



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, Corner Meeting House Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude Patten, Jr., Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Town Planner Karen Santoro, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, Fire Chief Deb Black, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Library Director Eileen Gilbert, CEO Mark Ekberg and Conservation Commission Chair Denise Naiva.

Via Zoom were Town Clerk/Tax Collector Jenn Cashman and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Jenn Thomas.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes – 10/11/2023, 10/16/2023, 10/17/2023, 10/18/2023 (Public), 10/18/2023 (Non-Public) and 10/23/2023:

Selectman Sonny Patten moved the minutes of the Budget Workshop Meeting held on October 11, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike. Motion passed (4-0-1). Selectman Sharon Ciampi abstained because she did not attend the meeting.

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the Budget Workshop Meeting held on October 16, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Selectman Patten moved the minutes of the Budget Workshop Meeting held on October 17, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Selectman O'Hara moved the minutes of the public meeting held on October 18, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the non-public meeting held on October 18, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Selectman Patten moved the minutes of the Budget Workshop Meeting held on October 23, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

New Business:

Discontinue portion of Old NH Route 140 Request (164 Gilmanton Road Lot 241-019):

TA Alicia Jipson explained that Attorney Ethan Wood has asked the Board to consider putting forward a warrant article to discontinue a portion of Old NH Route 140. Town Planner Karen Santoro provided the Board with aerial photos and information from her research, including old deeds. There are two issues: there is no survey that marks the exact location of the old road, and there is a deed noting the discontinuance of the portion of the road however there are no Town documents to support that. There was discussion about using the discontinued portion as a new, safer access for the business located on the Condodemetraky property, which would require a state driveway permit. The Board had concerns about access to repair or replace the water tank in the future, and Attorney Wood said he would speak with his clients about granting an easement for the water tank maintenance. He also reported someone is working on a survey of the property now.

Selectman Pike moved to proceed with placing the proposed warrant article on the ballot to discontinue a portion of Old NH Route 140 encompassed by the property located at Map/Lot 241-019 per discussion with Attorney Wood; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

TA Jipson will send this information to Legal for review. Attorney Wood offered to provide any documents or title work if necessary.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Day Update:

The Board previously asked for data on how many residents and out of town people utilized the Household Hazardous Waste collection in Belmont. Belmont's site had 109 vehicles, with 62 residents, 35 from Gilmanton and 12 from other communities. There were 14 Belmont residents who visited other sites, for a total of 76 Belmont residents using the HHW collection services.

No Overnight Parking Consideration on Mill Street (Library, Pavilion, Mill area):

DPW Director Craig Clairmont and Police Chief Mark Lewandoski reviewed parking problems in the downtown area. The Traffic Ordinance was last updated in 2011. Mill Street currently has unrestricted parking, and there are no means to enforce vehicle movement in the winter or summer. This creates problems with snow removal in the winter and it is dangerous to pedestrians especially. The suggestion is to make the section of parking in front of the band stand on Mill Street available for overnight parking, and exclude overnight parking in all other downtown areas. There are 10 parking spots available in the area where overnight parking would be allowed. There was discussion about signage and what is considered "overnight parking" and it was determined that 7:00 pm to 7:00 am is overnight parking. Signage will be provided with a small bar noting the times in the event that the times need to change in the future. TA Jipson will notice a public hearing for the next Selectmen's meeting.

Other New Business:

Gale School/Lakes Region Community Developers (LRCD):

LRCD plans to hold a Gale School update meeting on November 29th, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Belmont Mill and they would like the Board to attend. The public is also invited to attend.

Old Business:

Amend 2024 Budget Requests:

The Board has received amended budget numbers from TA Jipson with a list of those that may change after open enrollment for insurance takes place, as well as a list of those that are finalized and will not change after open enrollment.

Selectman O'Hara moved to approve the following amended budgets as presented; seconded by Selectman Pike:

<i>Sewer</i>	<i>\$657,540.23</i>
<i>Water</i>	<i>\$275,158.34</i>
<i>General Assistance</i>	<i>\$199,670.40</i>
<i>Highway</i>	<i>\$1,309,323.66</i>
<i>Elections & Registration</i>	<i>\$24,811.27</i>

The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Chairman Mooney would like to wait to vote on any of the budgets that may have open enrollment changes. The Budget Committee will understand the numbers may be different due to insurance changes and that is easily explainable. The Board will take a look and finalize their budget votes before the last Budget Committee meeting.

Conservation Budget Continuance:

Conservation Commission Chairman Denise Naiva and Town Planner Karen Santoro reviewed the proposed 2024 budget. At the last meeting the Board was deadlocked 2-2 regarding an increase from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for invasive species, which includes invasives on land as well as in the lakes. NHDES provides matching funding for milfoil remediation on Lake Winnisquam and Silver Lake, and those lakes help contribute to the local economy. Visitors and residents use the lakes to swim, boat and fish and the Town Beach is an example of the importance of clean access. Boaters bring invasive species from other water bodies so monitors are hired for the boat ramp at Lake Winnisquam to help prevent that from happening. The Commission has a very small budget and that is why the increase looks so high. Wages increased some, and there is a trail bridge repair that is needed.

Chairman Mooney moved to approve the Conservation budget as presented for \$22,085.05; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Motion passed (3-2). Selectmen Patten and Pike were opposed.

Lakes Region Casino Update:

Selectman Pike reported they have brought in new machines and they are advertising. There are more cars in the lot when you go by. There is still some type of issue with the State gaming commission but right now the commission is tied up with problems at other casinos.

Ambulance Fund Balance:

TA Jipson reported the current balance is \$715,670.02; but funds still need to be transferred for the warrant articles including hoses, the ambulance deposit and the Engine 1 refurbishment. Without any additional revenue, the balance at year end will be approximately \$422,953.00. The refurbish will not be done until February but will need to be invoiced in 2023.

4 Leisure Lane:

Spears Brothers confirmed there is asbestos that will need to be removed and then they will demo and cleanup the property. A courtesy call was made to the father of the previous owner who was possibly interested in repurchasing but he declined. Chairman Mooney requested a letter be sent to him verifying the conversation and letting him know demolition will be starting soon.

Elevator Update:

It is expected the elevator update will be completed the week of November 13th.

Code Enforcement Update:**752 Laconia Road:**

Code Enforcement Officer Mark Ekberg reported on a proposal from our attorneys for 752 Laconia Road. There seems to be some negotiation taking place and they are jointly proposing a timetable of December 1, 2023 for the property to be in compliance. The property is "messy" but there are only a couple of vehicles and boats that need to be taken care of. The owner has disposed of a considerable amount of items. If the property is not in compliance by December 1st, the Town can go onto the property to take action. The Board would get this same result by waiting to go to court or they can sign this agreement. Selectman O'Hara suggested signing the agreement helps protect the Board by showing we made an agreement and then it can proceed to court if necessary. CEO Ekberg said he thinks signing this agreement will show a chink in our armor. There is an attachment on the property and they are making progress. There was discussion about signing the agreement versus going to trial, and the ability to recover administrative costs. Selectman Pike stated CEO Ekberg should be tracking all of his time spent working on these properties. He also said the Board should sign the agreement to protect ourselves and our lawyers know more than we do. CEO Ekberg said the agreement would allow the Town to continue inspections with a 48-hour notice to ensure continued compliance. The property is still attached.

Selectman Pike moved to authorize our attorneys to move forward with the joint agreement for 752 Laconia Road; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

130 Depot Street:

CEO Ekberg said the owner asked the court for 30 days to clean up the property because he was going to quit his job and work on it full-time. CEO Ekberg visited the property and there does not appear to be any progress. The next court date is set for November 13th and the block of time will include a tour of the property.

Unanticipated Revenue: The Town collected \$9,700 from the old Nitro, a pickup, and a dump truck that were recently auctioned.

Public Comment: None

Next Meeting Date: Monday, November 13, 2023 at 10:00 am. This meeting will also include a Public Hearing for the Traffic Ordinance amendments.

Non-Public:

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 11:30 am; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call 1: J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

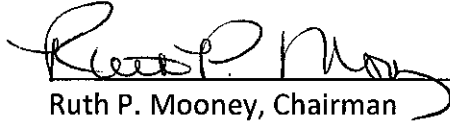
Those present and voting were Chairman Ruth Mooney, and Selectmen Jon Pike, Claude Patten, Jr., Travis O’Hara and Sharon Ciampi. Also present were TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, Fire Chief Deb Black, and Police Chief Mark Lewandoski.

There was discussion on the 2024 proposed wages and making changes to the current pay structure instead of waiting until April; in order to retain current employees and to help attract new employees. Due to the proposed changes it would be difficult to come up with a fair uniform bonus amount for all employees. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to proceed with individual bonuses rather than uniform bonuses, and that bonuses now would be approximately 90% of the proposed 2024 increase. Employees would start earning their bonus as of November 1st, with their monthly bonus payment to be made for the first pay period after November 30th. The Board previously voted to proceed with the non-union changes as of November 1st and will be waiting to hear if the unions accept these contract modifications.

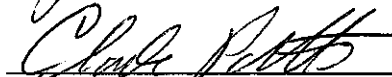
Selectman Pike moved to exit non-public session at 12:14 pm; seconded by Selectman O’Hara. Roll Call 2: S. Ciampi – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

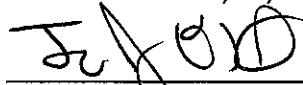
Adjournment:

Selectman O’Hara moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:15; seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call 3: S. Patten – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).


Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman


Jon Pike, Vice Chairman


Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman


Travis O'Hara, Selectman


Sharon Ciampi, Selectman