

Select Board Meeting  
Monday November 10, 2025  
6 PM  
Nowak Room, Town Offices  
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Vice-Chair Molly Cowan, Clerk Nancy Belanger, Dan Chartrand, and Interim Town Manager Melissa Roy were present at this meeting. Julie Gilman was absent. 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). Mr. Chartrand seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0. The Board entered non-public at 6:00 PM.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes until all matters discussed have been resolved. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

The Board exited non-public at 7:00 PM.

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7:05 PM

3. Bid Opening - 2026 Downtown Mobile Vending

a. Mr. Papakonstantis opened a bid from Clyde's Cupcakes for \$2,500.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to refer the 2026 downtown Exeter mobile food vending proposal from Clyde's Cupcakes to the Town Manager's Office to perform their due diligence. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

4. Public Comment

a. Keith Whitehouse of Westside Drive said the Westside Drive project is underway and people in the neighborhood are excited. Last week he spent seven days on the bridge in a beaver costume to raise awareness about Pairpoint Park. Not many people know much about it, so we ordered a sign from Staples to inform people. He'd like to put the park on the agenda in the near future.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Budget Recommendations Committee will have their CIP review night next week, where they will be reviewing the proposal for the design of Pairpoint Park. It will come back to the Select Board in December. Once we know their recommendation, he will talk with Mr. Whitehouse offline and talk about having him come back.

45 5. Proclamations/Recognitions

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

47  
48 6. Approval of Minutes

- 49 a. Regular Meeting: October 27, 2025

- 50 i. Corrections: Ms. Belanger said line 323 read "The Planning Board heard  
51 an application for 25-3 from Kayleigh Associates," but it should say case  
52 #25-3 and J Caley Associates for 97 Portsmouth Ave. Also, line 324  
53 should say "applicant" not "applicants".

54 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Select Board minutes of October 27, 2025 as  
55 amended. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Ms. Cowan did not vote as she was not present on October  
56 27. The motion passed 3-0.

57  
58 7. Appointments

- 59 a. Library Trustees Mid-Cycle Appointment

60 Mr. Papakonstantis said per RSA 202-A:10, the Select Board has the  
61 authority to appoint a Library Trustee until the next election. The Trustees  
62 recommended that the Board appoint Laura Wyskiel, a former Trustee who is  
63 willing to come back and serve.

64 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Laura Wyskiel as Interim Library Trustee effective  
65 immediately, to serve until the next municipal election or until a permanent appointment is made  
66 in accordance with RSA 202-A:10. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

- 67  
68 b. Planning Board Representative to Rockingham Planning Commission –

69 Mr. Papakonstantis said we have a letter from Planning Board Chair Lang  
70 Plumer recommending Marty Kennedy to fill Pete Cameron's spot.

71 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Marty Kennedy as Planning Board Representative to  
72 the Rockingham Planning Commission, effective immediately. Ms. Cowan seconded. The  
73 motion passed 4-0.

74  
75 8. Discussion/Action Items

- 76 a. Interim Town Manager Authorization – Melissa Roy, Interim Town Manager

- 77 i. Mr. Papakonstantis said this appointment will make things official.

78 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the interim Town Manager, Assistant Town  
79 Manager, or Select Board Chair to authorize documents in the Town Manager's absence. Mr.  
80 Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

- 81  
82 b. 2nd Public Hearing - RSA 41:14-a Groundwater Easement –

83 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing under RSA 41:14a, Groundwater  
84 Easement. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

85 Public Works Director Stephen Cronin was present to discuss the easement. Mr.  
86 Cronin said we had comments from the Conservation Commission regarding language  
87 in reference to water withdrawal rights. Counsel has finalized the proposed revisions and  
88 we sent it to PEA. They reviewed it and agreed, and we've forwarded the revised deed

89 to DES, which has reviewed and approved it. We feel that we've addressed the  
90 concerns of the various Boards about the deed. The next steps are to finalize the  
91 acquisition and proceed with executing the easement deed and recording it, then send it  
92 back to DES for final permit approval.

93 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.  
94

95 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing for the Groundwater Easement. Mr.  
96 Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.  
97

98 Mr. Cronin said at the next Select Board meeting, he'll request a formal  
99 vote of approval.  
100

101 c. Police Department Recruitment Incentives

102 Police Chief Stephan Poulin was present to discuss this request. Chief  
103 Poulin said when hiring a Police Officer, the benefits of hiring someone  
104 previously certified are vast regarding experience, training time, and training cost.  
105 We're looking to become more equal with surrounding departments who offer  
106 hiring bonuses for certified officers. Surrounding towns offer \$10,000 or \$15,000.

107 Ms. Roy said we're balancing our current force by not bringing in new  
108 people who need to be in the Academy. People are being offered cash to go  
109 other places. She supports this. We would fund this from unfunded positions.

110 Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the resources needed to train someone  
111 new to policing and whether it would balance out with the hiring bonus. Ms. Roy  
112 said it may not be dollar for dollar, but it's also a department member's training  
113 time, which is overtime. She thinks it would be close to balancing out.

114 Chief Poulin said this is about balance. People who have never been a  
115 Police Officer before are also valuable to the town. He would like to see half of  
116 new hires be certified. New Officers get 3 months of training versus 6 weeks for a  
117 certified person.

118 Mr. Chartrand said he's in favor. We've spent a lot of time and money to  
119 recruit and retain, and this is one more effort towards that.

120 Ms. Belanger said she's in favor of this. She heard in the Budget meeting  
121 what the Department is up against, and we need this.

122 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Town of Exeter to offer a \$15,000 sign-on  
123 bonus to New Hampshire Certified full-time Police Officers or out-of-State certified full time  
124 Police Officers from a recognized peace officer standards and training academy: \$5,000 at the  
125 first pay period of employment, \$5,000 after successful completion of the Department's field  
126 training program and the first six months of employment; and \$5,000 to be paid at the last pay  
127 period prior to successfully completing the probationary period, which is typically one year. Ms.  
128 Cowan seconded. The motion passed 4-0.  
129

130 d. Police Station/Fire Substation Construction Management Contract

131 Finance Director Corey Stevens was present to discuss this contract. Mr.  
132 Stevens said we're finalizing the construction management contract with Eckman

133 Construction for the Police Station and Fire Substation. This is based on 75%  
134 construction document completion. Eckman has gotten a feel for what the project  
135 is going to cost, but we won't know the exact number until we get the 100%  
136 drawings and get bids. We have an appropriation of \$17.5M, and a \$560,000  
137 grant for the project. We have no intention of going over those amounts.

138 Ms. Belanger asked what contingencies there are and what's covered.  
139 Are we covered through Primex? Mr. Stevens said with the siphons, we were on  
140 a time and materials contract, so the price kept going up, until we did the fixed  
141 bid. The site work represents the biggest variable for this project. Eckman  
142 intends to go with a site contractor who will give an "unclassified" contract with a  
143 fixed price. There could still be issues depending on what they find, but the  
144 natural elements of the site would be covered.

145 Mr. Chartrand said previously we did design-bid-build, but now we're  
146 doing design-build. Is that because we've had previous projects that go  
147 overbudget after being finalized, but with the design-build process they haven't  
148 been finalized yet? Mr. Stevens said he doesn't remember why we did design-  
149 build rather than design-bid-build for this project. Ms. Roy said at the time we  
150 were making these decisions we had had some projects come in substantially  
151 overbudget. This format allows the design and construction team to work  
152 together, knowing that we have a maximum budget number. That does require  
153 some value engineering. The project went from 23,000 square feet to 19,700  
154 square feet. We're doing that with the Architect and the Construction team.

155 Mr. Chartrand said this is a superior approach if it avoids going back to  
156 the voters.

157 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Interim Town Manager Melissa Roy to execute  
158 any and all documents related to the construction management contract with Eckman  
159 Construction Company, not to exceed \$15,626,567. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion  
160 passed 4-0.

161  
162 Mr. Stevens said there were four amendments to the Architect's contract  
163 that weren't in the original scope.

164  
165 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Interim Town Manager to execute contract  
166 amendment #2 with TGAS Architects for topographical resurvey services. Ms. Cowan  
167 seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

168  
169 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize Interim Town Manager to execute the Interim Town  
170 Manager to execute contract amendment #3 with TGAS Architects for wetlands delineation and  
171 site plan modification services. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

172  
173 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize Interim Town Manager to authorize the Interim  
174 Town Manager to execute contract amendment #4 with TGAS Architects for the Owner-side  
175 design and engineering services of a solar canopy. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed  
176 4-0.

- 177
- 178 e. Police Station/Fire Substation Project Notification – Melissa Roy, Interim Town
- 179 Manager
- 180 Ms. Roy said any municipal building project may be exempt from its own
- 181 town policies on going to the Planning Board and Select Board. We went to the
- 182 Planning Board Thursday night. This is a formal notification that we're building
- 183 the Police Station and Fire Substation and the Board may request a formal
- 184 hearing. Even without a formal hearing, we'll keep coming back to report to the
- 185 Board and community at large.
- 186 Ms. Belanger asked if the Planning Board were fine with this. Ms. Roy
- 187 said yes. We will go back in January when we have the 100% construction
- 188 documents. We didn't need to go through the full Planning Board process and
- 189 they were ok with that.
- 190 Mr. Papakonstantis said Ms. Roy has done an excellent job updating the
- 191 Board and the public on this project.
- 192 Ms. Belanger abstained from the Planning Board vote. The rest of the
- 193 Board agreed to waive the formal hearing.
- 194
- 195 f. State/Federal Grants Update – Corey Stevens, Finance Director
- 196 Mr. Stevens gave an update on outstanding federal grants. He removed
- 197 the SRF loans that we have forgiveness on, as the State has been upholding
- 198 those obligations. We're keeping an eye on the solar array and credit in 2026.
- 199 We're working with Revision to get the data required for the tax return we'll file.
- 200 We haven't heard anything on the Railroad Ave intersection improvements TAP
- 201 grant, but no news is good news. There's one new grant application for the Train
- 202 Station Improvements plan design, a Federal Grant for \$800,000.
- 203
- 204 9. Regular Business
- 205 a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions
- 206 i. There were no abatements or credits considered at this meeting.
- 207
- 208 b. Permits & Approvals
- 209 Mr. Stevens said he's looking for approval of the Tax Warrant for the
- 210 December bills. The Deputy Tax Collector can give the green light to the printing
- 211 company tomorrow to print the bills. Mr. Chartrand said not all of the \$35M is
- 212 going to the Town of Exeter. Mr. Stevens said 24% or \$8.4M is town money, and
- 213 the rest goes to the schools, the county, or the State.
- 214 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the second half property tax bills for 2025 in the
- 215 amount of \$35,980,276. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.
- 216
- 217 Mr. Stevens said the Town Manager is the tax collector in Exeter. When a
- 218 Town Manager leaves and a new one is put in their place, we need to recommit
- 219 the outstanding receivables to the new tax collector. Our auditors performed
- 220 agreed-upon procedures to reconcile outstanding receivables at the point when

the Board appointed Ms. Roy as the Tax Collector, September 2nd. There are two additional warrants to approve.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Recommittal Warrant for Property Taxes having uncollected property taxes of \$803,207.27 and unredeemed tax liens of \$809,711.85 as of September 2nd, 2025. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Recommittal Warrant for Land Use Change Taxes having uncollected taxes of \$5,000 as of September 2nd, 2025. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Ms. Roy said the new tax rate has been set at 18.76 per thousand. Only 28 cents of that is the municipal portion of the tax rate.
- ii. For sustainability reasons, we are only placing a printing request of 500 copies of our annual town report, instead of 600 copies.
- iii. The Westside Drive project is starting.
- iv. She attended ICMA [the International City/County Management Association conference] in Tampa last week.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger said the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission met for the first time since March. They talked about meeting with the Swasey Parkway Trustees to look for a space in Swasey Park for a sculpture. They also discussed a Town Hall digital sign. She asked them to reach out to Doug Eastman because it's a Historic District area. She attended the Budget Recommendations Committee meetings on October 29 and November 5. At the Planning Board meeting, a lot line adjustment with the Society of Cincinnati was approved. There was a conceptual review of a redevelopment of 65-67 ½ Main Street, with no vote. Case 25-3 for J Caley and Associates in the MUND was denied. Some members of the public spoke at the Planning Board meeting, and she suggested they come to the Select Board for public comment. There's a proposed CIP for the Master Plan update. Mr. Chartrand agreed that general comments about town planning don't belong in the land use process, they should come to the Select Board.
- ii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- iii. Mr. Chartrand attended the Budget Recommendations Committee meetings on October 29 and November 5. He participated in a Great Bay Changemakers program at Town Hall and made a pitch to citizens to get involved with local government.
- iv. Mr. Papakonstantis met with a resident who had been communicating with him about their neighborhood, along with Steve Cronin. He thinks we walked away with the citizen feeling like we're looking into their concerns.

265 The E911 Committee discussed street changes that will come before the  
266 Board. He also attended the November 5th BRC meeting.

267  
268 e. Correspondence

- 269 i. A memo to local welfare associates regarding SNAP benefits.  
270

271 10. Review Board Calendar

- 272 a. The next Board meetings are November 24, December 8, December 22, and  
273 January 5. The Budget Hearing is Tuesday January 20.  
274

275 11. Other Business

- 276 a. Ms. Belanger said Exeter will be on PBS on Thursday November 13 at 9 PM.  
277 b. Mr. Papakonstantis said the Town Office is closed tomorrow for Veterans Day.  
278 He thanked Veterans for their service.  
279

280 12. Non-Public Session

- 281 a. There was no non-public session at this time.  
282

283 13. Adjournment

284 **MOTION:** Ms. Cowan moved to adjourn. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0. The  
285 meeting was adjourned at 8 PM.  
286

287 Respectfully Submitted,  
288 Joanna Bartell  
289 Recording Secretary  
290  
291  
292  
293