



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 20, 2023, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, 14 Mill Street
Tioga Meeting 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, TC/TC Cynthia DeRoy, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Captain Steven Akerstrom, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Parks & Recreation Director Danielle St. Onge, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Assistant Fire Chief Deb Black, CEO Mark Ekberg, Planning Board Member Richard Pickwick and Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon. Via ZOOM were Finance Director Katherine Davis, Interim Town Planner Karen Santoro, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Assistant Jenn Thomas, Librarian Eileen Gilbert, Alyssa Spillane and John Caddle. Also present were Barrett Salta and Barry Beauregard.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Selectman Claude Patten moved the minutes of the public meeting held on March 6, 2023, as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the special meeting held on March 13, 2023, as written; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Elected Officials Swearing In:

Town Administrator Alicia Jipson swore in newly elected officials for the following positions:

Richard Pickwick for Planning Board
Sharon Ciampi for Selectman
Roland Coffin, Jr. for Budget Committee
Peter Harris for Zoning Board and Planning Board
Claude Patten, Jr. for Selectman
John Froumy for Zoning Board
Marsha Campbell for Budget Committee
Travis O'Hara for Selectman

Organization of the Board and Committee Assignments

The Board discussed using a roll call vote for all votes moving forward with our additional Selectboard members. TA Alicia Jipson noted that all votes will be randomized so there will not be any members consistently voting following each other. It was the consensus of the Board to agree and move forward with randomized roll call votes.

Selectman Pike moved to appoint Ruth Mooney as Chairman; seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call: J. Pike – aye, C. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – nay, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (4-1).

Selectman Patten moved to appoint Jon Pike as Vice Chairman; seconded by Selectman Travis O’Hara. Roll Call: S. Ciampi – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, C. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Chairman Mooney moved to appoint Jon Pike as the Selectboard Planning Board Representative; seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call: C. Patten – aye, S. Ciampi – nay, J. Pike – aye, T. O’Hara – nay, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (3-2).

Selectman Patten moved to appoint Ruth Mooney as the Selectboard Budget Committee Representative; seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call: T. O’Hara – nay, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – nay, C. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (3-2).

Chairman Mooney moved to appoint Claude Patten as the Selectboard Heritage Commission Representative; seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call: C. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Chairman Mooney moved to appoint T. O’Hara as the Selectboard Conservation Commission Representative; seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call: S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, C. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Chairman Mooney explained that representation is need for the Canterbury Withdrawal Study Committee. The Town of Canterbury approved funds to study withdrawing from the Shaker Regional School District. She served on the committee last year and does not wish to continue. She learned a lot and it was interesting, and these are really important positions to be filled. The commitment is once or twice a month evening meeting that started in August of last year.

Chairman Mooney moved to appoint T. O’Hara and S. Ciampi as the Selectboard Canterbury Withdrawal Study Committee Representatives because they both have school age children. The motion was seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call: T. O’Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, C. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Town Meeting Update:

TA Jipson reported we had 531 voters this year, which is a little lower than average for but good attendance for a snowstorm. The operating budget and union contracts passed. We are going to keep and retain employees with wages that should be paid, and we can attract new employees and be competitive. There were only two articles that did not pass; the increase to the Cemetery Trustees membership and rescinding SB2.

Selectman Sharon Ciampi said that she appreciated the Voters Guide, and it was very helpful. It was a good tool to educate the voters with no opinion, just information. Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden stated the Town of Loudon made similar changes with wages. It is not unique to Belmont. The voters want to keep their employees. Thank you to the Town of Belmont.

Operating Budget and Wage Adjustments Approval:

TA Jipson reported the operating budget passed and the April 1st wage adjustments and union contracts need to be signed except for the Police Department. There are discussions about two wages, but they will be ready for tomorrow. They are all a formality because they have been approved and voted on.

MS232 Statement of Appropriations:

TA Jipson said the MS232 would only need to be modified if any articles failed or were amended at the Deliberative Session; and it only includes budgeted articles.

NHDOT Bridge Funding Opportunity – Union Road over Durgin Brook:

The Town has received a letter about bridge aid funding to rehab or replace bridges in the next ten-year plan from 2027-2032. The preliminary data for the bridge over Durgin Brook (at Union Road near Mallard’s Landing) shows a cost of \$1.35 million with Belmont’s 20% share of \$270,000. This is a grant where the Town pays 100% upfront and then the State will reimburse 80%. They are looking to see if we are interested, but it does not commit us and is not legally binding. DPW Director Craig Clairmont noted that NHDOT sent a letter that the bridge is on the “red list”. This will give the State direction on how to move forward. If the Town does not accept the funding and something happens to the bridge, Belmont will be responsible for the whole bill and the bridge would close down while it happened. It does not look significant but if it fails it would be expensive. TA Jipson reported there is currently about \$304,000 in the bridge fund.

Selectman Pike moved to accept the opportunity to participate in the grant; seconded by Selectman O’Hara. Roll Call: C. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Otis and Bonnette, Page & Stone via ZOOM – Mill Elevator:

Otis representatives Alyssa Spillane and John Caddle were present via Zoom. Bonnette, Page & Stone representatives Barrett Salta and Barry Beauregard were present.

Selectman Pike asked for a timeframe and to describe the intentions for the elevator.

Mr. John Caddle explained the elevator has served its useful life and it is hard to find parts. The concern is if they cannot get a necessary part there would be a long wait time until the elevator was up and running. There are many safety advantages with a new elevator, but there are extended lead times. Ms. Alyssa Spillane said they plan to replace the electrical components and it will be economical to do that all at once. It is 15-20 weeks lead time after the shop drawings are approved. It takes a couple of weeks for the shop drawings. It is about 25 weeks until production and 4-5 weeks project/install time.

Mr. Barry Beauregard stated the best case is 20 weeks and worst case is 24 weeks. That would put us into October if things were released today. They will be onsite for 4-5 weeks for installation so they would plan to work the job in the fall; about 30 weeks out. Buildings & Grounds has created a temporary meeting space on the first floor for when the elevator is closed. The small senior group only meets once a month. Parks & Rec Director Danielle St. Onge can still be upstairs because there are front and rear stairs.

Mr. Beauregard brought forward an option to upgrade the interior of the elevator for \$25,000. Chairman Mooney did not think an interior upgrade was necessary. Mr. Caddle and Ms. Spillane noted that the shell and frame will remain as they are "keeping the bones". Mr. Barrett Salta stated there would not be much visual change. There was discussion about how the process would work and the cost of incidentals at \$180,000. There is not a guarantee that all of the funds would need to be spent. Chairman Mooney said the elevator is the first thing that needs to be done before anything else. The second is a generator. It is very hard when the electricity is down, and this will be the first major investment to get the building fully renovated.

There was discussion about maximizing the use of the Bonnette, Page & Stone supervision of the elevator installation with some other smaller projects at the same time. Chairman Mooney recommended holding off on any other decisions until we have the generator cost. Selectman Pike suggested getting the elevator ordered and working on sizing a generator to fully operate the Mill as if it was an EOC in order to obtain a quote.

Selectman Pike moved to spend \$180,000 for the Mill elevator project and to get information on a generator for the next meeting; seconded by Chairman Mooney. Roll Call: J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, C. Patten – aye, T. O’Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (5-0).

Selectman Ciampi had questions about the quote process with Otis and if other quotes were obtained. B&G Supervisor Golden explained the current elevator is an Otis and refurbishing and rebuilding what we have will be less expensive than changing companies to install a completely new elevator.

S. Ciampi stepped down from the Board to present as a cemetery Trustee member.

Cemetery Trustees Request to Appoint Two Alternates:

Cemetery Trustee Sharon Ciampi would like to request that the Selectboard allow the Cemetery Trustees to have two alternates because the petitioned warrant article to add two full members to the Cemetery Trustees failed. RSA 289:6 says the Cemetery Trustees can recommend two alternate members who can be appointed to one-year terms. The Trustees have two people who are interested in being alternates. There was discussion about the responsibilities. The Trustees are volunteers, and the alternates would not have voting rights unless they are filling in during the absence of a full member. Ms. Ciampi reiterated that this will not increase the number of full Trustee members as only three will vote to transact business.

In February the Trustees voted to come to the Board to request alternate appointments. Ms. Ciampi explained that Cemetery Trustee Norma Patten would like to come back as a one-year alternate and the Trustees decided that whoever did not win the election could become an alternate with Norma Patten.

The Board requested the Cemetery Trustees have interested parties complete an application form and then hold a vote to recommend the applicants. After providing the applications and meeting minutes, the Board can appoint two new alternate members.

S. Ciampi returned to the Board.

Other New Business

BOS Meeting Schedule:

The Board needs to decide whether to continue holding meetings on the first and third Monday of the month at 10 am, or if they would like to change the schedule.

Selectman Pike moved to continue holding meetings on the first and third Monday of the month at 10 am; seconded by Chairman Mooney.

Selectman Pike explained that Staff here are already working, and if the Board holds evening meetings, they will need to pay overtime. It is a cost savings, and if the Board needs to speak with an employee, they are easier to contact during the day. Chairman Mooney said the Board does hold night meetings when requested. Selectman O'Hara is concerned that a lot of residents work during the day. Chairman Mooney stated more people attend morning meetings than evening meetings.

TA Jipson explained there was a motion and a second on the floor and now is the time for discussion before a vote.

S. Ciampi said someone suggested holding one daytime meeting and one evening meeting. It was Selectman O'Hara's idea. She thought it was a good idea worth mentioning. It could be tried out for a few months to see how the response is, and if it doesn't work the Board

could go back to mornings. General Assistance Director Donna Cilley recommended if the Board chooses to make changes to the schedule that things are reassessed after a couple of months to see how it is working.

Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon agreed with GA Director Cilley. A lot of people won't attend, but they do watch the meetings. One problem is that they can hear the Board but not the audience. People should be stating their name and speaking at the podium. Things have been lax but there needs to be more use of the microphone.

Selectman O'Hara stated he is not opposed to morning meetings because it is a good cost savings. If there are not enough people to justify a change, meetings could be returned to morning. He would like the chance to prove if people want night meetings or not. TA Jipson said from an administrative standpoint switching meetings regularly would be confusing and require extra attention. Chairman Mooney agreed.

There is currently a motion on the floor and Selectman Pike does not want to amend his motion, but he did note that the Board will change their meetings if it is warranted and will accommodate night meetings when requested.

Roll Call: C. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, T. O'Hara – nay, R. Mooney – aye. The motion passed (4-1).

Old Business

Sargent Park:

B&G Supervisor Golden explained Sargent Park was closed for the winter for safety reasons, however the community has started asking when it will re-open. After this week the snow should be gone, and the snowbanks can be moved away from the gates. There is still a tree on Fuller Street leaning on the light pole across the fence in the basketball area. The homeowner has until April 1st to remove the tree and there has been no response. If the park is opened there is a concern the tree could come down and take out the light pole. A barricade could be placed across the courts, but someone will go around the barricade.

There was discussion about the tree and the neighbor's responsibility, and the equipment that will be required for the removal. The Town will need to step in and complete the removal if the homeowner does not do it, and we will seek reimbursement. DPW Director Clairmont suggested waiting to bring in the crane until the road ban has been released. He hopes it will be released in the first week in April but there are no guarantees. B&G Supervisor Golden is concerned about the amount of damage that could be caused if the tree comes down.

DPW Director Clairmont asked about a package deal from the removal company to also take down some limbs by the bank building. B&G Supervisor Golden explained those other trees are tagged as Conservation Commission trees and the Commission wants to obtain a price

from Bartlett Tree Service, who will be here tomorrow to evaluate and give an estimate. Selectman Pike suggested getting a price on both jobs from Bartlett as well.

New Selectboard Members:

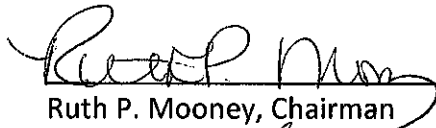
GA Director Cilley spoke to the new members and recommended that if they have any questions on what departments do or how they do things that they reach out and communicate directly. She strongly suggested the new members reach out and talk to the Department Heads and do tours of the departments.

New members will be provided with a list of department heads and contact information.


Next Meeting: The next regular meeting will be **Monday, April 3, 2023 at 10 am.**


Adjournment:

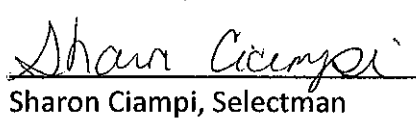
Selectman Pike moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:23am; seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call: J. Pike - aye, C. Patten - aye, T. O'Hara - aye, S. Ciampi - aye, R. Mooney - aye. The motion passed (5-0).


Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman


Jon Pike, Vice Chairman


Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman


Travis O'Hara, Selectman


Sharon Ciampi, Selectman