 2 meeting.

2. Town Manager's Report

- a. He attended a Primex Conference last week.
- b. Dave Sharples will attend on June 2 for update on the Police and Fire Substation project.
- c. We received approval for the groundwater easement.
- d. We're recruiting for the HR Director position.
- e. The DPW had Dump Truck 33 delivered this week.
- f. The Alewife festival was indoors due to weather. It was a big success.
- g. The Swasey Coastal Resilience grant will be reviewed at the June 2 meeting.
- h. The Epping Road widening will start when school is out.

3. Select Board Committee Reports

- a. Ms. Gilman had no report. She met with a student from PEA regarding sidewalk crossings. She also gave an update on State issues.
- b. Ms. Belanger had no report.
- c. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- d. Mr. Chartrand attended a Conservation Commission meeting where they talked about trail maintenance and public access. There was a Joint Sustainability/Energy meeting, which was the 2nd annual joint meeting. He attended the informal Train Station Committee again.
- e. Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the solar array. Mr. Dean said representatives and senators will be here to kick off the solar array on May 30 at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Tree Committee looked at where we're going to be planting trees and the tree inventory. We had a representative from Unital; he was actually from a third party that removes damaged trees. Four trees need to be taken down because they pose a hazard. Kirk Scamman, the Highway Foreman, was present, and supported removing them. In the Tree ordinance, any removal of public trees has to go before the Tree Committee, and the committee voted to approve after a lengthy discussion. Mr. Chartrand said he's glad there is now a process and the removal is not just unilateral.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Pairpoint Park committee met. Jen Martell put together 3 designs, and there was a survey with 500-600 respondents. They are going to come before the Select Board on June 30 with the three options and their recommendation. Mr. Sharples will create a rough cost estimate.

Ms. Gilman said there are trees between Kingston Road and the railroad trestle that have fallen into the river on town land. Mr. Dean said Public Works should be notified. Mr. Chartrand said DES likes fallen trees to remain unless they're necessary to remove. They create habitat.

264 f. Correspondence
265 i. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin
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267 10. Review Board Calendar
268 a. The next meetings are June 2, June 16, June 30, July 14, July 28, and Aug 11.
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270 11. Non-Public Session
271 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A3II (a) and (c) .
272 Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0. The meeting entered non-
273 public session at 7:54 PM.
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275 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public session. Nancy Belanger seconded. The
276 motion passed 5-0 and the non-public session ended at 8:39 PM.
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278 **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until the issue is resolved. Ms. Belanger
279 seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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281 12. Adjournment
282 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion
283 passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 8:40.
284
285 Respectfully Submitted,
286 Joanna Bartell
287 Recording Secretary