



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 4, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Belmont Mill Tioga Meeting Room

Chairman Ruth Mooney called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Also, present were Selectman Jon Pike, Selectmen Claude Patten, Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, Assistant Town Administrator Alicia Jipson, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Public Works Director Craig Clairmont, Finance Director Katherine Davis via Zoom, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Sarah Weeks via Zoom, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Superintendent Mike Tursi, Kevin Sturgeon, and Norm Hebert.

Pledge of Allegiance

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Abatements, Exemptions & Credits

The appropriate abatements, exemptions, and credits were signed by all attending Board members.

Minutes

Selectman Claude Patten moved the minutes of the meeting held on September 13, 2021, as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Jon Pike moved the minutes of the meeting held on September 20, 2021, as written; seconded by Selectman Claude Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Discussion with property owner of 133 Main Street relative to Parking- Owner Norm Hebert gave his opinion and overview of the situation on 133 Main Street and the parking. Says he was approached by a Belmont Police Officer one day and instructed that he cannot park there as it has been posted as no parking. Norm felt the officer was very rude during their interaction. He has noticed the No parking sign on Main Street and in front of his house and has inquired with the State and the Town. He called the NHDOT and realized that he was inadvertently not notified of the new changes. Mr. Hebert then went to D3 office to apply for a driveway permit, in which he was denied. Mr. Hebert States that he spoke with legal counsel, and he has a prescriptive easement. Parking has been allowed in front of the

property for some 100+ years. Mr. Hebert feels this will drastically reduce the value of the property. Mr. Hebert Stated that he is aware and understand the Town's decision on making it no parking due to the traffic and left turns and agrees. Mr. Hebert would like to work this out with the Town. Selectman Mooney commented that this intersection has been an issue for years. As a Board they have been pushing the State to address the intersection. It is in the State's current 10- year plan to address real soon and we don't know what will become of that intersection yet. They are starting site work and planning on the intersection now; this is a public safety issue. We have had many close calls at that intersection. We have to listen to our residents who use that stretch of road. Selectman Mooney also asked if the deed States that he has parking and if so, does it show where? Police Chief Mark Lewandoski asked to speak and explained that the interaction between Mr. Hebert and the fellow Police Officer was inaccurate, as the Chief was sitting close by in an unmarked police cruiser and was listening to the whole conversation. Police Chief Lewandoski Stated that during the discussion Mr. Hebert acknowledge the traffic and safety issue to the police officer as they were standing outside. Police Chief Lewandoski added that Mr. Hebert has an opportunity given to him by his neighbor Susan Woodbury to park on the side of her building, but that Mr. Hebert's interaction with Mrs. Woodbury had gone poorly. Police Chief Lewandoski also added that there is no legal parking in front of his property, that it is a roadway and traffic is very different now than it was back 100 years ago and even different than 20 years ago. Selectman Mooney added that the Town went to the State asking for relief for safety concerns. Traffic has changed in the last 20 years, and all through traffic comes through that intersection. Selectman Mooney is apologetic of the situation, but it seems that there is an opportunity to work with his neighbor on the parking, but the Town is not going to change the no parking sign due to safety concerns.

TA Beaudin added that the Town was under no requirement to provide notice to any of the property owners. It was a complete oversight accident that Mr. Hebert was missed in our notice and apologizes for that mishap. It was not done intentionally. Mr. Hebert added that he spoke with Bill Lambert from the State, and he seems to think that the parking behind the utility poll is less invasive and that may be an option for parking. Police Chief Lewandoski replied back that was never a parking area. That is a part of Nelson Court, and it is too close to the intersection and would violate the RSA. You would not have a view going South. Mr. Hebert offered a solution of making a few of the parking spots that are 1-hour only parking into full time parking and that would give him a spot to park in. Police Chief Lewandoski replied back that if that were to happen the apartments above the store would also park there and then there would be no parking for the Convenience store, Barbara shop, Comic Bookstore or for Town Business. Those living in the apartments above the store park across the street in municipal parking as can Mr. Hebert. Selectman Pike added that all this is a moot point at this time, adding that society has changed traffic has changed and as a Town and as a Board so do, we. To Selectman Pike's point Selectman Mooney's final comment was that we are leaving the no parking signs due to safety concerns unless the State come to us and tells us to remove them. Selectman Pike motioned to move on from this discussion and that the signs won't be removed unless the State tells us otherwise; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motioned passed unanimously.

Discussion with Kevin Sturgeon relative to Depot Street- Kevin Sturgeon addressed the Board in regard to his concerns on his property. From his upper driveway to the catch basin, there is a waterline that has caved in. Mr. Sturgeon is asking if the Town will put in a patch at the end of his driveway. Selectman Mooney responded to Mr. Sturgeon's request stating that we hired an engineer to look at this with his previous request, and asked if those issues were addressed in the report? We will look over the report and see if it was addressed and have the DPW Director Craig Clairmont come out and take a look at the issue as well.

Special School District Meeting- Superintendent of Schools Mike Tursi addressed the Board stating that the District has posted for a special meeting. We have an opportunity in front of us for the school to address space needs at BES. With the addition of Kindergarten at BES we have had a big space crunch. The space needs have been a discussion we have had for years. We have an opportunity to address and to add two additional classrooms to the school by utilizing funds. HB2 passed last spring and in that bill, it gave the Department of education the ability to compare our average daily membership for the 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 numbers. Our numbers went down for 2021 due to Covid-19 with parents opting for alternate schooling options, either deciding to homeschool, enroll in online schools and or moving to private schools. Once they gave us our estimate for adequacy, we are looking at an additional \$687,000 to be allowed into the district. We will be reserving those funds for the additional classrooms. With the \$687,000 and over \$300,000 in ESSER funds we could potentially take care of this project with both of these funds without going to the taxpayers. The estimate that we have on the table to do the addition is around \$975,000. Selectman Mooney asked if the current library, gym, and cafeteria will be able to hold the addition of the kids. Mr. Tursi responded that the two rooms will house support staff. Selectman Mooney also inquired if they have looked into portables. Mr. Tursi responded that yes, they have, and they have actually signed a three-year lease on two portable that are being delivered. We need a permanent solution as we are seeing an increase in the need for special services thus the need for the support staff and the space for them and the services. Selectman Pike asked Mr. Tursi if he would show his support on proposing boat tax being earmarked for the school tax. Mr. Tursi responded that he will support anything that favors the school and reducing the tax burden on the taxpayers.

Property Maintenance Code Discussion- Fire Chief Newhall Stated that we have been dealing with property issues for many years. If we adopt the IPMC Building Codes, then we have more teeth when we go to court. We won't need to recreate codes it is already done; we just need to adopt them. This will work with Building and the Fire Department. Selectman Pike asked Chief Newhall if he would attend a Planning Board meeting and get their approval on this.

Capital Budget Items- TA Beaudin provided a list of the capital items. This packet was provided by Interim Town Planner Candace Daigle and then the Planning Board will approve. The purpose of handing this out was as an informational piece, nothing to discuss today. It will go to the Planning Board for their discussion. The accrued liability fund, we have a number of possible and planned retirements in 2022, and we will need to increase that budget to cover those, and we have put funds in for anticipation of what we want to do with the Mill building. We have a balance of just under \$100,000. We did not appropriate any money into that account in 2020. Selectman Mooney suggested that we put money in to get rid of the old bank building, suggesting that we increase the fund to \$300,000. TA Beaudin also suggested that we want to look at putting money aside for another property revaluation that is going to be due for 2024. Selectman Mooney responded that it is unfortunate that the warrant article did not pass last year with doing a yearly statistical revaluation, so that the changes are more even flow with the market. TA Beaudin added that the Board will have an opportunity to address capital items when the department heads come forward.

Ratify New Hire Belmont Fire Department- Fire Chief Mike Newhall discussed that former employee Katelyn Downs left Belmont to seek employment with the City of Manchester. We put out a new ad and received a handful of applications. Out of the applications we selected Kaylee Downs. She lives in New Durham. She is a great Firefighter, and we are really happy to add her to our team.

TA Beaudin added that she had a fellow Town Administrator reach out and say that Kaylee was a great choice for a hire. Selectman Pike motioned to accept Fire Chief Newhall's recommendation and hire Kaylee Downs to the Belmont Fire Department; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

New Hire Vacation/Sick- TA Beaudin provided the Board with the new language for the vacation and sick time policy. TA Beaudin polled all department heads and did not get any negative comments back. I believe it is generic enough to cover all. It did not identify what was the length of the probationary period. It is TA Beaudin's recommendation that you make the changes retroactive to January 1, 2021. We have had a number of new hires and they may feel better knowing they are being included in this change.

Durrell Mountain Road- TA Beaudin provided the Board with a draft of the road assessment from Underwood Engineer. Our part-time employee Ann Chabot is going to conduct the traffic count for us. She is going to be out at the end of Durrell Mountain Road to get a full view of the traffic. She will be there this week and next week. DPW Director Craig Clairmont made every effort to reach out to other communities and they did not have the electronic counters to lend us. Ann was willing to take the task on and understood the task at hand and will do that for us. Once we are able to add that additional information into that report, we will have a final report. We have seen deterioration and once we see the traffic counts, we can see the picture better. This will allow us to go back to the new owner and open up the conversation about the repair. Craig did get an estimate from Wolcott for the shim work that he would like to do on Durrell Mountain to get us through the winter, that quote came in at \$16,49.50 we have \$7,500 in Capital Reserve. We can't expend the full amount so we could take \$7,000 from that and then take the rest of the funds from Highway Block Grants. \$5,000 will be going into that account in March. Craig really needs to move on this as winter is nearing. TA Beaudin has asked for the excavation reports in Gilford to see if what that they are reporting measures up to what we are seeing in traffic numbers.

ARPA Funds- Police Chief Mark Lewandoski is here to speak regarding body cameras for the Police Department. Mark has been gathering information from our numerous reps who work with the GOFFER program. The Town is slated to receive \$785,000 in ARPA funds and we have earmarked around \$450,000 to \$475,000 for the repair of well 1. TA Beaudin has reviewed the program and feels that the cameras could be an allowable use of the funds. Evan Boulanger has provided the summary of the increase in crime to help support the need. Police Chief Mark Lewandoski explained that as we have discussed before it is a matter of when not if, that the body cameras will be required. The cost from Axon is going to be \$81,232.70. They do the soup to nuts for us, they will supply 20 body cameras, they will supply us 60 cameras over 5 years. Every 2.5 years they will change out the cameras and update the software. We have the ability to purge camera footage at the point we see fit. Selectman Mooney asked if a camera is damaged does our insurance cover it? Police Chief responded that Axon covers that, and they replace it. Overall, this is a great program, it is a little more expensive, but it works more into our needs, and they provide more services. TA Beaudin commented that we did get a 2nd quote, but the 2 quotes do not compare and are not apples to apples when you compare services and what you get. The intent would be to fully fund this purchase with the ARPA funds. TA Beaudin has had numerous discussions with Representative Dough Trottier to see if funds will be coming from the State, and the Police Chief has looked at grants, but the grants only cover the cameras and not the service. TA Beaudin

is comfortable recommending that the Board can use these funds for this purpose. We have Evan's report for the need due to the pandemic and the report on the two proposals and why we are going with Axon vs the other proposal. Selectman Mooney motioned that we move forward with the purchase of 20 body cameras with a total cost of \$81,232.70 with funds taken from ARPA funds; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

NH 107 at Middle Route- TA Beaudin provided the Board with a letter sent by the NHDOT in regard to the signage on NH 107 and Middle Route. They are having their sign crew further evaluate the location of the sign and they will get back to us on some sort of recommendation on that.

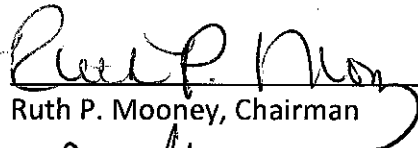
Budget Meeting- TA Beaudin asked the Board if they were free October 6th, 13th and 20th to conduct department budget reviews. Meeting would start at 9:00 am and run until 11:00 am.

Non-Public Session

Chairman Ruth Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 11:15 am. Roll call was taken and those present and voting were Ruth Mooney, Jon Pike and Claude Patten. Also, present were TA Beaudin, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, and Assistant Town Administrator Alicia Jipson, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, and Finance Director Katherine Davis.

Discussion was had on applications submitted for the open Highway Foreman position in the DPW, with Craig's recommendation for hire.

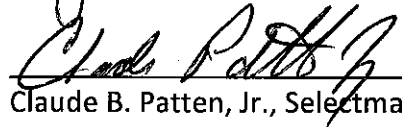
The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.



Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman



Jon Pike, Vice-Chairman



Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman