

1 Select Board Meeting
2 Monday June 15, 2026
3 6 PM
4 Nowak Room, Town Offices
5 Final Minutes
6

7 1. Call Meeting to Order

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

13 2. Discussion/Action Items

14 a. Westside Drive Project Update

15 Public Works Director Stephen Cronin was present to discuss this item.
16 Mr. Cronin said this project began in November 2025 after a multi-year planning
17 and design process starting in 2020. The water system improvements were done
18 throughout winter 2025-2026. In March 2026 they transitioned into the drainage
19 improvement phase, which was completed in April 2026. At that time there was a
20 public meeting for residents of the neighborhood. In spring 2026 they entered the
21 reconstruction phase. Currently, they are working on above-ground utilities and
22 granite curbing, which should continue through the week of June 21. When that
23 is complete, they'll transition to site and property restoration. There should be
24 substantial completion by September 2026; the binder course will go through the
25 winter season, and final paving will take place in late spring or early summer of
26 2027.

27 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment on this issue.

28 Herb Moyer of 51 Westside Drive said he is appreciative of the work
29 going on but he has concerns, which are reflected in a petition he created. He
30 had 84 signatures plus 10 more yesterday. His concern is that the narrowing of
31 the roadway by 38%, the lack of sidewalks, and the failure of the Police to
32 enforce speeding regulations. It's posted at 20 miles an hour, but a few go 45
33 miles per hour or more. With the narrower width, if two cars are in the roadway,
34 there's only about 10 feet for a pedestrian. The Police Department has been very
35 cooperative, with speeding monitors on telephone poles, and they saw a number
36 of "enforceable" excess speed events. He foresees Exeter making a tragic
37 mistake here.

38 Mr. Chartrand asked if historically there have been sidewalks in the
39 neighborhood. Mr. Moyer said yes, but they're in terrible shape and few people
40 use them. If the town put in new ones, he thinks people would use them.

41 Mr. Chartrand asked Mr. Cronin if that was within the scope of the work,
42 and Mr. Cronin said no. We went through several public meetings as part of the
43 design process where we solicited resident feedback. We had one design that
44 had sidewalks around the perimeter of the neighborhood, but that was not what

45 was approved to be built. There are no funds available for the construction of a
46 sidewalk.

47 Mr. Chartrand asked Mr. Cronin if narrowing the roads reduces speeds.
48 Mr. Cronin said yes, that tends to have a calming effect.

49 Ms. Belanger asked if we should look into limiting parking to one side
50 only. Mr. Cronin said it's something we could look into. As part of this project,
51 we're lengthening driveways, which may reduce people parking on the road.

52 Mr. Moyer said there is a single 20 MPH sign for the whole neighborhood.
53 He'd like to see something flashier or more creative.

54 Mr. Papakonstantis asked if it would be possible in the future to add
55 sidewalks without disturbing the work already done. Mr. Cronin said potentially.
56 We did not change the town's right-of-way widths. A single sidewalk around the
57 perimeter could be installed without disturbing the granite curb. Mr.
58 Papakonstantis said he imagines that would be costly, and Mr. Cronin said yes.

59 Mr. Papakonstantis suggested investigating whether "no parking" signs
60 would be helpful or whether we should put up more speed limit signs. He would
61 like the Town Manager to discuss with Chief McCain about what they can do to
62 enforce the speed.

63 Nicholas Metz of 1 Tilton Ave said he's heard questions and concerns
64 from his neighbors throughout this project. This was coming out of Covid, and the
65 first three public meetings were via Zoom. The residents' input fell off short when
66 it came to discussion of the sidewalks. In 2022, the only design shown had
67 sidewalks. At the third Zoom meeting in May 2023, there was a vote taken on
68 whether they wanted the design with or without sidewalks; 12 said they didn't
69 want sidewalks and 7 or 8 said they did. There are 90 households in the
70 neighborhood, so the sample rate was not acceptable. There was supposed to
71 be a follow-up survey that he doesn't believe transpired. There was some
72 confusion about whether the roads would be narrowed. People are flying through
73 the neighborhood, and pedestrians are stepping up onto lawns. It's often delivery
74 drivers or couriers. The road diet is supposed to slow people down, but we really
75 need sidewalks.

76 Deb Payson of 53 Westside Drive said sidewalks are important to her.
77 She has bad balance and sometimes falls. The sidewalks weren't safe, so she
78 had to walk in the road. Kids are out playing in the road and riding bikes. There
79 should have been a mailed letter with a survey about the sidewalks. She would
80 like to see a more detailed schedule of the work. She didn't expect to be living in
81 a construction zone so long, although the crew is very nice and responds to her
82 concerns. She is concerned about safety but doesn't think ticketing speeders
83 would do much. Mr. Papakonstantis said we can certainly put more speed signs
84 in.

85 Shannon Blaise of 7 Westside Drive said the speed in the neighborhood
86 is unacceptable. Could we have a sign that tells the driver what their speed is
87 compared to the speed limit? There are so many kids and dogs walking along.

88 Stephanie Willette of 2 Silvio Drive said the road is even narrower than it
89 was supposed to be now that they've added the curbs. Several years ago, she
90 reached out to the DPW about more signs after her neighbor's dog was hit. She
91 was told that it would happen after the project, but it has been delayed for many
92 years. The one sign has been obstructed by overgrown trees.

93 Kate Mattera of 9 Westside Drive said it was her dog that got hit by the
94 car. She has a 9-year-old son who is not allowed to go far because the street is
95 dangerous. She had hoped that the narrowing would be helpful with the speed,
96 but she is still seeing people coming around the corner very fast. She wonders if
97 they could do speedbumps to manage that speed. Mr. Papakonstantis asked Mr.
98 Cronin about speedbumps, and he said it would be a maintenance issue. We'd
99 also have to evaluate the effect on Public Safety response times.

100 Marshall Stephen of 8 Tilton Ave said the roads being narrow is going to
101 throw people off, especially in the winter. The roads are poorly lit. There should
102 be painted pedestrian crossings so people will slow down. We need more
103 participation data when we proceed on a project.

104 Mark Pittandreigh of 8 Silvio Drive said the initial design had no granite
105 curbing, just swales for water to run off. Were the curbs added later? Mr. Cronin
106 said there were stormwater elements that were part of the project; narrowing the
107 road was intended to create more room for swales and infiltration areas. Mr.
108 Pittandreigh said he thought there would be gravel swales so you could park
109 there, but with the granite curbing, the road has shrunk significantly. There will be
110 blind spots with people parking on the road. Lighting has always been bad in the
111 neighborhood; he would like to see improvements. Mr. Cronin said with the
112 narrowing of the road, the poles are further back, but there may be some options
113 for directing that light better.

114 Karen Moyer of 51 Westside Drive said there are real hazards to animals
115 in the neighborhood. Her neighbor killed her dog a few years ago. At the back of
116 the neighborhood people go very fast. She likes the signs that show your speed
117 and the speed limit.

118 Mr. Papakonstantis said he appreciates the leadership role that Mr. Metz
119 and Mr. Moyer have taken. He also appreciates the residents for coming to
120 speak. He asked Mr. Cronin to consider next steps with signage and lighting.

121
122 b. Swasey Parkway Coastal Resiliency Final Report –

123 Swasey Parkway Trustees Dwane Staples, Dave Short, and Darius
124 Thompson, as well as Conservation & Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy,
125 were present for this item.

126 Swasey Parkway Trustees Chair Staples called the meeting of the
127 Swasey Parkway Trustees to order at 6:49 PM.

128 Ms. Murphy said we received a coastal resilience grant to take a look at
129 sea level rise for Swasey Parkway. We created a small project team with herself,
130 representatives from the Select Board and the Swasey Parkway Trustees,

131 Melissa Roy, and Steve Cronin. She introduced consultant Nick Messina of CMA
132 Engineers.

133 Mr. Messina said the project's goals were to enhance Swasey Parkway's
134 resilience to flooding, look for opportunities to enhance natural systems,
135 incorporate community input, and look for opportunities to develop the project in
136 phases to respond to changing conditions. This grant was specific to the
137 Parkway, so it couldn't be applied to adjacent and abutting properties.

138 The first public workshop was in December 2025 where we heard general
139 public feedback. After that we developed three conceptual options. The second
140 workshop was in March 2026. The grant wrapped up in April 2026 and we issued
141 a final report. At the first public workshop, we heard feedback on what level of
142 investment the public was willing to make in the Parkway; about half were willing
143 to make a moderate investment, and the rest were split between low and high
144 investments. Accessibility and walkability were the top priorities. Parking and
145 driving there was low priority.

146 Concept 1, the low intervention measure, was mainly a vegetation
147 management plan, but this would not be meaningfully impactful. Concept 2, the
148 medium intervention measure, proposes a raised multi-use path along the river. It
149 also includes removing the North Brook dam, which would have moderate
150 ecological benefits. Drainage would need to be installed in low points where we
151 could treat the water before discharging into the Squamscott. The high
152 intervention measure would include the medium intervention work, plus creating
153 a floodable stormwater area adjacent to Norris Brook and in the center of the
154 Parkway. This would be a significant change in land use that the town would
155 have to get comfortable with. Regarding costs, the low intervention cost would be
156 around \$42,000, while medium and high would be above \$2M.

157 During the second workshop, 15% were in favor of making no changes.
158 Concepts 2 or 3 had 62% support when combined.

159 There is no subsequent work planned. If we took this to a design phase,
160 we would want to get more public feedback as well as site investigation and
161 permitting review. We could also consider a broader view of the area as a whole,
162 rather than just the Parkway.

163 Ms. Gilman said she thinks that the "king tides" are the problem. Why are
164 we not addressing the raised roadway as part of a sea wall? Mr. Messina said
165 the scope of the work was just the Parkway itself. You can achieve a consistent
166 elevation of 10 feet with the raised path. Extending it into downtown was outside
167 of the scope of the workshops.

168 Mr. Staples said there was some discussion about if we raised that wall,
169 we want to be careful about how we're changing the flow of the river. Mr.
170 Chartrand said Norris Brook is not going anywhere. Even if we raise the seawall,
171 the water will still come in there.

172 Ms. Belanger said she's concerned about 222 Water Street, where our
173 public housing is. She wants them to be specifically included in future public
174 meetings. She's also concerned about bicycles and pedestrians sharing one

175 path. Ms. Murphy said part of this effort was stakeholder mapping. Tony Teixeira
176 [of the Exeter Housing Authority] was one of the contact points for this activity,
177 but that doesn't necessarily reach the residents.

178 Mr. Papakonstantis asked the Swasey Parkway Trustees for their
179 comments. Mr. Staples said we need more data. Mr. Thompson said addressing
180 the sea level rise is much bigger than just the Parkway. This is a good starting
181 point.

182 Mr. Papakonstantis asked Ms. Murphy what the next steps are. Ms.
183 Murphy said we wanted to get the public thinking about these concepts, such as
184 "retreat or resist," as well as get a flavor of how people feel about it. We should
185 be including an analysis of sea level rise in our CIP projects. Our next rendition of
186 the Master Plan could consider these issues. She's not looking for an action from
187 the Board tonight.

188 **MOTION** [Swasey Parkway Trustees]: Mr. Staples moved to adjourn the Trustees meeting. Mr.
189 Thompson seconded. The motion passed 3-0 and their meeting was adjourned at 7:18 PM.

190

191 Ms. Belanger asked Ms. Murphy about Raynes Farm. Ms. Murphy said
192 we've been working on renovations to Raynes Barn since 2019, and they're
193 finally complete. There will be a public "open barn" event in July.

194

195 c. Public Hearing – Cass Street – 3rd Reading

196 Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of public hearing:

197 *Notice of Public Hearing Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b,III(a)*

198 *Notice is hereby given that the Select Board of the Town of Exeter will hold a*
199 *public hearing consisting of three (3) readings in the Nowak Room, 10 Front*
200 *Street, Exeter for the purpose of complying with the provisions of RSA 31:95-*
201 *b,III(a) for a proposed change to parking regulations on Cass Street. The first*
202 *reading will be Monday, May 18, 2026. The second reading will be Monday, June*
203 *1, 2026. The third reading will be Monday, June 15, 2026. Each reading will*
204 *begin at 7:00 PM. Dated: May 8, 2026.*

205 Mr. Papakonstantis said the request was specifically regarding the "no
206 parking" sign. Staff will continue to look into the other issues raised.

207 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing for Cass Street pursuant to RSA
208 31:95-b,III(a). Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

209

210 Mr. Cronin said the petition is to change the current ordinance to restrict
211 parking on both sides of the road from Park Street to a point roughly 170 feet
212 from the intersection west on Cass Street.

213 Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment.

214 Abigail Matthis Pitou of 20 Cass Street said she initially filed the petition,
215 which stated that the "no parking" from 20 Cass Street to Park Street was 75-80
216 feet west on Cass. She doesn't know how the number got changed. She filed her
217 petition on October 17, 2025 and only heard this 100+ number in the last

218 meeting. Pam [McElroy] looked into this and found that the number came from a
219 letter Mr. Cronin sent on May 14 to the Select Board without her [Ms. Pitou] cc'd.

220 Mr. Cronin said we measured from the driveway at 20 Cass Street, and it
221 was exactly 170 feet. He added that we have a CIP in the works for this area,
222 and that would be the ideal time to try to reconfigure something.

223 Kelly Richards of 25 Cass Street said she was aware that there was a
224 disparity in the distance, but her position and her neighbors' is the same. That
225 intersection is not unsafe. The intersection study and the Police Department
226 records show no issues. Park Street is no longer used as a bypass since the
227 bridge has been closed. She discussed the history of this area as detailed in the
228 packet the residents presented to the Select Board.

229 Kayoko Tazawa of 22 Cass Street said while she was away, a vehicle
230 was parked in front of her house even though there's supposed to be no parking
231 in that area. She would like to have a "no parking" sign at the telephone pole
232 near her house.

233 Ms. Pitou said there is a highway easement and a public easement. She's
234 not disputing that it's a public road. She's not using an ordinance to her own
235 benefit. Accidents aren't isolated, they come in "accident clusters." There's an
236 area where people barrel through from Summer Street onto Cass Street. The
237 issue is not isolated to this area, it's one big cluster.

238 **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Belanger seconded. The
239 motion passed 5-0.

240
241 Mr. Chartrand said he's not in favor of changing the parking regulations
242 on Cass Street at this time. The other Board members agreed.

243 **MOTION:** Mr. Chartrand moved to deny the proposed amendment to section 101.2 of the
244 parking regulations ordinance regarding Cass Street, finding that the requested expansion of
245 parking restrictions has not been demonstrated to warrant a permanent ordinance change at
246 this time, and to further direct town staff to evaluate existing encroachments into the public right
247 of way along Cass Street, including the extent to which those encroachments may affect
248 roadway width, site distance, parking availability, and traffic operations. Ms. Belanger seconded.
249 The motion passed 5-0.

250
251 d. Public Hearing – Wadleigh Street – 3rd Reading

252 Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of public hearing:

253 *Notice is hereby given that the Select Board of the Town of Exeter will hold a*
254 *public hearing consisting of three (3) readings in the Nowak Room, 10 Front*
255 *Street, Exeter for the purpose of complying with the provisions of RSA 31:95-*
256 *b,III(a) for a proposed change to traffic control signage on Wadleigh Street at*
257 *Forest Street. The first reading will be Monday, May 18, 2026. The second*
258 *reading will be Monday June 1, 2026. The third reading will be Monday, June 15,*
259 *2026. Each reading will begin at 7:00 PM. Dated: May 8, 2026*

260

261 Mr. Cronin said this is to change the existing intersection of Wadleigh and
262 Forest from a two-way stop to a three-way stop with the addition of a third stop
263 sign.

264 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion
265 passed 5-0.

266
267 Karen Dangora of 6 Wadleigh Street said she values her home because
268 of the peace and quiet. Cars speeding down the street are affecting that value.
269 It's a very dangerous corner for walkers. She hopes the Board will support
270 another stop sign and any other traffic-calming measures.

271 Pete Nikidis of 5 Wadleigh Street said he sees horrible speeding every
272 day. Drivers don't even follow the stop signs that exist. He's a huge proponent of
273 adding this stop sign. He also wants to find a way to move the existing stop sign
274 coming out of Rose Farm forward for better visibility. Since people aren't
275 following these stop signs, he would like to see a stop sign with flashing lights
276 around it. When we had the speed limit signs there it did slow things down
277 temporarily. We talked about a speed table or speed bump, and he would love to
278 be part of that decision making. Enforcing the stop signs further is the way to
279 make it all come together.

280 Mr. Cronin said we'll do our best to realign the stop sign coming out of
281 Rose Farm or look for an advance warning sign. We looked into speed tables but
282 the geography of the intersection is challenging. There could be a tipping risk for
283 vehicles. With the idea of sticking to the intent of the petition, and not having
284 notified Rose Farm about additional options, he doesn't recommend proceeding
285 with it at this time.

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

288
289 Mr. Papakonstantis said although additional options are not covered by
290 the motion, town staff will continue to work to make this area safer.

291 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved that pursuant to policy 89-18, the requirement for placement of
292 regulatory traffic devices and signage on public roads, the Select Board authorize a three-way
293 stop configuration at the intersection of Wadleigh Street and Forest Street. Ms. Cowan
294 seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

295
296 e. Park Street Bridge Update

297 Michael Sliper and Maurice O'Connell of CSX, Mike Moser of NH DOT,
298 and Public Works Director Stephen Cronin were present for this discussion item.

299 Mr. Sliper said the Park Street bridge has been out of service for some
300 time. CSX owns the bridge, and our intent is to remove it. It's considered an
301 obstruction. We don't have a timetable but it would likely be before the end of the
302 year. There will be some routine maintenance to the tracks, but there's no plan
303 for increasing speed or running double-stack trains. This bridge is an out-of-
304 service structure that is beyond its useful life.

305 Mr. O'Connell said since acquiring PanAm, CSX did a major tie
306 replacement project and spent \$100M upgrading the former PanAm to class 1
307 standards. There's been tremendous improvement for both freight and the
308 Amtrak Downeaster.

309 Mr. Sliper said for the removal, we would remove the bridge and peel the
310 stone structures on either side back to match the grade to the hill on either side.
311 We'll also install a more permanent end-of-road device such as a jersey barrier
312 or guard rail.

313 Mr. O'Connell said the removal of the bridge would make the train safer.
314 Regarding double-stack trains, there are other bridges along this line that would
315 have to be undercut or removed first.

316 Mr. Cronin said we're going to have a lot of questions before this work
317 happens. We're concerned about aesthetics, impacts to utilities, how the road will
318 be terminated, and impacts to abutting properties. In 2001, Boston & Maine
319 executed a Memorandum of Understanding that ownership of the bridge would
320 be transferred to DOT, with the intention that it would eventually go back to the
321 town. The town sought voter authorization in 2003, received it, and sent a letter
322 to Boston & Maine requesting the release deed, but it was never counter-signed
323 and the transfer of title never happened. This is not unique to Exeter; there are a
324 number of bridges along this corridor that are in a similar situation.

325 Mr. Moser said there were 11 bridges that were going to be transferred
326 from B&M to the towns and the DOT would work with the towns to rehabilitate or
327 replace those structures, but only three bridges were transferred at that time.
328 Some were transferred later, but there are five that we feel are still owned by
329 CSX, including the Park Street Bridge.

330 Mr. O'Connell said we want to work with the town and hear feedback. Mr.
331 Papakonstantis asked if they would consider delaying the removal until next year.
332 Mr. O'Connell said due to safety we'd like to get it down as soon as possible. It's
333 in everyone's best interest.

334 Ms. Belanger said the only safety concern she's heard is that a conductor
335 might have to stop and look at the bridge. Mr. Sliper said the bridge is failing and
336 is structurally unsafe. Ms. Belanger said no one drives on it. We can't get through
337 another winter while we look at how it will affect the area and the water pipes?
338 Mr. Sliper said he believes the water pipe is redundant and removing it won't
339 cause any issues. Are there other benefits to leaving the bridge? Ms. Belanger
340 said it's about the restructuring of that intersection and how it will reflect on the
341 town, as well as the cost. Who redesigns that intersection and who will approve
342 it? Mr. O'Connell said when we recommended that bridge be closed, it was
343 because there are serious issues. There are cracks in the deck and the clips that
344 are holding the deck and pin plates. There are pedestrians using it but there
345 shouldn't be. If there are three or four feet of snow on it over the winter, there
346 could be a structural issue. Mr. O'Connell said there is freight traffic and
347 passenger traffic running through there. Snow on that bridge could compromise
348 their safety.

349 Ms. Belanger asked how quickly the Board could see the redesign plans.
350 Mr. Sliper said fairly soon, but it will just be removal of the bridge and abutments
351 with a guard rail at the end of the street. We're not looking to redesign the
352 streetscape. It will be a slope so it will not be unsafe.

353 Ms. Belanger asked where the property line of the bridge is. Mr. Sliper
354 said it's a little wider than the current span, around where the paving changes.

355 Mr. Chartrand asked if the Board can have a commitment from CSX to
356 work with the Public Works Department on this. Mr. O'Connell said yes. If the
357 town or DOT wanted to build a pedestrian overpass, we could work with the town
358 on that, although we don't fund those kind of things.

359 Mr. Papakonstantis asked what it would look like to build a pedestrian
360 bridge. Mr. Cronin said the grades are challenging. To meet ADA and the height
361 requirements, you're probably looking at ramps with switchbacks. Mr. Moser said
362 it would have to go up by at least five feet.

363 Ms. Gilman asked if the removal would require federal funding. Mr. Sliper
364 said no, it would be internally funded by CSX.

365 Sally Ward of 72 Park Street said there are conflicting concerns between
366 CSX and the community. The closure of the bridge has been detrimental to the
367 community and created safety concerns because vehicles can't travel from the
368 east to the west side. She's disappointed that this is a fait accompli for CSX. Why
369 has CSX not considered replacing the bridge? Who owns the road, and who has
370 the authority to sever Park Street? She also has concerns about how this
371 process will unfold and how the public will be involved. She wants there to be a
372 bridge there, and a full bridge, not just a pedestrian bridge.

373 Mr. O'Connell said safety is our first priority. We care about the
374 community and want to hear from them, but we don't go out and build highway
375 bridges. If DOT or the town has ideas that involve CSX, we're committed to
376 having those conversations. Mr. Papakonstantis said public meetings are
377 important in Exeter, and he's hoping these discussions can take place in public
378 with input from the community.

379 Mr. Cronin said regarding the road, we'd have to work with Town
380 Counsel. CSX has a right to cross that's identified in our deed, but he can't
381 answer Ms. Ward's question fully.

382 Jackie Urquell said that bridge was not always there; there used to be a
383 street-level crossing. Why can't we have that so that Park Street is still Park
384 Street? It might be noisier, but the road won't be gone. We discovered that there
385 were plans to rebuild the bridge in 2011, but some federal funding changes
386 happened. Why can't it be done now?

387 Mr. Sliper said CSX and the Federal Government are against adding any
388 new at-grade crossings. Any time there is a crossing, there's a chance for a train-
389 vehicle or train-pedestrian encounter. Mr. O'Connell said safety is paramount.
390 Putting an at-grade crossing there is not a safe alternative.

391 Mr. Moser said there was a preliminary look at the bridge in 2011, but
392 based on the increased vertical requirements, it became problematic.

393 Commissioner Rodriguez made it clear that he wanted us to work with the town
394 and CSX to get something that will work for both sides. The original agreement
395 was that we would replace the structure with a 90/10 agreement, and we're open
396 to looking at that again. We're currently in the process of finalizing projects for
397 the next 10 years, and it will be two years before we get to that cycle again, so it
398 would be 2037 or 2038 until it could be considered. There is a new funding bill
399 coming through Congress, so there may be an opportunity through that which
400 he's not yet aware of.

401 Rebecca Winter of 12 Locust Ave said she's happy to hear them talk
402 about safety. She keeps hearing that this bridge serves no purpose, but for her
403 neighbors it's her connection to the Hospital, emergency, and fire services. An
404 ambulance's goal time is eight minutes, and it takes five miles north or
405 southbound from any of the road-level crossings or the bridge in Exeter to cross
406 the tracks and get to her house. If they get to that crossing and it's blocked by a
407 train, their policy is to re-route, which means an additional 10 minutes.
408 Passengers are under that bridge for a couple of seconds, but she lives in her
409 house 24/7. What is CSX going to do for us? We're asking for the agency to
410 control the bridge ourselves. Give us the deed and let the town take care of it.
411 You want to take out the bridge because it's cheaper, but emergency access to
412 that neighborhood must be addressed.

413 Megan Ramundo of 71 Park Street said she chose Exeter because she
414 could walk everywhere. She loves her neighbors and her neighborhood. To take
415 her daughter to kindergarten, she walked across that bridge. We don't want to
416 see our bridge go away. This is a historic thoroughfare that is being cut off. The
417 town is planned around the tracks. They're taking away the ability to walk to
418 school and more traffic comes through narrow streets.

419 Mark Furlong of 20 Forrest Street said it was great to have an alternative
420 to grade crossings with this bridge. When the Main Street and Salem Street
421 crossings were closed, the only way to get through town was on Front Street,
422 and traffic was very backed up. Having a bridge is a safety benefit to the town.
423 That's a tough area, but lift bridges are used in many parts of the world. He did
424 some research and found that the Select Board had signed the deed in 2003. Mr.
425 Chartrand said it was signed by the town and sent off, but never completed. Mr.
426 Furlong said folks from Oak Street and Park Street neighborhoods have a voice
427 here and will keep showing up.

428 Eileen Flockhart of 7 Jacks Court said trains are magical. It would be a
429 sad thing if that went away. A bridge or a pedestrian bridge will allow kids to see
430 those trains go by.

431 Terrie Harmon of 6 Oak Street asked if CSX is willing to come back in
432 person. Mr. Sliper said potentially. Ms. Harmon asked if she could get a copy of
433 the report that CSX owns the bridge. Mr. Moser said there's no documentation it
434 was ever transferred. Ms. Harmon asked if there was a memo or other report. Mr.
435 Moser said the research is in draft form, but she can have a copy when it's
436 finalized. Ms. Harmon asked if CSX is willing to stay the teardown until we can

437 work out the public's right to a public way and the railroad's right to tear down the
438 bridge. Mr. O'Connell said this is a safety issue. The sooner we can get it done,
439 the better for all of us. We don't want anything to happen to our employees or
440 this community. The timing is very important. We're willing to work with the town,
441 but it's got to be a process that moves quickly, likely within the next six months.
442 Mr. Moser said the community can decide how that area is going to look along
443 with NH DOT. We are going to remove the bridge.

444 Mr. Papakonstantis said he understands the concerns of CSX, but this is
445 all coming very suddenly. We had a meeting a year ago where someone from
446 DOT was here and there were unanswered questions as to who owns the bridge.
447 We've been trying to get you to come and talk with us, and it's a reasonable
448 request for us to talk with counsel and talk about our options. He's uncomfortable
449 hearing the bridge has to be taken down in six months. Mr. O'Connell said he
450 hopes those conversations can happen expeditiously. We're committed to the
451 community and all the communities along their routes. We didn't have to be here,
452 but we want to be here. What this area looks like going forward is out of our
453 control. We'll share the plans and work with the town.

454 Ms. Cowan said she feels like she's being gaslit. This has been a trying
455 conversation for everyone. What about emergency response times? This is our
456 community. Staying this until we figure out what is going on is a reasonable
457 request. Mr. O'Connell said if the town wants to put a bridge up there, it's fine.

458 Mr. Papakonstantis said we need to do our due diligence. The Board was
459 elected to represent the legislative body which is our community. He can't sign
460 onto doing anything expeditiously until we know more. Mr. O'Connell said he
461 understands that the community has some concerns. We're willing to work with
462 you and that will take some time. The commitment is to work with the town
463 through the process. He's hoping they can go back and request a pause while
464 we figure out what we need to do.

465 Mr. Sliper said the bridge is out of service, including for pedestrian traffic,
466 so no one should be using that bridge. CSX will work with you to do something to
467 get across the railroad tracks. The bridge can't be fixed. CSX is offering to take it
468 down at no cost. People are still using this bridge while it is deemed unsafe.
469 Regardless of what happens, this bridge cannot be repaired, it would have to be
470 replaced.

471 William Murphy of 18 Oak Street said he's been stuck with tracks shut
472 down and the highway shut down. This bridge is important. It allows fire trucks to
473 pass. We need a safe way to get around. They want to remove the one thing that
474 allows the town to have pedestrian crossing, because crossing at a road is
475 unsafe. There's got to be something solid that says if they take the bridge down,
476 we can put it back. The bridge was there for a purpose.

477 Silas Richards of 5 Locust Ave said the removal of this bridge will have
478 profound impacts on pedestrian and cyclist movement in town.

479 Joel Shander of 93 Park Street said the road predates the railroad for
480 hundreds of years. CSX is willing to work with the town to put in a new bridge

481 after this one is removed. It's always bothered him that there's only one bridge
482 and it's only one way. There are other places that might make more sense for a
483 bridge. Can CSX work with the town to have multiple crossings? At the meeting a
484 year ago, the representative from the State said it was the town's fault that the
485 deed had never been transferred, that the town always said it wasn't ready, but
486 this is at odds with what was said tonight. It sounds like the town did everything it
487 could have. Mr. Cronin said there have been a number of conversations over the
488 years regarding maintenance and ownership. Mr. Moser said after the meeting,
489 we realized things were different. The State signed an agreement with B&M
490 regarding the 11 bridges, and signed an agreement with Exeter which you did
491 follow through with, but it did not go through with B&M. We have more
492 information than we had a year ago.

493 Mr. Chartrand asked if CSX's willingness is having a right-of-way at Park
494 Street or just general benevolence. Mr. O'Connell said we would work with you in
495 general. A bridge would have to be built by the town or DOT after we reviewed
496 the plans. We do get approached with projects like this and we work with the
497 communities.

498 Megan Ramundo of 71 Park Street said no one has documented what
499 CSX has done historically to work with communities. She sees profits and
500 expectations for the global trade markets of railways. She hopes they explain
501 what work with communities means.

502 Mark Furlong of 20 Forrest Street said at the June 30 2025 Select Board
503 meeting, they discussed that this bridge has historic significance and would
504 require a historic and environmental study. Is that still required? Ms. Gilman said
505 if no Federal money is involved, an archaeological study is not required. In 2003,
506 a historical survey of that bridge was done, and the documented owner was the
507 DOT. Was that survey part of the conversation? Mr. Moser said there was a lot of
508 research done recently. The owner was listed as NH DOT in reports for the last
509 15 years. It was only seven or eight months ago that we became aware we didn't
510 own it. The removal would not use Federal or State money so review is not
511 required.

512 Jessica Lepler of 27 Park Street asked whether the owners have that
513 right to close the road. Who is responsible for the maintenance of that bridge? Is
514 it the owner's responsibility to maintain it? Mr. Moser said the DOT signed an
515 agreement with B&M that we would accept maintenance responsibilities until the
516 bridge was replaced or when 10 years expired. We had continued to maintain the
517 bridge and have rehabilitated it a couple times, but it is at end of life.

518 Mr. Papakonstantis said it's called discontinuing a road, and it depends
519 on the class of road. When we discontinued Swasey Parkway, it had to go
520 through legal review. We'd have to work with counsel to figure out whether and
521 how we could discontinue that road.

522 Gina Lahey of 80 Park Street asked we could build a pedestrian bridge
523 with the ability to have an emergency bridge cross it if needed. Mr. Moser said
524 pedestrian bridges are designed for vehicle loads but not fire trucks.

525 Mr. Chartrand said regarding the ambulance and emergency aspect, the
526 voters funded a second Public Safety site on the other side of the tracks, so there
527 will be access to the neighborhood. It doesn't give access to the Hospital but it
528 will get emergency services there.

529 Joel Shander of 93 Park Street said it's not just Exeter residents who are
530 impacted. If you come in via 111 or 111A, that bridge is your access to the
531 hospital.

532 Mr. Papakonstantis said this will be a transparent and public process. We
533 have a list of things to look into for due diligence. He will give Sally Ward as
534 much advance notice of meetings and other information as possible.
535

536 f. Public Comment

537 Mr. Papakonstantis said he forgot to call for Public Comment at the
538 beginning of the meeting. He asked for public comment, but there was none.
539

540 g. Town Offices Public Hours of Business –

541 Town Manager Paul Cohen asked the Board to modify the public hours
542 the Town Offices are open. Currently, it's 8 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through
543 Friday. He's asking to extend the hours on Tuesdays to 7 PM and close early on
544 Fridays at 12:30 PM. Portsmouth, Stratham and Kingston all maintain extended
545 hours at least one day a week and maintain early closures on Friday. Our Town
546 Clerk, Tax Collector, and Sewer Collections offices already have these hours.
547 We are in a challenging labor market and the proposed schedule would be more
548 attractive to potential employees. He recommends this become effective on July
549 6th. Employees will still be working a 40-hour work week. The public hours are
550 different from the hours employees work. This would apply only to the Town
551 Offices, not to Town buildings in general. Ms. Gilman asked if this has been
552 discussed with the Union. Mr. Cohen said any Union employees in this building
553 are already working this schedule. Mr. Papakonstantis asked that this change be
554 advertised.

555 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved that the Select Board approve the Town Manager's proposal to
556 revise the Town Offices public hours to weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with extended
557 hours until 7 PM on Tuesdays and early closure at 12:30 p.m. on Fridays, effective July 6, 2026.
558 Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
559

560 h. Tax Collector Appointment

561 Mr. Cohen said on September 2nd, the Board voted to appoint the Interim
562 Town Manager Melissa Roy as Tax Collector, but now that he has been installed
563 as Town Manager he would need to assume that role.

564 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Paul Cohen, Town Manager, as Tax Collector for the
565 Town of Exeter, NH, in accordance with Warrant Article 43 (March 1984) and upon the
566 recommendation of legal counsel. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
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568 3. Regular Business

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a. Permits & Approvals

i. Contract Award – Front/Linden/Pine Streets Roundabout

Mr. Cronin said at the June 1 meeting, the Board opened two construction bids. Baillargeon Construction was the apparent low bidder at \$715,771.50. There were three alternates, including alternate 1 which was street lighting, with a bid of \$49,518.75. The base bid with the alternate is above the town bond authorization, so we've been looking at additional funding sources. There is money available in the 2022-2023 Highway Block Grant appropriation and the Sidewalk Improvement Fund.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to award the contract to Baillargeon Construction for the Front Street/Pine Street/Linden Street intersection improvements project in the amount of \$765,290.25, consisting of the base bid of \$715,771.50 and Additive Alternate No. 1 (Street Lighting) in the amount of \$49,518.75; and to appropriate \$96,000 of highway block grant aid and \$104,000 from the Sidewalk Capital Improvement Fund to supplement the remaining 2023 Article 5 bond authorization; and to further authorize the Town Manager or their designee to sign the associated contract documents. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Cronin said this includes a 15% contingency for construction and an additional \$20,000 for construction phase services. The next request is to award a contract to VHB for part-time on-site inspection and oversight.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to award a contract amendment to VHB for Construction Phase Engineering Services associated with the Front Street/Pine Street/Linden Street Intersection Improvements Project in the amount of \$20,000.00, and to further authorize the Town Manager or their designee to sign the associated contract documents. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

ii. Grant Acceptance – NH the Beautiful

Mr. Cohen said our Conservation and Sustainability Planner Kristin Murphy obtained an \$8,000 NH the Beautiful municipal recycling and storage equipment grant which funded the purchase of a large box container to provide storage for the polystyrene foam prior to processing, as well as a skid of large "supersacks." There is no town contribution.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Town Manager, or his designee, to execute any and all related agreements for acceptance of the NH the Beautiful grant funding in the amount of \$8,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

iii. Dog Warrant

Mr. Papakonstantis said this is the annual dog warrant request.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved for the Select Board to sign the 2026 dog warrant as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

iv. Donation Acceptance – Pairpoint Park

613 Finance Director Corey Stevens was present to discuss this item.
614 Mr. Stevens said in May, the Pairpoint Park Committee raised \$2,985.
615 They've raised \$38,460 in total. Mr. Papakonstantis said the RFQ is out
616 and they interviewed the candidates last Thursday.

617 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to accept the donations received during the month of May 2026
618 totaling \$2,985.00 for the design and construction of Pairpoint Park and direct that the
619 funds be held by the Trustees of Trust Funds in the Pairpoint Park Fund. Disbursement of
620 the funds shall be made by authorization of the Town Manager for the purpose of
621 designing and/or constructing Pairpoint Park. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
622

623 v. Contract Award - Certified Local Government

624 Mr. Cohen said this is a request from Town Planner Dave
625 Sharples for an exception to our purchasing policy to contract with the
626 Barrett Planning Group for the continuation of the Exeter Historic District
627 Survey. \$25,000 in funding would provide 55 surveys of historic
628 properties.

629 Ms. Belanger said in the contract, there is a typo; under item 1, it
630 says "serves" instead of "services." Mr. Cohen said he would address
631 that.

632 Ms. Gilman said she did the application and got the award while
633 Dave Sharples was out of office.

634 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to authorize an exception to the purchasing policy to contract
635 with Barrett Planning Group LLC for the continuation of the Exeter Historic District Survey. Ms.
636 Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
637

638 b. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

639 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 64/48/11 in the amount of
640 \$3,680.71 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
641

642 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve an abatement for 104/79/219 in the amount of
643 \$1,445.55 for tax year 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
644

645 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve a Jeopardy Bill for 103/10 in the amount of \$1,851
646 for tax year 2026. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
647

648 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve a Jeopardy Bill for 87/8/C-03 in the amount of \$746
649 for tax year 2026. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.
650

651 4. Approval of Minutes

652 a. Regular Meeting: June 1, 2026

653 Corrections: Mr. Cohen said in the first paragraph, Interim Town Manager
654 Melissa Roy should read Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy.

655 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Select Board regular meeting minutes of June 1,
656 2026 as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

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5. Appointments and Resignations

- a. Resignation – Communications Advisory Committee – David Kovar

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to accept the letter of resignation of David Kovar from the Communications Advisory Committee. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- b. Conservation Commission – Alternate to Voting Member – Michelle Crepeau
Mr. Chartrand said we are moving an alternate to a voting position following a resignation. This leaves an alternate position open.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand made a motion to appoint Michelle Crepeau to a voting member position on the Conservation Commission, term to end April 2029. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

6. Town Manager’s Report

- a. Mr. Cohen said tomorrow at 7 PM, the Zoning Board of Appeals will be holding a Public Hearing for the proposed 34-unit townhouse complex and two apartment buildings containing 300 units off Holland Way
- b. House Bill 1491 regarding the insurance has still not been sent to the Governor’s Office. The Board’s request to send notice did go out.
- c. He and Melissa attended the NHMA conference, which they found to be very informative.
- d. He has continued his tour of board and committee meetings, and he will be here tomorrow night to attend the Zoning Board meeting.
- e. The employee appreciation lunch went well. He thanked Pam McElroy for organizing the event.
- f. He and Melissa met with the Exeter Hospital President and had a productive meeting.
- g. Ms. Cowan asked about HB 1300. Mr. Cohen said he reached out to the Superintendent of SAU 16, whom he will meet with next week. He’s also reaching out to contacts in other communities. It’s surprising that this is flying under the radar. The bill would provide a cap on the increase of school budgets to the inflation level, and there’s a 6% cap for school administrative costs. It has to appear on the ballot for State and national elections in 2026 and 2028. There is a lot of ambiguity and inconsistent language. Ms. Gilman said it’s going to be confusing to have a town question on a national ballot. Mr. Cohen said if 60% of NH Communities approve it, Exeter would be dragged into it. There’s no alternate means of school funding to relieve this.

7. Select Board Committee Reports

- a. Ms. Gilman attended the Energy Committee and the Tax Exemption Committee. Tomorrow the Energy Committee is having their monthly “Power Hour” information session on CPCNH at the Library.
- b. Ms. Belanger attended Housing Advisory where there was a conversation about having co-Chairs. Only the 250 Committee is doing that, and it’s very short-term.

701 If it's not possible, they're ok with being Chair and Vice-Chair. There were some
702 proposed zoning amendments, but Mr. Sharples was not able to make it to the
703 meeting until the end. We will revisit this conversation at the July meeting. We
704 also discussed the Plan NH Charette. She attended a Planning Board meeting
705 where two cases were tabled at the applicant's request: the proposed hotel on
706 Portsmouth Ave and a minor site plan request for 73 Winter Street. There was a
707 lot line adjustment that was very odd. We had a conditional use permit
708 application which was approved; this project was discussed extensively at the
709 Conservation Commission meeting.

- 710 c. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- 711 d. Mr. Chartrand attended the Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting and a
712 Conservation Committee meeting. He also attended a Water/Sewer Advisory
713 Committee meeting last week.
- 714 e. Mr. Papakonstantis attended the Pairpoint Park Committee. He had to miss a
715 Tree Committee meeting due to a conflict.

716

717 8. Correspondence

- 718 a. A notice from NH DOT regarding use of public right-of-way for outdoor dining.
- 719 b. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin
- 720 c. An email from Silas Richards related to bicycle usage and signage on sidewalks.

721

722 9. Review Board Calendar

- 723 a. The Board's goal-setting session is Monday June 22 at 5 PM. The next meetings
724 are June 29, July 13, July 27, August 10, August 24, September 14, and
725 September 28. September 1 will be reserved in case we need a meeting.

726

727 10. Non-Public Session

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

729

730 11. Adjournment

731 **MOTION:** Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and
732 the meeting was adjourned at 10 PM.

733

734

735 Respectfully Submitted,
736 Joanna Bartell
737 Recording Secretary