

Select Board Meeting
Monday June 30, 2025
7 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 7 PM.

2. Public Comment

- a. Mark Damsell of 10 Newfields Road thanked Exeter Dispatch and Police, and specifically Officer Troy Wise, for handling a recent incident with a propane leak at his house. He added regarding Park Street bridge that the train cars are getting longer and more stacked up. The train now takes 10 - 15 minutes to go by. He thinks Park Street bridge is a vital part of this town so that the ambulance can get to and from the Hospital.

3. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations or recognitions made at this meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: June 16, 2025

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the minutes of June 16, 2025 as presented. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

5. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments made at this meeting.

6. Discussion/Action Items

- a. a. Park Street Bridge Update

Julie Avenant of NHDOT and Public Works Director Steve Cronin were present to discuss the Park Street Bridge.

Ms. Avenant said the inspection reports on the bridge show Railroad ownership in 1999. There were two MOUs created in 2001. The first is from October 2, 2011, between the State and B&M Railroad, where maintenance - but not ownership - was transferred to the State. The second was from the end of October 2001, between the State and the Town. In this MOU, the ownership of the bridge was meant to be transferred from the Railroad to the Town, but we have no record of that transfer occurring. According to CSX, they own this bridge. The closure memo said this is a State-owned bridge, but that was because the State was maintaining the bridge.

45 Ms. Belanger said that's odd. Mr. Cronin said it was a surprise to us as
46 well. There was a Town Meeting action in 2001 where the Town voted to execute
47 the MOU, but the deed was never transferred. The State says that CSX owns the
48 bridge.

49 Ms. Avenant said in spring of 2025, the State issued the closure memo.
50 This is a non-redundant steel-tension member structure, which is fraction-critical.
51 If one element fails, the bridge is at risk of collapse. FHWA [The Federal Highway
52 Administration] has initiated additional inspection requirements for this type of
53 bridge. Three cracked tension members were found during an inspection in
54 February 2025. Immediate closure of the bridge was requested at that time. The
55 Town asked if rehab is an option, but the Chief Bridge Inspector said it's not a
56 candidate for rehabilitation. There could be other cracks in similar locations.

57 The alternative is removal. CSX Railroad reached out to the DOT and
58 requested to remove the bridge and pay for it, saying it was a significant safety
59 hazard. The bridge is a historic resource so there will be environmental and
60 historical permitting. DOT has committed to funding that. It's not anticipated that
61 the town would need to provide funding for removal. Story boards or
62 informational panels could address the historical nature of the bridge.

63 DOT will coordinate with CSX regarding the water line on the bridge. DOT
64 Bridge Design is asking for Town assistance on the removal of that water line.

65 The anticipated timeline for environmental/historic work is 6 months, and
66 then CSX may be ready to begin bridge removal in Spring 2026. Regarding
67 replacement options, part of the MOU was that DOT was going to maintain the
68 bridge for 10 years or until it was rehabilitated or replaced. There was an LPA
69 [Local Public Agency] project on the books, but every time DOT coordinated with
70 the Town it didn't sound like the Town was ready. In 2022, the Town didn't
71 support a replacement project due to two alternative grade crossings within a half
72 mile. If that has changed, we are willing to work with the Town on an LPA project
73 for replacement, with 90% from State funding and 10% from the Town.
74 Regarding vertical clearance, modern standards require 23 feet, so the roadway
75 would need to be raised 3-6 feet to accommodate that vertical profile. Due to the
76 constraints of the roadway approaches, it will be a challenge to raise it. A
77 pedestrian bridge is another option, but funding sources are more geared toward
78 vehicular bridges. There are TAP and CMAP grants which can fund non-
79 motorized uses, but those are competitive funds. She talked to Bureau of Right of
80 Way; this is an unusual situation where the roadway came before the railroad. If
81 the Town is not interested in replacing the bridge, they could discontinue or
82 extinguish the roadway. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if not having the town vote
83 until March would affect the timeline. Ms. Avenant said no, the bridge can be
84 removed without the road being discontinued, although it's highly recommended.

85 Ms. Gilman asked about the water infrastructure. Mr. Cronin said as part
86 of Rose Farm, the developer increased fire flow capacity in that neighborhood.
87 We also replaced the water main on Summer Street. There are water main
88 crossings on either side, so there's redundancy. The fire flow is now sufficient.

89 We don't see an issue with moving the water main, other than funding. We'd
90 want to speak with our consultants about how to terminate the main on either
91 side. Mr. Chartrand asked how much it might cost. Mr. Cronin said he hesitates
92 to put a number on it. If CSX owns it, we are trespassing. We can't find any
93 written agreements. We've maintained and replaced that main, but that's an
94 issue that could arise if we contest ownership.

95 Mr. Papakonstantis asked if funding for these projects is still available.
96 Ms. Avenant said they have not had any changes to our funding. It's funded
97 through 2036.

98 Mr. Cronin asked how long the Town would have to decide on
99 replacement. Does it have to happen immediately? Ms. Avenant said it doesn't
100 have to happen together. In that case you wouldn't discontinue the roadway, just
101 put in safety barriers.

102 Mr. Cronin asked what would happen if the Town decided not to fund the
103 removal of the water main. Ms. Avenant said DOT and CSX would have to
104 discuss that.

105 Mr. Cronin asked how the safety barrier process would work if CSX went
106 ahead and removed the bridge. Ms. Avenant said we can have that discussion,
107 but as a Town right-of-way it would be up to the Town to secure it.

108 Jackie Arquell of 31 Park Street asked what taking the bridge out means.
109 Could it have a level crossing with a barrier? Mr. Cronin said he's hearing from
110 DOT that that responsibility is on the Town. It would take a lot of work with
111 abutters to make a regrading happen. There may be other utility work as well. Mr.
112 Papakonstantis said we'll have to look at all of these options.

113 Mr. Chartrand said as an SB2 town, we only make decisions once a year.
114 We need respect for our form of government from DOT and CSX.

115 Cliff Sinnott of 84 Park Street said in addition to the environmental study
116 and historic preservation study, could there be a traffic impact study and a study
117 on safety response times for not having the bridge there? It's changed the traffic
118 pattern on Salem Street and Oak Street. It's a major connector between 101 and
119 Newfields Road coming west.

120 Tim Miles said the traffic is forcing everyone to come out at the old Exeter
121 Flower Shop/Main Street School, where traffic is always backed up. The road
122 gets down to one lane twice a day.

123 Sally Ward of 72 Park Street said she is not in favor of removal of the
124 bridge. It would negatively impact traffic and safety, and it's a historical part of
125 Park Street. It's not just an inconvenience, it would change the character of the
126 neighborhood and the town. She's concerned because it sounds like CSX has
127 already made a decision. She's deeply distressed at the potential for removal of
128 the bridge.

129 Mark Furlong of 20 Forest Street said he's opposed to removing the
130 bridge. It serves the whole west side of Exeter and the adjacent towns.
131 Sometimes you can't get through downtown because of events or traffic. Having
132 a bridge as opposed to grade crossings is an advantage if there is an incident on

133 the tracks. During the track work when Salem Street Crossing and Main Street
134 crossing were closed, it was nearly impossible to get out of town. According to
135 the bridge inspection report from May of last year, the bridge is eligible for
136 placement on the National Historic register. Ms. Avenant said that would be
137 investigated during the historical mitigation process. Mr. Furlong said he'd like to
138 hear from CSX as well. Mr. Papakonstantis said we will have them at a future
139 meeting.

140 Devon Skerrit of Exeter said he would like this process to engage the
141 public and hear about the repercussions of removing the bridge. Mr. Skerrit's
142 daughter Dana said she attended the Harris Center and MSS, and she
143 remembers using that bridge on walking field trips. It was a shortcut to get to the
144 Main Street Playground.

145 Nicholas Metz of 1 Tilton Ave asked if there is an option for private
146 funding for rehab of the bridge. Ms. Avenant said this is a fracture-critical bridge
147 and not a candidate for rehabilitation. Mr. Metz asked if that would be the case
148 even if every element were replaced. Ms. Avenant said the bridge doesn't meet
149 the modern vertical clearance requirement of 23 feet.

150 Sally Ward said regarding the question of the vertical height standard,
151 what are the potentials for waivers of that standard? Also, can we do additional
152 research on the issue of the MOU and something falling through the cracks? Mr.
153 Papakonstantis said we will exhaust all efforts to get to the bottom of that. Ms.
154 Avenant said the NHDOT bridge design manual says 22 feet 6 inches. 23 feet is
155 the AREMA [American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way
156 Association] standard for Class 1 Railways such as CSX. It would be waiving a
157 national standard. Mr. Cronin said CSX has an interest in being able to pass
158 double-stack trains across the entire corridor. Would 23 feet accommodate that?
159 Ms. Avenant said yes. Mr. Cronin asked if other bridges along this corridor are
160 less than 23 feet. Ms. Avenant said probably; she can look into that.

161 Ms. Belanger said she'd like the railroad to elaborate on how the bridge is
162 a hazard to operations.

163 Mr. Papakonstantis asked how frequently bridges are inspected. Ms.
164 Avenant said twice a year. In February of 2025 the bridge was found to have
165 critical deficiencies. Mr. Cronin said a hole developed over the winter. Ms.
166 Belanger said she'd like to see the inspection prior to the February 2025
167 inspection.

168 Ms. Belanger asked why the memo of March 18 2025 says this is a State-
169 owned bridge. Ms. Avenant said the DOT maintains the bridge, so they came to
170 be listed in that field in the inspection software. There were not separate fields in
171 the software for owner and maintainer.

172 Mr. Cronin asked if CSX has produced anything showing the deeded
173 ownership. Ms. Avenant said we can ask them.

174 Ms. Cowan said she's primarily concerned about safety, although traffic is
175 a concern as well. Mr. Cronin said the new Public Safety station will impact the
176 response time. Fire Chief Justin Pizon said the reason we have a second fire

station is so we could respond from both sides of the track. Police and Ambulance have vehicles that go over the bridge, but Fire Trucks are too heavy.

Emergency Management Director Eric Wilking said our concern is a train derailment. We had a train derailment years ago and it cuts the town in half. With the Public Safety station, there will be an ambulance and Fire Truck on either side, and that would buy us time to take 101.

Ms. Gilman said the Great Dam removal had an archaeological and historical survey done. This area of Town was one of the earliest laid out. Logging businesses used this road. Grade changes occurred because the train came through. For the dam, we installed a blue sign at the bridge and glass etched with a view of the dam at the Library. We also created documentation of its history and removal which is available at the Library. The town should think about what we might want to do to remember the bridge. Residents can come to the Heritage Commission to discuss it.

Kathleen Garifano of Westside Drive said she works at the Hospital, which has gotten rid of their paramedics. It's important to have a road for the ambulances to get around and not wait for the train.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he would like to hear from CSX at a meeting this summer. He'll work with Mr. Cronin on further developments and reach out to the neighborhood regarding when it will be on the agenda again.

b. Pairpoint Park Update

Steve Jones, Chair of the Pairpoint Park Committee, as well as members Amanda Kelly and Jenn Martel, were present to give a presentation on their work. Mr. Jones read the committee's charge:

"Work with the Town Planner, Parks & Recreation Director, Recreation Advisory Board Representative, Heritage Commission Representative, Historic District Commission Representative and Select Board Representative to review the map and specs of the property, including all inspections, and determine all permits that may be required to move forward with a park. Develop a formal public survey for community members to offer public input on park ideas or concepts. Present multiple design concepts and cost options to the Select Board during public meetings. All proposals shall follow Town of Exeter Park guidelines, policies and procedures. Investigate all sources of funding opportunities (grants, donations, funding partners and sponsorships, etc.). Recommend a project timeline, including potential phases of development/construction. Design, plan and construct a public park that will be an integral and essential part of the Town of Exeter's downtown, enjoyed today and for future generations.

Mr. Jones said the site is downtown between Cornicello and the Chocolatier. It's ¼ of an acre and has two easements for those businesses. On the river side, there's an old fish ladder owned by NH Fish and Game but which is no longer in use. There's a significant slope to this property, 6-7 feet over 55 feet. In 1990, two structures which were there burned to the ground. DPW loaded

220 a dump truck with debris, and the remainder was plowed under. It's been
221 unimproved since.

222 Ms. Kelly said regarding the survey, we started with a single question,
223 "What do you want to see in this space?" We put it out through an online survey.
224 We wanted to start with public input. We generated a top 10 list which we used to
225 inform our design process.

226 Ms. Martel said she was in charge of taking the ideas and developing
227 three concepts. She's a professional landscape architect. The biggest challenge
228 was the slope. It needs to be accessible to the entire community, which goes
229 beyond the ADA requirements. The point is to get people close to the river. She
230 discussed the "deck," "shady bosque," and "serpentine" designs. The deck is a
231 big structure on the site; the shady bosque is a terraced option with a ramp; and
232 the serpentine is a winding path down to the retaining wall.

233 Ms. Kelly said in survey 2, we presented those three concepts to
234 determine what people liked best. There were over 500 responses in 15 days. In
235 the results, the shady bosque was the clear preference, by almost 2:1. The top
236 three themes were local flora and fauna, the history of the river, and
237 environmental protection, which are all compatible. People were interested in
238 seating, bench swings, and public art. We haven't decided on these yet. The
239 committee unanimously voted on the shady bosque as the preferred concept.

240 Ms. Martel said in the shady bosque design, you would enter the park in
241 the middle of the parcel, where there would be perhaps a couple of benches.
242 You're brought to a sloped walk which takes a swoop through the site at a 5%
243 slope for ADA accessibility. Area 3 is the bosque or grove, an area that would be
244 a stabilized stone dust surface that is ADA accessible. Three trees would be
245 planted. There would be movable tables and chairs. It's similar to the
246 Luxembourg Gardens in Paris. The bottom is the overlook with views of the river.
247 The inspiration image is a snail shell.

248 Mr. Jones said there are many grant opportunities, although some may
249 be frozen or eliminated. The Land and Water Conservation Fund is
250 independently funded. There are also Community Block grants.

251 Ms. Kelly said we're looking for Select Board approval for the shady
252 bosque and the themes local flora and fauna, the history of the river, and
253 environmental protection. Second, would the Select Board authorize our
254 committee to work on grants and other sources of funding? Third, would the
255 Select Board authorize our committee to solicit donations? We would need
256 construction documents for grants, budget, and timeline; would the Select Board
257 authorize a \$40,000 CIP budget item for park design and engineering? The
258 Committee would attempt to raise \$5,000 to defray that cost. At the next meeting,
259 we will discuss fundraising as our number one goal. Some grants may require a
260 match.

261 Ms. Belanger asked Mr. Dean if there is money in the Parks budget for a
262 matching fund. Mr. Dean said no. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if there could be a

warrant article for matching funds contingent on receiving the grant. Mr. Dean said yes.

Mr. Chartrand said a constituent asked if the vision for this park is dog-accessible. Mr. Jones said this came up on both surveys. A vocal fraction of respondents want dog-accessible parks. That is a question that goes beyond Pairpoint Park and is on the Town to answer. Ms. Roy said most of our parks prohibit dogs. None of the materials in the plan appear to be an open grass area that would be appropriate for dogs. Ms. Cowan said if we're including tables and you're not meant to have a picnic blanket or kids crawling around on the grass, she thinks maybe dogs could be there if leashed. Mr. Chartrand said it's a good policy, but we might want to make this an exception. This would be a natural resting place for people walking dogs downtown. Ms. Martell said there's no grass run here. It's just a seating area. It wouldn't be easy to enforce not having them there. Ms. Roy said we can discuss this with Greg [Bisson] and see if there's a huge push to have more access for dogs. There are maintenance issues involved. Ms. Cowan said she doesn't want this area to become gross. Ms. Kelly said in the public survey, people mentioned wanting a real dog park. If they want a dog park, she thinks they should come to the Select Board and start that initiative.

Ms. Belanger thanked the committee for their work.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked the Board what they thought of the concepts. The Board agreed they have no problem with the ideas presented.

Ms. Roy said Swasey Parkway may also be a target for LWCF funding; it would be preferable if the committees could not compete against each other. She asked regarding the committee is asking for donations, is it for Phase 1 of design and engineering? Ms. Kelly said the donations to design and construct would be one pot of money.

Mr. Chartrand thanked Elliot Berkowitz and Nancy Phillips for donating this land.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Advisory Committee to move forward with the concept and theme of the shady bosque design, and to further authorize the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Advisory Committee to work with Town Officials to pursue grants to design and construct the park according to the approved vision; and further authorize the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Advisory Committee to work with Town Officials to solicit and accept donations under the Town of Exeter donation policy. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis said we don't make motions regarding the CIP, there's a budget process. He would like the committee to work with Town staff to create a CIP item. Mr. Chartrand said it's the Planning Board that kicks off the CIP process, not the Select Board.

c. Radiological Emergency Response Plan

Emergency Management Director Eric Wilking was present to discuss this response plan. What's left of FEMA has requested that we formally adopt the radiological emergency response plan. We've been using it for 30+ years, updating it six or seven times, and it has never needed formal adoption until now. The plan addresses the ability of the Town of Exeter to provide a rapid and integrated response to any emergency at Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant. The plan describes our response and our integration into the overall State and Federal response. In an emergency, most command and control functions are at the State level. The local level would implement traffic diversions, etc. There are 17 communities in the EPZ. He reviewed the plan and sent two small edits to the State, but it's not a diversion from what we've used in the past.

Ms. Belanger said she doesn't see a role for the Select Board in the plan. The Town Manager is advised of what is happening, would it be their role to inform the Select Board? Mr. Wilking said because of the form of government we have, the Town Manager manages the daily operations of the town. He is the leader of that response. Decisions are made collaboratively by Police, Fire, and the Town Manager. There's a seat at the table for any and all members of the Select Board, but in an incident the Town Manager is the leader. Ms. Belanger said she wants a plan for the Select Board to be advised. Ms. Roy said in our emergency drill binders we talk about contacting the Board.

Ms. Belanger said regarding training, do we have a training plan? Mr. Wilking said following an initial training, the ongoing training has been targeted to specific individuals. There could be another training paid for by the State. Fire Chief Justin Pizon said we do run drills every 18 months. We use the State resources for that. It's required by law.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to adopt the updated radiological emergency response plan. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

d. DPW Projects Update

Public Works Director Steve Cronin was present to give an update on Public Works projects.

Mr. Cronin said regarding Westside Drive, we opened construction bids at the June 16th Select Board meeting. There were two bidders for that project, which are currently being evaluated. We have a small funding gap we're trying to close. We have a meeting scheduled with the contractor before July 3rd to finalize those details. We will make a recommendation for award at the July 14 meeting. We plan on beginning construction this year, in late summer or early fall. The two bids were dramatically different, with about \$1.5M difference between the two. There are three different funding sources: the General Fund, the Clean Water SRF [State Revolving Fund], and the Drinking Water SRF.

Nicholas Metz of 1 Tilton Ave said patience is wearing thin. We have children going to hospitals after falling in potholes. We have requests for the potholes to be filled. We need to move on this as quickly as possible. Mr. Chartrand said he's driven through and it's terrible. We have a form of

350 government where funding can come up short when what voters approved
351 doesn't cover it. Mr. Cronin said the bidding climate has been very challenging.
352 We extended the bid time by two weeks and reached out directly to contractors.
353 We went through something similar with Linden Street and Webster Ave.

354 Adam Harbrick of 2 Blanche Lane said if it starts in late summer/early fall,
355 what is the paving timeline? Mr. Cronin said this project is more than a full
356 construction season. We have bid items in the contract to put down another
357 surface to get it through the winter season.

358 Mr. Cronin said the Drinkwater Road project started July 11 [stet] with
359 installation of binder and levelling course, and installed raised structures in
360 preparation for a final coat. We'll be setting granite curb and drainage system
361 over the next few weeks. Regarding the parking, we are going to narrow the
362 travel lane to a consistent width of 10 feet, which will create some additional
363 shoulder. The Chief of Police told the Board he intended to apply for a grant for
364 speed feedback signs. We installed turtle crossing signs there and will look at
365 additional pavement markings. A request came in for a section of High Street,
366 and we will top that at the same time as Drinkwater Road.

367 Mr. Cronin said we awarded a contract for Linden Street Bridge and had a
368 preconstruction meeting. Construction will begin July 7. We will put out detour
369 signage and route notices. We anticipate the bridge being closed from July 7 to
370 November 20. We don't expect impact to recycling pickup or local deliveries. We
371 will be communicating with abutters.

372 Regarding the Epping Road widening, there will be construction activity
373 June 23 through August, with flaggers during work hours. Expect traffic delays
374 throughout the summer. We have been in touch with NH DOT about a pedestrian
375 crossing at Continental Drive.

376 The Webster Ave Pump Station and Forcemain replacement was ahead
377 of schedule but we had a change in our Project Manager. Building construction
378 activities are nearing completion but the forcemain work has been delayed.

379 Septage receiving is operational this month, which is bringing in additional
380 revenue.

381 Regarding the Pine/Linden/Front Street roundabout, final designs are
382 nearly complete. Until relocated the utility poles. Sewer and drainage repair will
383 begin in late July. We will be having an abutters meeting.

384 Regarding the new groundwater source on Drinkwater Road, our
385 consultants submitted a final report to DES. Kensington had to be notified and
386 requested a public hearing, which is scheduled for July 23. We had a meeting
387 with Underwood today, and there will be a progress meeting July 25. We're on
388 schedule to bid that project in the fall. We're hoping to break ground before the
389 end of the year.

390 The Surface Water Treatment Plan conceptual design is ongoing. The
391 pilot study consultant will do a treatment technology pilot study in September at
392 the existing site on Portsmouth Ave.

393 The School Street area project had a neighborhood meeting in March. In
394 June we had a CCTV inspection of the sewer system. There will be a second
395 neighborhood meeting this summer.

396 Unutil has completed the gas main replacement work on Water and High
397 Streets. Work on High Street that was supposed to follow has been delayed due
398 to Unutil working on a PEA project.

399
400 7. Regular Business

401 a. Permits & Approvals

402 i. Swasey Parkway Resilience Grant Acceptance

403 Public Works Director Steve Cronin was present to discuss the
404 grant. Mr. Papakonstantis said the Swasey Parkway Committee looked at
405 proposals. Mr. Cronin said CMA captured the public spirit the best. We
406 were short by \$2,500 but we modified the scope to not include a survey.

407 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to award a contract to CMA Engineers for the development of a
408 community-centered approach for enhancing climate resilience at Exeter Swasey Parkway in
409 the amount of \$20,000. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

410
411 ii. Atlantic Fuels Fire – Unanticipated Revenue

412 Fire Chief Justin Pizon was present to discuss this matter. Chief
413 Cronin said in January 2024, there was a fire in Epping. Three of our
414 members had their gear saturated in fuel oil, which we can't get rid of; we
415 had to dispose of the gear. We filed an insurance claim with Primex,
416 which was denied. The Seacoast Technical Response Team filed suit
417 against Atlantic Fuels and they settled out of court. We received a check
418 a few weeks ago. Our PFAS-free gear is scheduled to be delivered in
419 September. We got a discount for making a bulk purchase. We can still
420 add some sets to our existing order. We are asking the Board to accept
421 the unanticipated revenue of \$11,717.80 and allow the FD to apply the
422 funds to three sets of gear.

423 Ms. Belanger asked how the three sets were paid for, and Chief
424 Pizon said we took it out of the protective equipment line in our budget.
425 Every year we schedule to replace 7 sets. It will last for 10 years but we
426 only run it for 5 years front-line. We want to get everyone out of the
427 PFAS-containing gear.

428 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the unanticipated revenue from the Atlantic Fuels fire
429 settlement in the amount of \$11,717.80. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

430
431 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to utilize the unanticipated revenue of \$11,717.80 to go towards
432 the purchase of three additional PFAS-free gear in the current bulk order. Ms. Gilman
433 seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Chief Pizon mentioned in response to the resident's concern regarding the Park Street Bridge, Exeter has its own paramedics and doesn't rely on the Hospital for that service.

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 60/9 in the amount of \$103.18 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 110/2/105 in the amount of \$133.38 [stet] for tax year 2023. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve a selected cut for 91/42. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

i. Tax interest waiver request

Mr. Dean said this request came from a resident looking for an interest waiver on a tax bill due to financial hardship. Mr. Chartrand asked if we can make the waiver dependent on clearing up the bill. Mr. Papakonstantis said the interest continues to accrue. Mr. Chartrand said it will continue to build, so we should take this up when it's resolved. Mr. Dean said the motion could reflect the understanding that the amount of the waiver would change at settlement. Mr. Chartrand suggested going forward, we should do this only when we have the payment in hand.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize a waiver of \$1,597.76 interest for 95/64/37. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

ii. MS-535 Approval

1. Mr. Dean said this is a report of expenditures from 2024.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration MS-535 financial report of the budget for the period ending 12/31/24, and further authorize the Select Board to sign. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Town Manager's Report

- i. There is a holiday on July 4th, and the Town Offices will be closed that day. Trash pickup will be delayed to Saturday.
- ii. HB475 was passed but not signed; this modifies the calculation of default budgets. Positions left vacant for more than a year must be removed from default budgets. It requires default budgets to exclude one-time expenditures, which contradicts existing laws. It forbids budget and salary increases, limiting the ability of the Select Board to compensate employees. Ms. Gilman suggested having the Assistant Town Manager write a letter on our behalf saying this would not be beneficial. The Board agreed.

- 479 iii. SB213, electioneering by public employees, implements a misdemeanor
480 offense for employees who act to influence any voter. Ms. Belanger
481 asked about Department Heads talking about warrant articles at
482 Deliberative Sessions. Mr. Dean said we'll have to get legal guidance on
483 that. It calls into question our factsheet process as well. Ms. Roy said
484 we've always said "educate, not advocate," but now we have to figure out
485 whether even educating is off-limits.
- 486 iv. Mr. Papakonstantis asked about air conditioning at the Town Offices. Are
487 employees ok? Ms. Roy said we have individual air conditioners in
488 offices. DPW is waiting for a certain part.
- 489
- 490 c. Select Board Committee Reports
- 491 i. Ms. Gilman said she attended the Facilities committee with Mr.
492 Chartrand. Dave Sharples interviewed three candidates for a grant-
493 funded job doing survey work for the HDC. We decided on one and will
494 come back to the Board with the contract. On June 11, the NH
495 Preservation Alliance presented an award for exceptional preservation
496 work. The Heritage Commission nominated John Merkel for his
497 preservation work, and he was chosen.
- 498 ii. Ms. Belanger said the Arts & Culture and Rec Advisory Board were both
499 cancelled. At the Planning Board, Foss Motors came for a design review
500 proposal to demolish the existing building and construct a new dealership.
501 That passed design review, so they will come back with their plans. John
502 Grueter is the new Clerk. At Rec Advisory, Greg Bisson said the pool and
503 camp are going strong. Planet Playground should be completed on June
504 29. They will pick Friday in mid to late July to celebrate. 10 Hampton
505 Road has a new roof and windows, and mechanical work started this
506 week. The new Senior Coordinator started two weeks ago; her name is
507 Laurie Dee. Fundraising Bricks are still available.
- 508 iii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- 509 iv. Mr. Chartrand said he attended the Facilities Committee and the informal
510 Train Committee.
- 511 v. Mr. Papakonstantis said he attended the Pairpoint Park Committee and
512 Swasey Parkway Trustee meeting.
- 513
- 514 d. Correspondence
- 515 i. Notice that trash and recycling will be delayed for July 4.
- 516 ii. Notice of a Styrofoam recycling event on July 19.
- 517 iii. Letter from Xfinity regarding automatic payments
- 518 iv. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin
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- 520 8. Review Board Calendar
- 521 a. The next meetings are July 14, July 28, August 11, August 18, Tuesday
522 September 2, September 15, and September 29.

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9. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91A3II (a) and (b). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0, and the meeting entered non-public at 9:36 PM. At 10:07 PM Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public session. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0. Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until the situation is resolved. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to adjourn. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary