



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 6, 2023, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, 14 Mill Street
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, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Assistant Fire Chief Deb Black, Code Enforcement Officer Mark Ekberg, Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon and Cemetery Trustee Sharon Ciampi. Also present were Travis O'Hara and Brian Gardiner. Via Zoom were Library Director Eileen Gilbert, Finance Director Katherine Davis, Acting Town Planner Karen Santoro, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cynthia DeRoy, and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Assistants Jenn Thomas and Leigh Smith.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Selectman Claude Patten moved the minutes of the public meeting held on February 21, 2023, as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

Library Trustee Mary Charnley contacted TA Alicia Jipson about a correction to a comment made at the last meeting. She asked that the following statement be read into the record: "The Library Trustees would like the minutes to reflect a correction to a comment that was made at the February 21st meeting. Selectman Pike stated at the meeting that the amount was over \$140,000 for architectural plans for the library building addition. Please let the record show that at the 2005 Town Meeting Article #27 shows a vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$30,000 for the purpose of architectural plans for the library building."

Selectman Pike countered that there were articles for funding the library plans in the three years prior to 2005, and that the grand total was closer to \$150,000. The article in 2005 was the final portion of the funding for the plans. TA Jipson noted that she recently found the plans while organizing her office and the 2010 quote for the addition was over \$2 million.

New Business

FD New Hire – Randy Danforth

Fire Chief Mike Newhall stated this candidate is from Franklin, where he is a Captain. He used to be on Belmont's Call Company. He has been associated with the Belmont community for many years.

Selectman Pike moved to approve hiring Randy Danforth for the position of full-time Lieutenant at the Belmont Fire Department; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

FD New Hire – Richard Raper

Chief Newhall stated this candidate comes from Laconia as a highly qualified fire fighter.

Selectman Pike moved to approve hiring Richard Raper for the position of full-time Firefighter at the Belmont Fire Department; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

911 Data Request

TA Jipson explained the Division of Emergency Management has a state wide contract to map towns' technology and the data will be shared with NH GRANIT/UNH. The State RSA requires that towns be asked to release the information. If the Town applies for infrastructure grants, this could help us.

Chief Newhall said he and Chief Lewandoski do not have the authority to release it because it is protected.

Selectman Patten moved to allow the Town of Belmont to share 911 data with NH GRANIT/UNH for the purposes of mapping Broadband Infrastructure across the state; seconded by Selectman Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Commission Appointment

There was a request to appoint a new Alternate Member.

Selectman Pike moved to appoint Jeffrey DeFrancesco to serve as an Alternate Member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire in March 2025; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

Lakes Region Planning Commission Rep Discussion – Request from Kevin Sturgeon

Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon informed the Board that the Planning Board discussed the representation at the last meeting. He suggested waiting to make a recommendation until the next meeting because not all members were present. There was a motion for Planning Board Member Dennis Grimes to fill one of the spots because he has engineering experience, but he had to decline. There is potentially another member interested however he was not present at the most recent meeting. If no one else wants the position, Mr. Sturgeon would be interested in filling it.

Candidates' Night – Tuesday, March 7th at 5:00pm at BHS

The National Honor Society is hosting Candidates' Night at Belmont High School on Tuesday, March 7th at 5:00pm. This event was originally planned for March 8th but was rescheduled.

Old Business

Rescind SB2 Discussion Continuation – Request from Kevin Sturgeon

Mr. Kevin Sturgeon of 110 Depot Street thanked the Board for revisiting the discussion on rescinding SB2. He read an interesting article in the Daily Sun and there was lots of good discussion at the February 21st meeting. He had concerns about the voting process with regards to the school if the Town reverts back to traditional Town Meeting. His opinion is that the school would seek to rescind SB2 also if it passes for the Town. His understanding is that the reason for the petitioned article was to get more people to participate and be better informed. The large money articles tend to see more participation. The best example of educating people and getting public input was the Police Station; a \$3 million article which passed the first time it was presented.

Mr. Sturgeon asked the Select Board where they stand on this article. Chairman Ruth Mooney said the Board has no say on the article, but personally she prefers things the way they are now.

There was some discussion on past Town and School meetings.

Library Trustees Corrections from 02/21/2023 Meeting refer to Minutes section on page 1.

Purchasing Policy Acceptance

Chairman Mooney explained that former TA Jeanne Beaudin tasked TA Jipson with bringing forward a purchasing policy. A lot of research went into creating the policy based on other municipal and business policies. Some towns run into problems with purchasing, and this is a way to protect the taxpayers.

Selectman Pike stated he does not agree with the policy as written. He has put his trust into the people who run their departments and work within the budget. Every day purchasing is done correctly, and he doesn't think more oversight is needed. It will only impede department heads. He does recommend that Purchase Orders be processed on the computer rather than on paper. This is more policy that is more time consuming than we need.

TA Jipson commented that the current department heads will not always be here and there are always new people. Some people don't know the policy or the process for purchasing. This policy keeps everything in check, particularly when the Board wants to do a three-bid requirement, or for items that exceed a specific dollar amount. It makes sure that things are coded properly for processing.

Chairman Mooney moved to accept the Purchasing Policy as written; seconded by Selectman Patten. The motion passed. Selectman Pike was opposed.

Other Old Business

Elevator

Selectman Pike asked who is the general contractor for the elevator. TA Jipson replied that the Board hired Bonnette, Page and Stone (BPS) to do the general contracting. They and Otis are going to try to come to the next meeting.

B & G Supervisor Patrick Golden reported that a notice came from Otis explaining that the control panel in the current elevator is obsolete and not covered under the maintenance contract. The new control unit alone would be \$19,800 with a minimum of 2-3 weeks downtime. TA Jipson noted the replacement elevator is only \$105,000.

Conservation Commission Land Acquisition

The Conservation Commission is trying to acquire property on Ladd Hill/Mile Hill for conservation purposes. The current property owner has a contract for an option for a cell phone tower. Our attorney has informed us that the cell phone tower agreement will need to be terminated prior to the Conservation Commission's purchase because the Commission does not want a tower on conservation property. The Commission will pay the legal fees for the termination agreement. Mr. Travis O'Hara asked for clarification that the fees would be for the agreement and not fees to opt out of the contract. TA Jipson confirmed it is only to draft the termination. Our attorney has suggested the current owners may want to consult with their attorney to determine if they will owe any money for terminating the contract.

NHPDIP Funds

The Board gave Finance Director Katherine Davis authority to move \$5 million into an NHPDIP account for a higher interest rate. From February 9th through February 28th the interest earned was \$12,791. If the funds had been kept at our regular bank, they would only have earned \$1,200. Chairman Mooney emphasized that this account is through the State, and all Trustee of the Trust Funds accounts are held here, and it is only available to municipalities, counties and schools. TA Jipson mentioned the school payment will be transferred soon so there will be less earnings on the next statement.

Grant Opportunities

TA Jipson and Finance Director Davis have attended a webinar about the Community Center Grant. The Town could submit an application for up to \$1 million for the Mill renovations. This grant does require a 15% match, which we do have in an account.

There is a grant through Senator Shaheen's office for Police Departments. Lieutenant Evan Boulanger and TA Jipson are working to see if we meet the qualifications of the grant, and the Friday deadline is quick approaching.

Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be **Monday, March 20, 2023 at 10:00 am.**

Non-Public:

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (I and c) at 10:36 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 were TA Alicia Jipson, CEO Mark Ekberg, TC/TC Cynthia DeRoy, and Mr. Walker. The Board returned to public session at 11:40 am. Discussion was had on a status update from legal in regards to 15 Johnston Street. Discussion was had with TC/TC DeRoy on the status of a Tax Deeded property at 4 Leisure Lane and the next steps to move forward. Then final discussion was had with Property owner Mr. Walker and the status of his property and not being in compliance with the Town Zoning ordinances and the proper next steps suggested by legal, which would include the Town clean up the property at their expense and put a lien on the property, if they so choose to. Code Enforcement Officer Mark Ekberg will work with Mr. Walker.

Adjournment:

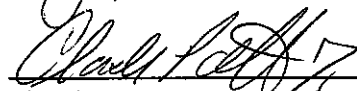
Selectman Mooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 ; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.



Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman



Jon Pike, Vice Chairman



Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman