



# Office of Board of Selectmen

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**Selectmen's Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, February 6, 2023, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Belmont Mill, 14 Mill Street**  
**Tioga Meeting Room**

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude Patten, Jr., TA Alicia Jipson, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cynthia DeRoy, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, Parks & Recreation Director Danielle St. Onge, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Assistant Fire Chief Deb Black, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Lieutenant Evan Boulanger, Officer Richy Bryant, Captain Stephen Akerstrom, Cemetery Trustee Sharon Ciampi, and Code Enforcement Officer Mark Ekberg. Via Zoom were Finance Director Katherine Davis, Acting Town Planner Karen Santoro, J. Thomas, L. Smith, E. Gilbert.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Minutes

Selectman Claude Patten moved the minutes of the public meeting held on January 17, 2023, as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

## New Business

**Fire Department Pinning and Swearing in Ceremony-** Fire Chief Mike Newhall commented that pinning's and swearing ins had fallen behind during COVID and they are catching up. Today we are recognizing the following: Trevor Gilbert, Maddison Hebert and James Hayes to be sworn in by TC/TC Cynthia DeRoy. Newhall then commented that after a firefighter's probationary period, and they become full-time firefighters, badges are "pinned" and displayed on uniforms. Badges are no longer metal per NFPA regulations, so embroidered badges will be distributed and "pinned" onto the uniforms later. Timothy Moar, Nathan Phillips and Thomas Ryan received their badges. Nathan Manville was unable to attend.

**Years of Service Awards-** Chairman Mooney stated there was an unintentional oversight in 2021 and Employee Years of Service were not recognized.

The following employees were recognized:

Joshua Huestis – 5 years  
Sean McCarty – 20 years  
Thomas Murphy – 20 years  
Chris Clairmont – 10 years  
Claude Patten – 15 years

Cynthia DeRoy – 15 years

Richy Bryant – 35 years

**Community Power Information-** Ms. Emily Manns works with Standard Power to provide energy services and they are an energy broker. She gave an overview of their program. It provides competitive renewable energy for industrial, commercial, and municipal programs. The program is new to NH but there are hundreds around the country. The municipal program has no taxpayer cost, no impact to the budget and participants can come and go at any time. There is a contract period. Chairman Mooney clarified that the program works where the Town joins the program, but individuals can come and go on the plan anytime. The program allows the Town to “bundle” electricity customers together to purchase power. It only affects the supply line on electric bills. Some examples of scenarios were presented in a handout to show how a program like this could work for cost savings, along with information about choices for service, renewable energy and more. The program is for eligible customers who are not already on competitive supply. Right now people can choose their own competitive supplier by opting in. This program will enroll people unless they opt out. Community Power can host public hearings and meetings for outreach. A couple of different products should be offered and public input, community surveys, Facebook, flyers, and posters are used for outreach. There is a question on the survey about using renewable energy if it was comparable or less expensive. Products and a draft plan are designed based on survey results. Any electrical assistance benefit residents receive is unaffected by this new program. Residents with solar can also participate.

If the Town would like to proceed, the first step is to appoint a committee. Chairman Mooney asked if this program is regulated by the PUC. Ms. Manns answered that it is; a plan is filed with them for review and comment. It goes through regulatory review. This does go to Town Meeting. It can go through the PUC first. The committee does not have a required number of members, but 5 or 7 community members is recommended. The committee is not made up of Town staff however they can attend the meetings. The committee will create a plan with public input, but Community Power has some templates that can be used as a starting point. Chairman Mooney wants the Board to digest and understand everything before making a decision. It would be hard to make this work if the Town is unable to find enough volunteers to be on this committee so it would need to be publicized in the newsletter, etc. This would be a year-long committee whose duties would end when the plan is approved. There are 12 towns in New Hampshire in the program right now, with 11 anticipated to be added this cycle. This program is intended for residential customers and municipal facilities may not want to use this program. TA Jipson asked about a short survey that could be done to determine if residents have any interest in using this type of program before appointing a committee, whose responsibility it would be to reach out to residents. The Board will contact Ms. Manns after they have done some additional research.

**New National Opioid Settlement Participation-** There is a new settlement the Town can participate in that is pursuing Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart.

*Selectman Pike moved to agree to participate in the "New National Opioid Settlements" and to allow TA Jipson to execute all required documentation as needed. The motion was seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.*

**Opioid Funding Request – PD Trunarc Laser-** A request has been made to use some of the previously received funds. TA Jipson contacted the Deputy Attorney General to help determine whether this request is allowable, however the RSA is not very specific. This use is defensible under the RSA.

Police Chief Mark Lewandoski and Lieutenant Evan Boulanger presented their request. Lt. Boulanger explained this a safety request for police officers and personnel. This is not a tool to generate more drug arrests. Drugs are generally field-tested for probable cause by scooping the product out of a baggie/package. Officers are often trying to test with other people around, and in adverse weather conditions. He said Chief Newhall provides Narcan for the evidence and booking room in case an officer is exposed. This is a handheld device with a laser that goes through plastic bag and tells you exactly what it is out of a couple of hundred drugs. It only has to be done once, and it reduces contact and exposure with dangerous substances. The drugs would still need to be sent out to a lab for court purposes, but the report this unit generates will bolster probable cause. This machine will know more drugs than any individual police officer. There will be one unit for everyone to share. The department has been working on this for over a decade but there have been no grants have been available for this type of thing. These funds have a narrow window for what they can be used for. The department is looking at the "pay per scan" program and they anticipate using the unit about 100-200 times per year. There are à la carte options from \$17,000 with a 1-year warranty and training, up to \$21,600 for a 5-year warranty and training. The warranty is important because this is an expensive piece of equipment. Batteries are \$900. There would be a savings with the 5-year warranty. There is currently approximately \$35,000 in Opioid Settlement Funds available for use. The scans are about \$4.58 each and the system will need to be "pre-loaded" with some scans so the final number will be approximately \$23,000. It comes with 100 scans and they offer them in increments of 250 scans. 300 should get the department through the rest of this year and part of next year. Generally the shift supervisor would have the unit because they visit these types of scenes. Selectman Patten asked how long the unit will last. Does a new one need to be purchased every 5 years? Lt. Boulanger stated Gilford has had their unit for over 10 years and they have had no issues with it. This unit could be used on packages found at overdoses and it could help inform EMTs how to properly treat patients based on the drug found. Under the Good Samaritan Law people can't be arrested for reporting an overdose, but the drugs can be seized so it is good for officers to know what the drug is. Lt. Boulanger said this can be used town-wide, and it analyzes pills also. This could also be helpful for EMTs if a patient is unconscious and can't identify their prescription medications. Chairman Mooney thinks that this is the type of program these funds should be used for rather than the funds sitting unused.

*Selectman Pike moved to approve the purchase of a Trunarc Laser for the Belmont Police Department, with funds to come from the Opioid Settlement funds in accordance with RSA 126-a:86. The motion was seconded by Chairman Mooney and the motion passed unanimously.*

**PET (Prevention, Enforcement & Treatment) Officer Update-** Chief Lewandoski and Officer Richy Bryant gave an overview of his PET Officer duties. He started at the end of June in the new position. He locates people who are struggling with homelessness or addiction, and it is his job to follow up with families and parents. He is helping and offering hope with no bias. The majority of the population he is working with are 28-44. He has coordinated with the General Assistance Director to assist some people. Officer Bryant works domestic calls and calls with young kids. He has gone to court with some of his clients. Many have no license, and they are trying to figure out how to make things work. There are a few clients doing very well and he checks in with them by text, in person or email. If they don't respond, we know they are struggling. Addiction is a big stumbling block to the next step of being productive.

Officer Bryant is still covering the School Resource Officer (SRO) job, so he does spend time in the schools. Chief Lewandoski said they are close to having the SRO position filled so that will give Officer Bryant more time to stay focused on the PET job. It is hard for people to ask for help. There are a lot of daily interactions, including texts at 2 am. There are 6 communities in the whole state that have PET Officers. This program is modeled on what Eric Adams has done in Laconia. There are grant reporting periods every three months.

**Parks & Rec Request to Hire Part-Time Program Director-** Parks & Recreation Director Danielle St. Onge stated the 2022 and 2023 budgets included funding for a part-time Summer Camp Program Director. The candidate selected for the position previously held a similar position prior to COVID.

*Selectman Patten moved to hire Nicole Sturgeon as the part-time Program Director; seconded by Selectman Pike and the motion passed unanimously.*

**Deliberative Session Update** – The Deliberative Session went well. TA Jipson worked after the session on Saturday to publish the Voter's Guide with copies at the Town Hall and Library, as well as posting it to the Town website. Voters can take the Guide with them into the voting booth if they would like. The guides include background information, legal explanations of the articles, and some include estimated tax impact information. There was discussion about additional locations to provide the Guide for more exposure and including a notice on the Park & Ride message board.

Cemetery Trustee Sharon Ciampi asked if she could make a comment about the Deliberative Session and Chairman Mooney allowed it. S. Ciampi said that she was under a time limit while making some of her remarks on Saturday, and her comments about visiting the Heritage Commission did not come out the way she wanted them to, and she feels that she owes the Heritage Commission an apology. She will send them a letter but wanted to apologize in a public forum. She visited the Commission in August and they had a good meeting. The

Commission was supportive of projects and offered some resources. They were very supportive, but she thinks her comments implied that that they were not helpful, which in fact they were supportive.

### **Other New Business**

**Park Attendant (Sargent Park)-** Parks & Recreation would like to start advertising for the Park Attendant position at Sargent Park to start in March on weekends. This position was included in the budget.

*Selectman Pike moved to approve advertising for a part-time Park Attendant for Sargent Park to start in March. The motion was seconded by Chairman Mooney.*

**Generator Quote for Mill-** Building & Grounds obtained a quote for the supply and installation of a generator for the heating panel at \$12,400. This generator would only power the circulators and furnace. In order to power the whole building, it would need a serious generator like the Police Department has. There was discussion about whether it is best to purchase this generator that may be able to be used elsewhere if a full generator is obtained for the Mill building in the future. Building & Grounds did some additional research and determined that the generator alone would be \$6,000 for the Town to purchase, without any installation and connection services. The quote is realistic. There were two instances this winter that were concerning. Over three days the Mill used 200 gallons of fuel. Building & Grounds carefully manages control of the heating system because the Mill building cools off so quickly. The cost is for a gas generator. It can't be stored in the Mill building. The Board will think about their options. It makes sense to secure the building so there are no freeze-ups. TA Jipson recommended obtaining a quote for a full-size generator that would run the Mill. The Board concurred that after the elevator, a full building generator would be the next big item to consider.

**Grant Overview from State of NH-** Town administration is checking to see if the Town would qualify for a particular community center investment program based on having General Assistance, Parks & Recreation and the Senior Center at the Mill building. There are a couple of other grants they will be researching as well. Finance Director Katherine Davis said the first grant opportunity is 100% federally funded and the award programs are up to \$500,000 per project. Typically, that can be matched with a USDA Rural grant to fulfill the total cost of the project. Right now, is grant application season.

**School Resource Officer (SRO)-** There is now a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town and the Shaker Regional School District for the SRO. Chief Lewandoski and TA Jipson reviewed the MOU along with the Board, the Town's attorney, and Primex. The MOU clearly states that the Shaker Regional School District (SRSD) shall be responsible for reimbursement to the Town for the SRO's wages, taxes, and benefits in the amount approved by the SRSD with quarterly reimbursements to the Town. Selectman Pike asked if the SRO will be getting a car. Chief Lewandoski responded that there will be a vehicle available, but he

anticipates the SRO will use his own personal vehicle. If there is a specific need for a vehicle the department will ensure that they provide assistance. The School Board will vote on this Tuesday evening.

**Town Planner-** The Planning Board requested TA Jipson's assistance working with MRI to fill our Town Planner position. The Planning Board feels that MRI's resources would provide better candidate options. The notices have been posted with an updated job description. MRI will do all of the resume intake and initial interviews and provide recommendations to us at the end of the process.

**"workcampNE" Summer Camp Program-** TA Jipson was approached by a resident asking the Town to consider this summer program for Belmont. High school students pay to go to camp and then go to a specific town to do volunteer community service. The group will set up at the high school or middle school and get recommendations from the Town or Welfare Director of residents who may need assistance. Some of their target projects are roofing, painting, wheelchair ramps, minor cosmetic repairs and more. TA Jipson met with School Superintendent Mike Tursi and General Assistance Director Donna Cilley about the program, and they will be coming to Belmont in July. The Town will be collecting the names of people who need help and there are some great references from the School District. Projects will be evaluated based on need, and availability and skills of students. The Town is also looking for local electricians and plumbers to help assist with services during that one week. There is a detailed list of covered and non-covered services. Building permits will be pulled by the program on behalf of the homeowners. Campers will be staying at the school buildings off-hours, and they bring their own cooks, adult supervisors, and beds. They provide all of the supplies for the projects. CEO Mark Ekberg questioned if any necessary permits would be issued by the Town with no fee. Chairman Mooney said fees would be waived for this organization.

**Wells at Lakes Region Manufactured Housing Cooperative-** There are two new wells being drilled which will primarily affect Lakewood Drive. The well company wanted to inform the Town that those residents will temporarily be on portable water.

**4-H Fairgrounds/Events-** The 4-H organization is looking into bringing back some additional shows and agricultural events. They are trying to raise funds to add activities to the property. Last year they put in a request to get permission for their fair, but the Planning Department did not issue approval until after the fair was over. Chairman Mooney would like to meet with Acting Planner Karen Santoro and someone from the fairgrounds to determine the best solution. Acting Planner Karen Santoro said a Special Events Request can be submitted, and then it is reviewed, and they get an email approval. If there are no specific dates yet, a meeting can be set up to review.

Selectman Patten reported he was approached by the 4-H organization to see what is involved in getting permission to host RVs over Motorcycle Week. It would be no more than 20

self-contained RVs. There would be no tents. Chairman Mooney will set up a meeting with 4-H and the Planner.

### **Other Old Business**

#### **Purchasing Policy Acceptance-**

*Selectman Pike moved to table acceptance of the Purchasing Policy to the next meeting; seconded by Selectman Patten, and the motion passed unanimously.*

**Mountain Lake Village Request-** TA Jipson received a letter to be signed, stating that the City of Laconia is looking to extend their water and sewer services to Belmont's Mountain Lake residential lots.

*Selectman Patten moved to concur with the City of Laconia to extend water and sewer services to residential lots in Belmont to service Mountain Lake Village, LLC; seconded by Selectman Pike, and the motion passed unanimously.*

**Mill First Floor Update-** There is a temporary meeting room downstairs in the event that the elevator starts to get worked on. The new room has been dubbed "The Corner Meeting House Room". Chairman Mooney asked about the cost to get technology downstairs. It will be expensive to move all of the equipment for a short time period. TA Jipson noted there are some members on Planning and Zoning with hearing issues who tap into the audio equipment in the Tioga Room to participate in meetings. That may still need to be addressed to accommodate their needs. B&G Supervisor Patrick Golden reported the acoustics in the temporary meeting room are much better with the lower ceiling. Chairman Mooney recommended those members with hearing impairments stop in to "test out" the acoustics in the temporary meeting room to determine if it is adequate for their needs. TA Jipson noted that Zoom could still be used, and the meetings recorded through Zoom.

**Code Violations Update-** CEO Mark Ekberg provided the Board with an updated list of violations. In the last 18 months, 45 violations have been closed. Johnson Street is currently in the attorney's hands. There has been no update since December when there was supposed to be a hearing to establish ownership.

The owner of 130 Depot Street has stated he is not going to be getting rid of the cars. A tire recycler could come get the tires, but the access for loading them doesn't exist until the front of the property is cleaned up.

CEO Ekberg has not been able to maintain communications with the owner at 752 Laconia Road. There has been no update from the attorney. It is unlikely access could be gained for a proper inspection.

One of the Durrell Mountain Road properties has cleaned about 75% of the scrap and debris.

TA Jipson explained that property can be liened for cleanup costs, but it doesn't mean that it won't get filled up again. The Town would remain a lienholder. There was discussion about going to court, but they are lenient with property owners. It is CEO Ekberg's option that some type of legal decision would need to be made to allow the Town to clean up a property. Chairman Mooney reminded everyone that money was added to the legal line for this type of issue, and we need to get the opinion of a lawyer.

There was recently an update on activities at 194 Gilmanton Road that was in the local news. It appears that operations at the property are still active. TA Jipson reported it is in Legal's hands.

B&G Supervisor Golden asked if there has been any resolution with regards to the tree on Fuller Street. There is a resident who has a tree that is on the Town's fence and light that is expected to cause some future damage. TA Jipson stated letters have been sent to abutters to verify who owns the tree. The Town can take down the portion of the tree from the fence to the light, but it is recommended the entire tree come down. Selectman Pike would like to know what it would cost for DPW to take down the tree. A crane will be needed.

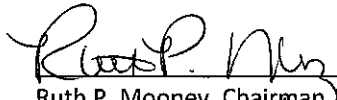
The library has sent an invitation for the library's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday, February 11th at 10:30am. There will be story time, crafts and snacks.

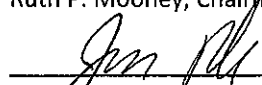
**Next Meeting** The next regular meeting will be **Tuesday, February 17, 2023, at 6:00 pm.**

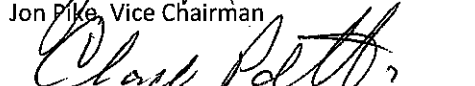
**Non-Public**

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c) at 12:10 pm. 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 were TA Alicia Jipson, and CEO Mark Ekberg. The Board returned to public session at 1:30 pm. Discussion was had on code enforcement matters and how to proceed going forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 pm.

  
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Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

  
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Jon Pike, Vice Chairman

  
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Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman