

Select Board Meeting  
Monday June 2, 2025  
6 PM  
Nowak Room, Town Offices  
Final 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 PM.

2. Non-Public Session

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II(I). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0. The meeting entered non-public session at 6:02 PM and the Board went downstairs to the Wheelwright Room. The Board exited non public session. Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until the matter was completed. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion carried and the minutes were sealed.

3. Board Interviews

- a. John DalSanto for the Zoning Board of Adjustment

The meeting reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7 PM.

4. Bid Opening - Swasey Parkway Resilience

- a. Horsley Witten Group of Exeter NH: with optional task 4.1, \$31,450; without optional task 4.1, \$21,250.
- b. Geosyntec Consultants of South Hamilton MA: \$18,000.
- c. CMA Engineers of Portsmouth NH: \$22,500.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to refer the three bids to Steve Cronin and Kristen Murphy to review and come back to the Select Board with a recommendation. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

5. Public Comment

- a. Keith Whitehouse of 61 Westside Drive asked about the Westside Drive project. Mr. Dean said there will be a bid opening June 16. We will likely see equipment there in early July after the recommendation for award. Mr. Papakonstantis asked Mr. Cronin to come to a future meeting to give an update on the Westside Drive project to the Board

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: May 12, 2025

Corrections: Ms. Belanger said on page 6, it should read “provide a one-on-one person or other support to allow a disabled child to attend Rec Camp.”

**MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

- b. Regular Meeting: May 19, 2025

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of May 19, 2025 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

## 7. Appointments and Resignations

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept with thanks the resignation of Dave Short from the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Advisory Committee. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

## 8. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. Mr. Papakonstantis said the ribbon cutting for the Solar Array was last week. This project puts Exeter on the forefront of energy sustainability initiatives. He thanked Dave Sharples; Kristen Murphy; Public Works; Steve [Jordan] the Transfer Station Attendant; the Energy, Sustainability, and BRC committees that helped push this through; and the Legislative body, which voted twice to fund this.

## 9. Discussion/Action Items

- a. a. Park Street Bridge Update

DPW Director Steve Cronin was present to give an update on the Park Street Bridge.

Mr. Papakonstantis said a resident had a public comment at the last meeting regarding the status of the bridge. He apologized for the Board not answering the question at the previous meeting.

Mr. Cronin said DPW received a report that there was a hole in the bridge deck. The State DOT [Department of Transportation] assessed it and determined it was more than a superficial repair. They issued a notice to the town closing the bridge indefinitely. They’ve been conducting additional engineering to see if it can be repaired or should be removed. He and Mr. Dean requested additional information, including whether it could be open to pedestrian traffic and what the timeline is. The DOT representative committed to trying to get answers and will meet with us again June 11. Regarding removal, in August 2024 CSX [Rail] reached out to Public Works saying they had a project that included removing the bridge, and asked us to remove the water main. We had a lot of questions about impacts. We engaged with DOT and Town Counsel about ownership and the town’s rights. Town Counsel said that any plan for removal would include discontinuance of the roadway, which would go to the Select Board and voters. We met with DOT and CSX; their primary reason to remove the bridge is to accommodate double-stack trains, but there are other bridges along the line that

affect that. We told them to come before the Select Board to make their intentions known, but they wanted to do more research with DOT before coming to the town. The bridge closed in February and we hadn't heard much from the State until last week. The State is the owner of the bridge, and they would be proceeding with plans from now on. Regarding closure, it would only be the section of that road over the bridge, but there are other questions about right of way and existing deeds before we could answer questions on that possibility. CSX has not expressed interest in rehabilitation; the State seemed to be leaning toward removal for financial purposes, but were open to the possibility of rehabilitation. There is an MOU from 2021 that outlines the funding mechanisms and what the town's financial obligations would be if we pursued that.

Mr. Chartrand asked if that's not the only water main across the railroad tracks. Mr. Cronin said that's correct, the Salem Street project introduced some redundancy. There were some concerns about flows but they were addressed as a condition of the Rose Farm project. We're more concerned about how they will terminate the water system, where fire hydrants end up, and the termination of the road. Mr. Chartrand asked if the water main could go under the railroad tracks. Mr. Cronin said it would be challenging with the drilling of that grade.

Sally Ward of 72 Park Street said the railroad track is CSX, the bridge is the State, but this is our town and our neighborhood and it's critical we have input. She can't imagine what it would look like if they took the bridge out. Mr. Papakonstantis said if removal were considered there would be public hearings with opportunities for input. He asked Mr. Dean for updates on this project.

Michelle Prago of 4 Lexington Ave said on the Exeter Community Facebook page, people are complaining about additional traffic on Walnut and Oak Street. Could the State do a traffic count? Mr. Cronin said we can ask that.

Jessica Leppler of 27 Park Street said it's been quiet on her side of Park Street since the bridge was closed, but she's concerned about Fire and Police accessing the other side of town when a freighter comes through. There's no other way to cross the town other than going out to the highway.

Jackie Raquel of 31 Park Street said she's thrilled to have the bridge closed temporarily, but she would like to talk about what taking the bridge out means. Is it regrading the bridge and making it a crossing, or a cliff on both sides? Mr. Cronin said we have the same questions.

Gina Lahey of 80 Park Street said a few years ago, during the address and street changes, we were hearing that it was vital for safety for an emergency vehicle to get over the railroad bridge. She can't imagine not having that access in case of an emergency.

Ms. Belanger said the railroad company wants to do this for a double-decker. Can we find out the weight difference from one to two? People along the tracks will be affected by shaking if the train weighs more.

- b. 3rd Reading – No Parking Order 101.2 – Drinkwater Road, Pickpocket Road, Swasey Parkway

DPW Director Steve Cronin and Police Chief Stephan Poulin were present for the public reading of the ordinance.

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.

Mr. Cronin said he talked to the Sustainability and Conservation Commission about the concerns. DPW intends to pave Drinkwater Road this summer, but we're not planning to widen or regrade the shoulders. We looked at putting two parallel parking spaces at the Conservation property, which may be possible. We could potentially engage traffic consultants to suggest more ideas.

Chief Poulin said the Police Department is taking a neutral stance on whether we need an amendment or not. We will enforce whatever the town decides. In the last few years there have been two accidents on that road. Speed is an issue. If it is decided that it should be posted, he recommends we do the whole road. Doing a small portion will just move the problem over.

Ms. Belanger asked about the signs that tell you how fast you're driving. Chief Poulin said they cost about \$1,000.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment.

Keith Whitehouse of Westside Drive said he's concerned about access to the Smith-Page land. We don't want to just move parking in front of someone else's place, but he doesn't know if shutting down an entire road is a solution. There are inviting, wonderful areas on both sides of the road. There should be public access to public lands.

Michelle Crepo of 4 Lexington Ave said she understands that people are parking on the side of the road, but there are similar situations all over town. At Brickyard Pond, people park on both sides of that street and offload children. There are also concerns near Sea Dog on Front Street. Drinkwater has less traffic than these streets. She thinks there could be parking on one side of the street. There is room in some areas for turnouts. She would hate to see a parking ban prevent a better solution in the future.

Mike Waleryszak of 20 Drinkwater Road said he's against the parking ban on the road. In front of his place, he could park 6 cars. The Police stop there often to keep an eye on the traffic. The problem isn't parking, it's the speed. He's witnessed three times the Police have stopped cars in the last few days. Adding a speed sign or something like that could help. The answer is more enforcement and reminders about the speed limit.

Scott Matthews of 18A Drinkwater Road said he doesn't think there's a problem. He would hate to see parking banned and limit opportunities for people in town. It might make the parking situation worse on Gardner Street or others. He's happy to have people park

Rick Deckdel of 16 Drinkwater Road said he's opposed to the ban. He doesn't frequently park on the street but it's nice to have the option.

David Loch of 46 Drinkwater Road said going back 3.5 years ago, his neighbors on either side came with him to the town to talk about the danger of parking there. It wasn't just him. If you look at the videos and the photographs, it really is dangerous. It shouldn't be about anything other than public safety.

Mr. Papakonstantis brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Chartrand said he understands Chief Poulin's point that it should be a complete ban or none at all. He's intrigued by what Public Works and Bell and Flynn might be able to do to narrow travel lanes and create a little more space for folks that are bicycling, running, or walking. He walked Smith-Page with Keith Whitehouse, which is gorgeous public land and is open for hiking. He'd like to see us hold up for now on a parking ban to see what our Department Heads can do to enhance the recreation and wildlife corridor.

Ms. Belanger said she agrees. She would like to see DPW put up a flashing sign, either now or after the road is repaved. She doesn't want to block off access to the path or the work to be done at the conservation property.

Ms. Gilman said she agrees. We've had a lot of input and she understands the issue. Since we're going to do the repaving, there might be some work done to slow people down.

Mr. Cronin said he'll see if there's an opportunity to work with Bob Glowacky on public information about traffic issues and safety.

Mr. Chartrand said people need to be mindful of other users of the road and wildlife.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to add Swasey Parkway west side of the Street from Newfield Road to the turnaround to the No Parking Order 101.2. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to add Pickpocket Road North Side 450 feet west of Kingston Road to the No Parking Order 101.2. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to pause adding Drinkwater Road to Exeter Town Parking ordinance until such time as Public Works and Public Safety can present a plan to the Select board. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Tick & Mosquito Programs – Madison Bailey, Health Officer

Mr. Dean said Madison Bailey could not be here, so the Board should table this for next time. Ms. Roy said it was just an update to the program. Mr. Papakonstantis said that Ms. Bailey's memo noted that Exeter was one of five communities in NH selected for tick sampling. They will be sent to CDC labs, and we should get results by spring 2026 to determine which tick-borne illnesses could be contracted by humans or pets. This program only requires the Health Officer's time.

d. Water/Sewer Advisory Committee Position Request

Mr. Papakonstantis said this committee was reduced from 7 to 5 members, including 2 voting members of the Select Board. There were 4 resident members. The Executive Committee wants to add an alternate position for longtime volunteer Mr. Moser. Mr. Dean said the term would be April of 2026.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if we can add an alternate position without going to Town Meeting. Mr. Dean said he believes so but he can follow up on that. The Board tabled this item.

e. 2025 Bond Document Execution

Ms. Belanger read the Bond Resolutions:

*That under and pursuant to the Municipal Finance Act, Chapter 33, N.H.R.S.A., as amended, the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank Law, Chapter 35-A, N.H.R.S.A., as amended, and other laws in addition thereto, and to votes of the Issuer duly adopted on March 12, 2024 under Article 4 and on March 11, 2025 under Articles 5 and 6 of the Warrants for such annual meetings of the Issuer there be and hereby is authorized the issuance of a \$19,355,400 bond of the Issuer (the "Bonds") which is being issued by the Issuer for the purposes of (i) current refunding the Issuer's \$3,500,000 bond anticipation note dated August 15, 2024 and maturing on August 15, 2025 which note was issued to finance the costs of new public safety building to hold the Exeter Police Department, and to provide a satellite fire substation and financing additional new money costs of such project (\$17,522,500), (ii) financing repairs to the Linden Street bridge including the reinforcement of bridge abutments and wing-walls, replacing substandard bridge rails, and pavement repairs (\$1,257,900) and (iii) financing the replacement of the fuel island station at the Public Works facility (DPW Complex) including replacing aging equipment and the relocation of the island to accommodate better traffic flow (\$575,000). The Bonds shall be dated as of their date of issuance, shall be in such numbers and denominations as the purchaser shall request, shall mature in accordance with the schedule set forth in Exhibit A to the Loan Agreement hereinafter described (the "Loan Agreement"), shall bear a net interest cost rate (as defined in the Loan Agreement) of five and one quarter percent ( 5.25%) per annum or such lesser amounts as may be determined by a majority of the Board. The Bonds shall be substantially in the form set forth as Exhibit B to the Loan Agreement and otherwise shall be issued in such manner and form as the signatories shall approve by their execution thereof.*

*RESOLVED: That the Bonds shall be sold to the Bond Bank at the par value thereof plus any applicable premium.*

*RESOLVED: That in order to evidence the sale of the Bonds, the Treasurer of Issuer and a member of the Board are authorized and directed to execute, attest and deliver, in the name and on behalf of the Issuer, a Loan Agreement in substantially the form submitted to this meeting, which Loan Agreement is hereby approved, with such changes therein not inconsistent with this vote and approved*

*by the officers executing the same on behalf of the Issuer. The approval of such changes by said officers shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution of the Loan Agreement by such officers.*

*RESOLVED: That all things heretofore done and all action heretofore taken by the Issuer and its officers and agents in its authorization of the projects to be financed by the Bonds are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.*

*RESOLVED: That the Clerk and the signers of the Bonds are each hereby authorized to take any and all action necessary and convenient to carry out the provisions of this vote, including delivering the Bonds against payment therefor.*

*RESOLVED: That the useful lives of the projects being financed are in excess of five (5), ten (10) and twenty (20) years.*

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adopt the Resolutions set forth in the Authorization of Bonds and Approval of Loan Agreement with the NH Municipal Bond Bank. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

## 10. Regular Business

### a. Permits & Approvals

#### i. Charitable Exemption for Hero Pups

Finance Director Corey Stevens said following the last meeting, we put the amended articles of incorporation of Hero Pups to our Legal Counsel. She responded that the amended documents should satisfy the State Statutes regarding charitable purpose. It technically should have been done before April 1 for this year but the Board could extend it for 2025 if they so choose.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked how much the exemption was for. Mr. Stevens said it was contingent on a re-evaluation of the property. Mr. Dean said we were told it represented \$4,400 in taxes. Mr.

Papakonstantis proposed approving the exemption without an amount.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the application for a charitable exemption for 18/3 for tax year 2025. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

#### ii. Outdoor Dining Permit Fee Waiver Request – The Inn by the Bandstand/Ambrose Restaurant

Mr. Papakonstantis said the fee for outdoor dining is \$200 per calendar year. Jamie Lopez of Ambrose Restaurant is requesting a prorated fee of \$83.35 for 2025. Mr. Lopez, who was present, said in the fall he invested a great deal of money to put pavers between the buildings and new asphalt in the back. He asks that the Board consider this and partially waive the fees. They are not big fees but it's a matter of principle.

Ms. Belanger said in the application, it lists the months to do this, but there's no start or end date. Mr. Lopez said he'd like to use the outdoor dining space as the weather permits between May and October. Ms. Belanger said she thinks they need an end date like October 31. Ms. Roy said she can work with Pam on the application. Ms. Belanger asked

what times the outdoor dining would occur. Mr. Lopez said 4 - 9 PM 7 days a week. We seat the last patron at 9 so they would be there until they finished. Ms. Belanger asked how access would be blocked off. Mr. Lopez said the section we're looking to use is just the pavers area. Ms. Belanger said she wants to see no one parking in the employee parking during the times it's restricted. Mr. Lopez said he's not aware of that being an issue. We're very clear about parking spaces. Ms. Belanger said she'd like the restricted hours expanded to better accommodate town volunteers attending their meetings.

Mr. Chartrand said putting dining there is wonderful for the town and will publicize the restaurant. The egress for our volunteers is vital. Mr. Lopez said he doesn't plan on obstructing the access.

Mr. Chartrand said Mr. Lopez should ask for a permit year-round so that he can do this weather permitting: from June 1 - December 31. Ms. Belanger said if he does it through the end of the year, there has to be snow removal specified. Mr. Chartrand said there won't be outside dining if there's snow to be removed.

Ms. Roy said Fire didn't sign off on the application. Mr. Dean said they may need to follow up with us.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he would like to see this revised with the exact dates and fee, and with Fire signed off on it, at the next meeting. He said Mr. Lopez does not have to return.

Ms. Gilman said on the application, it talks about lighting and firepits. Are we anticipating anything like that? Mr. Lopez said lighting, not firepits. It will probably be an early evening thing because of bugs.

Ms. Roy said Ms. McElroy got back to her and said this was a request for a fee waiver. If the Board decided on the fee waiver, at that point she would send it around for approval.

The Board tabled this matter until the next meeting.

iii. Linden Street Bridge Bid Approval

DPW Director Steve Cronin said we advertised bids for the Linden Street bridge repair project, and the Board opened the bids at the April 28 Select Board meeting. There was one bid, from NE Infrastructure. We were slightly over our appropriation with the base bid so we reduced the scope: Public Works will have to absorb the cost of bridge rail removal, final paving, and traffic control. We're able to recommend the bid award to New England Infrastructure at \$1,350,000, which is in the available appropriation. Wright-Pierce will provide full-time construction oversight.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to award a contract to NE Infrastructure Incorporated for the Linden Street Bridge Repair Project in the amount of \$1,350,000, and to approve a contract amendment with Wright-Pierce for Construction Phase Engineering Services in the amount of \$113,934, and to further authorize the Town Manager or their designee to sign the associated contract documents. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.



- iv. Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership Stewardship Grant Acceptance

Mr. Dean thanked Conservation & Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy [who was not present] for getting another grant. Mr. Papakonstantis said he'd like to go back 3 years and see how much Dave Sharples and Kristen Murphy have gotten the town in grant money.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Town Manager, or their designee, to execute any and all related agreements for acceptance of the 2025 Great Bay Protection Partnership Stewardship grant funding in the amount of \$2,963. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Roy said Ms. Murphy received the Coastal Adaptation Work Group Champion Award.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint John Delsanto to ZBA as an alternate member, term to expire April 2027. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

- b. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 110/2/11 in the amount of \$229.80 for tax year 2023. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 110/2/111 in the amount of \$425.25 for tax year 2022. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 110/2/111 in the amount of \$381.15 for tax year 2023. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 111/5/10 in the amount of \$194.21 for tax year 2022. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 111/5/10 in the amount of \$221.39 for tax year 2023. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 111/5/4 in the amount of \$438.27 for tax year 2022. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 111/5/4 in the amount of \$395.17 for tax year 2023. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 70/99 in the amount of \$969.56 for tax year 2024. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to deny abatements for 72/183, 64/105/40, 68/6/513, and 87/8/B-15. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he asked for more information on the interest refund for 90/29, but the information was not in the packet. He asked if we can consider this again on June 16.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to table the interest refund request for 90/29. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Regarding the Police Station and Fire Substation, value engineering continues. The design development phase is complete. Dave Sharples will be updating the board at a future meeting.
- ii. Unital's gas main work continues on High Street and Water Street.
- iii. Dump Truck 33 has arrived.
- iv. He signed a grant for the Styrofoam Recycler project
- v. Epping Road widening will begin again in June when school lets out.
- vi. The HR Director position has closed.
- vii. The Senior Coordinator position has been filled.
- viii. Webster Ave Forcemain work has started.
- ix. The Westside Drive bid opening is June 16th.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Mr. Chartrand met with Keith Whitehouse at the Smith-Page conservation area. He also participated in the Memorial Day parade with other Board members, which was an amazing job by Florence Ruffner and the Memorial Day Committee. The Facilities Advisory Committee was scheduled but cancelled; he apologized for not notifying Pam McElroy. He was at the Transfer Station on May 30 to celebrate the opening of the Solar Array.
- ii. Ms. Belanger attended a Rec Advisory meeting. Amanda Kelly who has been working on ADA issues is going to come on July 23. 10 Hampton Road is slightly over budget but she didn't hear details. Mr. Bisson may have to come for more funds. Ms. Roy said she talked to Greg and David today and she thinks we're on budget, but she will look into it again. Ms. Belanger said Planet Playground is open. Two Parks and Rec interns started last week. The Rec Advisory Board is excited about the Senior Coordinator. The ADA van arrived; it's big so they're test-driving it. For the 250th Celebration, they talked about adding trips to historical sites next year. One fundraising idea, a beer garden, has been tabled permanently. There was unanimous support of a town-wide yard sale, possibly in October. Fundraising bricks are a good opportunity.
- iii. Ms. Gilman said the Heritage Commission talked about next steps on surveying the town's history. We could go offsite for another meeting. We

did a presentation of the Pine Street/Elliot Street historical assessment with several residents.

- iv. Mr. Papakonstantis attended the parade and the solar array event. Swasey Park Trustees met and discussed the Coastal Resiliency grant, trees they need to look at, the equipment shed, and electricity.
- v. Ms. Gilman gave an update on State issues.

e. Correspondence

- i. Three letters presented at the solar array
- ii. A memo from the Health Trust on SB 297
- iii. An email sent by a resident regarding a Planning Board issue
- iv. A letter of thanks from St. Vincent de Paul for a Human Services grant
- v. The NHMA Legislative update

11. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are June 16, June 30, July 14, July 28, and Aug 11.

12. Non-Public Session

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

13. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary