

1 Select Board Meeting  
2 Monday March 16, 2026  
3 6:45 PM  
4 Nowak Room, Town Offices  
5 Draft Minutes  
6

7 1. Call Meeting to Order

8 Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Clerk Nancy Belanger, Julie Gilman, Dan  
9 Chartrand, and Interim Town Manager Melissa Roy were present at this meeting. Vice-Chair  
10 Molly Cowan was present remotely via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Mr.  
11 Papakonstantis at 6:45 PM.  
12

13 2. Board Interviews

- 14 a. Elaine Hays for the Planning Board & Recreation Advisory Board  
15

16 The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7 PM.  
17

18 3. Swear In Town Officers

- 19 a. Town Moderator Kate Miller swore in Andrea Kohler as Town Clerk.  
20 b. Town Clerk Andrea Kohler swore in returning Board members Dan Chartrand  
21 and Nancy Belanger, as well as the new and returning Board, Committee, and  
22 Commission members.  
23

24 4. Select Board Reorganization

25 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger nominated Niko Papakonstantis as Chair. Mr. Chartrand seconded. In a  
26 roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.  
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28 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger nominated Molly Cowan as Vice-Chair. Mr. Chartrand seconded. In a  
29 roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.  
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31 **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand nominated Nancy Belanger as Clerk. Ms. Cowan seconded. In a roll  
32 call vote, the motion passed 5-0.  
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34 5. Public Comment

- 35 a. There was no public comment at this time.  
36

37 6. Proclamations/Recognitions

- 38 a. There were no proclamations or recognitions at this time.  
39

40 7. Approval of Minutes

- 41 a. Regular Meeting: March 2, 2026

42 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger made a motion to accept the March 2, 2026 meeting minutes as  
43 presented. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Ms. Cowan abstained. In a roll call vote, the motion passed  
44 4-0.

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Ms. Cowan left the meeting at this time.

8. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments made.

9. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Public Hearing – Grant Acceptance – Street Tree Program – Kristen Murphy

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of the public hearing:

*Notice is hereby given that the Select Board of the Town of Exeter will hold a public hearing in the Nowak Room, 10 Front Street, Exeter beginning at 7:00 PM on the 16th day of March 2026, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of RSA 31:95-b,III(a) for the following: Acceptance of Piscataqua Regions Estuaries Partnership Climate Impact Grant in the amount of \$25,000 granted to the Exeter Planning Department to be used for a street tree planting program and associated outreach and education program.*

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Town Natural Resources Planner Kristen Murphy was present via Zoom to discuss this grant. Ms. Murphy said the purpose of the grant is to make significant contributions to mitigate urban heat. She applied for this grant to fund the planting of 28 street trees and install three educational kiosks and eight sidewalk placards. This will be known as the “Exeter Heat Relief Program,” and will be a two-year project. We will be hosting community events as well.

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

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for a list of all the grants that Kristen Murphy has pursued and received at a future meeting.

**MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the Piscataqua Regions Estuaries Partnership Climate Impact Grant in the amount of \$25,000 and to further authorize the Interim Town Manager, or their designee, to execute any and all related agreements for acceptance of this grant funding. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

- b. Public Hearing – Grant Acceptance – CLG Grant – Julie Gilman

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of the public hearing:

*Notice is hereby given that the Select Board of the Town of Exeter will hold a public hearing in the Nowak Room, 10 Front Street, Exeter beginning at 7:00 PM on the 16th day of March 2026, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of RSA 31:95-b,III(a) for the following: Acceptance of Department of Natural and*

89 *Cultural Resources, Division of Historical Resources Grant in the amount of*  
90 *\$25,000.*

91  
92 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion  
93 passed 4-0.

94  
95 Ms. Gilman said we were also awarded this grant last year at \$20,000, to  
96 document the resources along the High Street historic district.

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

98 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing, Mr. Chartrand seconded. The  
99 motion passed 4-0.

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101 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for a list of all the grants that Dave Sharples has  
102 gotten at a future meeting.

103 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the Historical Resources grant from the Department of  
104 Natural and Cultural Resources in the amount of \$25,000, and to further authorize the Interim  
105 Town Manager, or their designee, to execute any and all related agreements for this grant. Ms.  
106 Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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108 c. 2026 Election Results – Kate Miller, Moderator

109 Attorney Miller gave a summary of the election results. The total number  
110 of Town voters is now 12,510, with a few new registrations at the election. Voters  
111 were cooperative and in good humor. We had great volunteers and are looking  
112 for more. We were using a new accessible voting system for those who have  
113 difficulty reading or marking a ballot. There's a private booth with computer  
114 assistance to mark the ballot. We've been doing accessible voting for years, but  
115 this was new equipment. We had new ballot counting machines that took a little  
116 getting used to. They take a little more time to accept the ballots. They handled  
117 the write-in ballots well and had some nice breakdowns of different aspects of the  
118 ballots.

119 Mr. Chartrand asked if there were fewer people registering at this election  
120 than previously. Attorney Miller said there were 53 new voters at the election.  
121 The higher document requirement was for absentee ballots. Previously folks  
122 didn't have to prove their identity, they only had to sign the absentee ballot. New  
123 registrants have always had to show proof of citizenship, with a passport or birth  
124 certificate, as well as proof of domicile showing you reside in the town, and a  
125 photo ID. Mr. Chartrand asked if Phillips Exeter students can register. Attorney  
126 Miller said there are bills to limit the types of photo ID that show identity. In the  
127 past, any student ID with photos and birthdate were valid. Ms. Gilman said  
128 there's trying to disallow college ID cards and change the definition of domicile  
129 and residence.

130 Attorney Miller said in the next two elections, voters will need to choose a  
131 Democratic or Republican ballot, which will change their registration from  
132 "undeclared" to that party. They can change this back at the election after voting.

133 If the voter is already registered with a party, changes have to be made 10 days  
134 prior to the election.

135 Mr. Papakonstantis asked Attorney Miller to come back in August to walk  
136 people through the process.

137

138 d. Pairpoint Park Resident Proposal – Keith Whitehouse

139 Mr. Chartrand recused himself from this discussion item.

140 Mr. Whitehouse said he was at Pairpoint Park today breaking up the  
141 snow. He talked to John Bell last Monday and he's on board if we decide to go  
142 forward. It means a lot to him to do everything he can to make this Town a better  
143 place. He wants people to get outside. He's not working against the Pairpoint  
144 Committee, which he is on, he's working for them. He wants to get this open to  
145 have fundraising on site. We should start on the design which we've spent so  
146 much time doing. We have \$18K on deposit and another \$11K in the mail. He's  
147 talked to 80-90 people. He sees a lot of opportunities if we can get this open  
148 before the 250th celebrations.

149 Mr. Papakonstantis said Mr. Whitehouse has brought attention to  
150 Pairpoint Park and helped with the fundraising. He agrees about having more  
151 access to public land.

152 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment.

153 Amanda Kelly of 24 Prospect Street, who is a member of the Pairpoint  
154 Park Committee, said we're on track to fill the hole this fall if everything goes  
155 well. She applauds Mr. Whitehouse's evolution on this process and thinks this  
156 will be close to the plan that ends up happening. There was a discussion on June  
157 26 that the whole committee had, and 9 members recommended unanimously  
158 not to fill the hole until the Engineer recommends what fill to use. It's not prudent  
159 to move forward without the construction documents. We're really close with the  
160 fundraising for that piece. We're talking about the RFP for the construction  
161 documents. She'd prefer to focus on the action items they've laid out as a  
162 committee.

163 Mr. Whitehouse said there's nothing to disagree with there, but he's  
164 saying this can be done in two weeks by someone who is an Engineer. He won't  
165 take any of the money we've raised. He'd like to make some progress now.

166 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for further public comment, but there was  
167 none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

168 Ms. Belanger said she admires Mr. Whitehouse coming back about this  
169 so many times, but she wants to follow the process we've put forward.

170 Mr. Sharples said there are concerns about what's out there, such as  
171 water mains or gas lines. We don't know what's underneath there because it was  
172 a burned building. He heard that the DPW stamped organic and burnt materials  
173 down into the site. To open to the public, it would need to be to code and  
174 accessible. Mr. Whitehouse said we would do that. Mr. Sharples said he has yet  
175 to see a plan for ADA accessibility. The slope is a 10% grade which is difficult to  
176 make safe. You need to have hardscape to have accessibility, not loam or stone

177 dust. Mr. Whitehouse said Amanda agreed to help him create ADA access. This  
178 would be a temporary thing to open our land to our public. He asked Mr.  
179 Sharples about his timeframe for the opening of the park. Mr. Sharples said he  
180 couldn't say. Mr. Papakonstantis said there's fundraising and grants to be done.  
181 It's premature to say when it could be open. Mr. Whitehouse said it could be a  
182 number of years.

183 Ms. Belanger suggested Founders Park could be used as an area for  
184 fundraising.

185 Mr. Sharples said he doesn't think there's any contamination on the site,  
186 but we don't know how the fill will settle. Right now it's very uneven in there. Mr.  
187 Whitehouse said he just wanted to get it open for the 250th anniversary.

188 Mr. Papakonstantis said Mr. Whitehouse has done a lot for this town so  
189 it's hard to juggle what he needs to do as part of the Board. Access to public land  
190 is important, but this is unlike any other conservation land. There are some  
191 issues here. It's not moving fast because it's one of many things that we have to  
192 deal with as a Town. The committee has done an incredible amount of work.  
193 They've already raised \$29,000, gotten public input, and come up with three  
194 designs. It's frustrating that it will take a long time, but we have to follow the  
195 process.

196

## 197 10. Regular Business

### 198 a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

199 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 64-105-49 in the amount of  
200 \$4,444.00 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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202 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 110-2-4 in the amount of \$298.02  
203 for tax year 2024. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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### 205 b. Permits & Approvals

#### 206 i. Grant Acceptance – Household Hazardous Waste Grant Acceptance – 207 Stephen Cronin, Public Works Director

208 Ms. Roy said we do this annually. In 2025, 357 households  
209 participated. It's a regional event, and the individual communities pay in.  
210 At the last event, we collected 1600 pounds of waste. We received  
211 \$7,900 from DES for this year's event.

212 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept a grant from the New Hampshire Department of  
213 Environmental Services for household hazardous waste collection for \$7,900 and further  
214 authorize the Interim Town Manager or their designee to sign the associated grant agreement.  
215 Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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#### 217 ii. Donation Acceptance – Pairpoint Park – Corey Stevens, Finance Director

218 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the donations received in the month of February 2026  
219 totaling \$15,511 for the design and construction of Pairpoint Park, and direct the funds to be  
220 held by the Trustees of Trust Funds in the Pairpoint Park Fund. Disbursement of the fund shall

221 be made by authorization of the Town Manager for the purpose of designing and/or constructing  
222 Pairpoint Park. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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224           iii.    Donation Acceptance – National Night Out – Corey Stevens, Finance  
225                    Director

226                                Ms. Roy said this is not from the Pairpoint Park Committee; this is  
227                                from the family that donated the park.

228 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the donation from Pairpoint Group LLC of \$2,500 for  
229 National Night Out. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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231           c.    Town Manager’s Report

232                   i.    Ms. Roy said we had voting last Tuesday. She thanked the staff and  
233                                volunteers for their work.

234                   ii.   Dave Sharples is back as of last Monday.

235                   iii.   She continues to work with Finance Director Corey Stevens and Town  
236                                Engineer Paul Vlasich on the Police and Fire Substation. They are  
237                                expecting to start with masonry this week.

238                   iv.   DPW issued an informational blurb about Clemson Pond. There was  
239                                residual contamination material in the northern siphon. AE Com on behalf  
240                                of Unutil will mitigate this issue at no cost to the town. This portion of the  
241                                project is anticipated to be completed by March 27.

242                   v.    She participated in interviews for various positions.

243                   vi.   She worked on brainstorming for next year’s budget for Fire and EMS.

244                   vii.   She worked with Dave Tovey and Amanda Kelly on some short-term ADA  
245                                projects.

246                   viii.   HR is working on an improved onboarding process.

247                   ix.   Bob Glowacky is working with the Communications Committee on “Exeter  
248                                101” where Departments will explain to residents what they do.

249                   x.   Parks and Rec is gearing up for spring sports, the egg hunt, and summer  
250                                camp.

251                   xi.   She attended a webinar about AI in local government.

252                   xii.   Kathy Crouteau in Planning gave her two-week notice.

253                   xiii.   Longtime Exeter employee Nancy Bugbee passed away last week.

254

255           d.    Select Board Committee Reports

256                   i.    Ms. Gilman had no report.

257                   ii.   Ms. Belanger attended Housing Advisory, where there was ongoing

258                                discussion with a representative of the Exeter Housing Authority about  
259                                housing options. Dave Sharples came to the meeting, it’s great to have

260                                him back. A legislative update was provided by the Seacoast Workforce  
261                                Housing Coalition. The next meeting has been moved from April 10 to

262                                April 17.

- 263                   iii.    Mr. Chartrand thanked the voters for re-electing him. He attended the  
264                                Sustainability Advisory committee, but it was cancelled due to lack of a  
265                                quorum. He is not able to make the Train Committee on Thursday.  
266                   iv.    Mr. Papakonstantis attended the E911 committee. The Pairpoint Park  
267                                committee cancelled their March meeting. He spent time with Town Staff.  
268                                The election was March 10. He thanked the voters for their consideration  
269                                of the warrant articles. He heard feedback that the video from the Finance  
270                                Director was valuable and easy to understand. He attended the Coastal  
271                                Resiliency subcommittee meeting.

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273                   e.    Correspondence

- 274                                i.    A notice of the enhancing climate resilience design input session.  
275                                ii.   The NHMA legislative update.  
276                                iii.  A notice from Public Works on what can be recycled.

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278                   2.    Other Business

279                                Ms. Belanger asked for an update on styrofoam. Mr. Chartrand said there was an  
280                                overflow at the transfer station but he and Mr. Whitehouse moved it to a storage area.  
281                                The bin that collects it is nearing fullness but it has sacks that can be swapped out.  
282                                We're waiting for power at the new site so we can work off our backlog.

283                                Ms. Gilman gave an update on State issues.

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285                   11. Review Board Calendar

- 286                                a.    The next meetings are March 30, April 13, April 27, May 4, May 18, June 1, June  
287                                15, and June 29.

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289                   12. Non-Public Session

290                   **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II (b) and (c).  
291                   Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0. The meeting entered non-  
292                   public at 8:49 PM.

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294                   **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to exit non-public session at 9:24 pm. Ms. Gilman seconded.  
295                   The motion passed 4-0.

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

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300                   13. Adjournment

301                   **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 9:25 pm. Ms. Belanger  
302                   seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

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305                   Respectfully Submitted,  
306                   Joanna Bartell

307 Recording Secretary  
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