



# Office of Board of Selectmen

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**Selectmen's Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, January 3, 2023, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Belmont Mill**  
**Tioga Meeting Room**

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude Patten, Jr., TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, Director of Public Works Craig Clairmont, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Code Enforcement Officer Mark Ekberg, and Cemetery Trustee Sharon Ciampi. Via Zoom were TC/TC Assistant Leigh Smith, Assistant Fire Chief Deb Black and Land Use Technician Karen Santoro.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Minutes:**

Selectman Claude Patten moved the minutes of the public meeting held on December 19, 2022 as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

### **Mill Discussion – Bond or Capital Reserve Fund Options:**

Chairman Ruth Mooney explained quotes had been received for the renovations and a decision needs to be made on whether to add more funds to the Capital Reserve Fund or to bond out the project. The Board had also requested information about bond rates. Finance Director Katherine Davis said there are several options. There is money in the Municipal Facilities Capital Reserve Fund, which is for all Town buildings. It was originally anticipated that \$300,000.00 would be budgeted for 2023. There is a bond savings of just over \$48,000.00 left from the Police Department building. A warrant article has been developed for 2023 to reappropriate those funds towards the Mill renovations with no tax impact. Finance Director Davis checked the bond bank and rates are over 5%. Rates are increasing to borrow money. Selectman Pike proposed that if the Town is able to invest money at approximately 4.25%, and the bond rate is 5%, it will only cost 1% if we use our own funds. Chairman Mooney noted there could be times where there is not a lot of money in that investment account such as before tax bills. Selectman Pike suggested leaving the 2022 appropriation of \$300,000.00 in the investment fund to let it earn as much as possible. Chairman Mooney asked if there are limitations on spending the earnings from the investment fund. Finance Director Davis stated the earnings will become part of the budget. The more money we know we will receive, the more we can budget for. There are timing issues, and there are rules from DRA for earmarking funds. Generally, for transparency those items go on the ballot with a note that there is a zero-

dollar tax impact for the article. Chairman Mooney clarified that some planning will be required to utilize the investment fund earnings.

TA Jipson suggested the bond would be a hefty amount and it may be best to consider increasing the appropriation for the Municipal Facilities account to \$500,000.00 and specifically earmarking an amount for the Mill renovations. This would leave funds for other building needs. Finance Director Davis reported there is approximately \$467,000.00 in that account after 2022 transfers. For 2023, \$300,000.00 has been earmarked for Municipal Facilities, but that amount could still be increased. Chairman Mooney does not feel comfortable bringing a bond forward. Selectman Pike and Selectman Patten concurred. Selectman Pike would like to leave any earnings in the investment account to continue accruing interest. Next year it could be used to pay down the tax rate or it could be put towards the Mill.

There was discussion about how much the tax rate would change if the appropriation was increased by \$200,000.00. That will require some research. Selectman Pike said if we stop with the renovations now, we have failed. Chairman Mooney observed the first thing to address is the elevator, and we have the funds to do that. When we address the elevator the second floor up will be shut down for a period of time, but we need to move forward. Unfortunately, the most expensive part of the Mill renovations is the elevator, heating and HVAC.

**Building & Grounds Cost Estimate for Mill Reno First Floor:**

Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden generated an estimate to get the first floor of the Mill set up to temporarily hold meetings when the elevator repairs are taking place. A deep clean, painting the walls and floors, putting in chairs and making cosmetic changes would be about \$1,500.00. TA Jipson will need to get a quote to move the audio-visual equipment. It may be possible to temporarily use Zoom only and not use the Livestream equipment. B&G Supervisor Golden estimates it will take about 2-3 weeks to do the deep clean and painting. He asked if it would be possible to start soon because winter is slower, and spring is very busy. Chairman Mooney recommended starting the project.

*Selectman Pike moved to spend \$1,500.00 to get the first floor ready for a temporary meeting space; seconded by Selectman Patten. The motion passed unanimously.*

B & G Supervisor Golden is concerned that the Mill building does not have a generator and it is very expensive to heat the building back up after a power outage. He suggested having a generator that would only run the heating system. Chairman Mooney suggested looking for grants for municipal buildings that may help fund a generator. There was discussion about the Mill being designated as an emergency shelter. B & G Supervisor Golden will look for more information on what it would take for a generator for the heating system.

**Union Ratification – Fire Department:**

The Fire Department Union has accepted the terms of the contract. All looks well. This is a three-year contract.

**Parks & Rec Request to accept online payments:**

Parks & Rec Director Danielle St. Onge provided the Board with some printed examples of how the online payments would look. This is the same system the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office is already using. It is free to the Town and the user pays the fees. It was the consensus of the Board to allow Parks & Rec to accept online payments through EB2.gov. This will also be more secure and save on administrative costs.

**Meals & Rooms Tax Distribution:**

Finance Director Davis reported the State has provided the 2022 Rooms & Meals Distribution of \$646,602.75 on December 27, 2022.

The Town has also received Bridge Aid of \$125,888, which will be noticed to accept at a public hearing. There is conflicting information from NHMA, and this is a one-time thing. It will need to be setup a specific way in advance, but it was not received until 4 days before the year closed.

**Other New Business: None**

**Old Business:**

**South Road Trash Collection Issue:**

Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman reported an issue where two households were receiving Belmont curbside trash collection when they should be using Northfield's service. One property has all of their frontage in Belmont, but the bulk of their property and their home are in Northfield. The other property is landlocked entirely in Northfield but uses the neighbor's frontage in Belmont as an easement to access the property. The Town of Northfield was contacted, and the two households were notified of the change in service to Northfield for the future.

**NHPDIP Update:**

Finance Director Davis has started to coordinate the paperwork to move forward with an NHPDIP account based on the consensus of the Board. The interest rate is about 4%. Signatures are required to complete the ACH transfers and a dollar amount to transfer will be needed. There was discussion about the Town's current account balances. Our current cash position is strong. The account is very secure, and funds can be transferred whenever needed.

*Selectman Pike moved to transfer \$5,000,000.00 to the NHPDIP account; seconded by Selectman Mooney, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Finance Director Davis maintained that TA Jipson is always apprised of the Town's cash situation and there are times when cash flow is tight such as December and June. The accounts will need to be watched closely.

**Additional 2022 Encumbrances to Approve:**

Finance Director Davis announced there are a few more encumbrances to approve that came up since the last meeting.

The additional amount is \$89,037.96. This includes Ossipee Mountain Electronics for the Fire Department remote speaker, microphone and charger for the command vehicle upfit with invoices for \$2,167.60 and \$2,350.16; some changes with the Police Department cruiser leases for 2023 of \$31,797.60 to carry it forward for the signed contract; CAI Technologies for the Land Use tax map update for \$1,200.00; \$31,779.60 to offset the cost for the new Police Department cruiser lease due to the budget cycle and COSSAP's payment for the PET cruiser; and \$19,761.00 due to a contract increase for the sewer fund from the Winni River Basin replacement fund.

*Selectman Pike moved to add \$89,037.96 to the 2022 encumbrances; seconded by Selectman Patten. The motion passed unanimously.*

There was some discussion about the sewer breaks on Route 140 and the State billing process, and if a camera had been sent through the lines. The Board would like to request a breakdown of the bills for each break. We are being charged for multiple sewer line breaks in the same area. TA Jipson noted there is a meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. Chairman Mooney will attend the meeting.

**Other Old Business:****Cemetery Trustees:**

Selectman Pike reported the Cemetery Trustees had some difficulty a few years ago with some trees at the Bartlett Cemetery. The original quote for the work was \$20,000.00 but they have been able to get the work done for \$3,000.00. Selectman Pike thanked the Trustees for taking care of this.

**Emergency Management:**

Chairman Mooney asked for clarification from Fire Chief Newhall on the recent situation with the power outage and use of Belmont High School as an emergency location. A meeting has been requested with Department Heads. With many power outages, Chief Newhall opened the EOC which goes the State level and if there is funding it will funnel back to our community. There was no power to the High School building and there were multiple problems with the generator. It has not been tested and run and exercised recently. Fortunately, power came back on but they may have had to look at using the Middle School because it also has a generator. Chief Newhall stressed that because these locations are in our Emergency Operations Manual, they have to be operational for that purpose. There are concerns about students in the buildings if the power goes out and there is an emergency.

Chairman Mooney asked the Chief if he is responsible for checking on the operation of the generators at the emergency locations. Chief Newhall accepted some responsibility, but

acknowledged that the Fire and Police Department generators exercise themselves regularly so that any issues can be addressed, and the assumption was that it was the same situation at the schools. A letter is being sent to the school from the Fire Department requesting regular records showing the generators are in working condition. This is a big concern, and the Emergency Management plan needs some finetuning. Selectman Pike requested a meeting be scheduled immediately with the school and Town departments. Selectman Mooney concluded it is unacceptable for students to be in the buildings without working generators. Chief Newhall will be sending a letter to the School Board and will CC the Town. Emergency locations are for use when there is an emergency, and they need to be operational. The first location is the Belmont High School, the second location is Belmont Middle School, and the third location is the casino. There was discussion about the need for generators to operate the pellet-driven heating systems at the school buildings. Chairman Mooney confirmed there are a lot of questions that need to be asked.

**Park & Ride Lighting:**

B & G Supervisor Golden informed the Board that the new lights are up and working well. The project is complete.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 am.

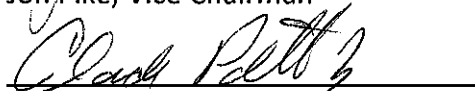
**Non-Public:**

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c) at 10:59 am. Selectman Patten seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Roll call was taken and those present, and voting were Jon Pike, Ruth Mooney and Claude Patten, Jr. Also present was TA Alicia Jipson, Police Chief Mark Lewandowski, TC/TC Cynthia Deroy, CEO/BI Mark Ekberg, Mr. Walker. The Board returned to public session at 12:25 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 pm.

  
Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

  
Jon Pike, Vice Chairman

  
Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman