



Office of Board of Selectmen

143 Main Street, P.O. Box 310, Belmont, New Hampshire 03220-0310
Telephone: (603) 267-8300 Fax: (603) 267-8327

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 10:00 am

Belmont Mill, Corner Meeting House Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude "Sonny" Patten, Jr., Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Town Planner Karen Santoro, Police Captain Steve Akerstrom, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, DPW Assistant Director Brian Jackes, Fire Chief Deb Black, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, CEO Mark Ekberg and Planning Board Member Kevin Sturgeon and Bill Naughton of the Belmont Historical Society. Via Zoom was Library Director Eileen Gilbert.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Mooney reminded everyone about the Curbside Bulky Collection service through Town Hall where you can prepay to have items such as mattresses picked up at the curb.

Review & Approve Minutes – 11/13/2023:

Selectman Jon Pike moved the minutes of the meeting held on November 13, 2023 as written; seconded by Selectman Sonny Patten. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

New Business:

PD New Hire – COPS Grant Position:

Captain Steve Akerstrom reported the Department recently accepted a grant for two positions. They are down 2 officers plus the 2 new grant positions. The new grant hires must be uncertified. They have completed the background check on one candidate and he has passed. He is from Goffstown and would be hired under the grant position so that other vacant positions can be filled with certified officers. Selectman Travis O'Hara asked if the new hire would sign a contract even though they are hired under the grant, and Captain Akerstrom said yes.

Selectman O'Hara moved to accept the hiring of Jeffrey Hager for one of the new COPS Grant Positions; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Captain Akerstrom also mentioned that Father Mark is looking to come on board as the Police Chaplain. There are no wages associated with the position and he will be sworn in tomorrow morning.

Letter From Anonymous:

Chairman Mooney said the Board received some questions in an anonymous letter. The answers to the questions are: 1. There is no dress code for the Board of Selectmen. 2. It is proper etiquette to remove hats for the pledge but we don't ask those in attendance to do so. 3. This question was confusing with regards to placement of the Board and the camera angles. The Town Administrator and Recording Secretary are not seen on the regular LiveStream camera, but can be heard and they are to the left of the Selectmen. People facing the Board are the audience, and people at the table facing the Board are presenters on the agenda.

Request from Heritage Commission/Historical Society to use 1st Floor of Mill:

Sharon Ciampi and Bill Naughton from Historical Society spoke with the Board about using the Mill building for displaying, storing and organizing items; which was previously discussed by Vicki Donovan, Chair of the Heritage Commission. Papers and pictures are better stored in a climate-controlled environment and the two groups plan to work together to catalog and preserve as much as they can and would like to use the two small rooms on the first floor for that work once meetings move back upstairs. Chairman Mooney was concerned about having important things in the Mill while rehab work is going on. The process could be short-term for cataloging and then things reorganized and moved back to other locations in preparation for displaying at the Mill building. They do not have a final plan or timetable but wanted to start discussions with the Board about their ideas. They need to review all of the items to see what types of display frames and cases would be needed, and they can't work to sort items in the bank building. It is not an immediate need but they want to have this project on the Board's future radar. Chairman Mooney responded that the Board will help as best they can and perhaps the group might be able to work on things through the winter by hopping from floor to floor as rehab work takes place.

Energy Audit Review - Mill:

The Board received copies of the energy audit for the Mill. One of the reasons the audit was completed was to be able to apply for grants. It will also be a tool for our contractors to use for how to structure the heating and cooling and energy systems. There is some good information and some bad information. It is recommended that the windows be replaced or air sealed and LED light fixtures be used. Airsealing the windows would be \$24,000 with a 15-year payback and replacement would be \$126,000 with a 59 year payback. Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden said the windows were sealed when secured in 1997 but this is an old brick building with no vapor barriers. TA Jipson explained some of the grants that are potentially available for work on the Mill building.

Tax Revenue Received to Date:

TA Jipson reported we are steadily collecting tax payments. The total commitment is \$11,621,000.00 and we have collected 24% in just two weeks. Bills are due December 18th.

Gale School Redevelopment Update:

TA Jipson provided information from the 11/29 meeting. There were only 11 people in attendance and she and Selectman Ciampi attended. They are estimating \$2-\$4 million for the quoted cost, and they provided a layout of the exterior and interior plans. The first floor will have the Boys & Girls Club daycare with 35 children, and the second floor will be a community center. They hope to finance by March 2024, go to bid April 2024 and start work soon after. They have applied for grants and they are keeping historic pieces like the chalkboards if they can. Lakes Region Community Developers has spent \$150,000 so far, and they have a tab on their website for projects where more information can be found.

Other New Business:

DPW – Granite State Clean Fleets RFP (NHDES Volkswagen Trust)

Earlier this year, DPW requested permission to apply for a grant for this program for two trucks. They were approved to move on with the next part of the process to write the contract for one of the two requested trucks. There will be an 80/20 match commitment with \$51,000.00 for the match. Those funds will come out of Highway Block Grant funds so the Town will have a \$250,000.00 truck with no cost to taxpayers. There will be a public hearing for this at the next BOS meeting.

Chairman Mooney moved to authorize TA Jipson and DPW Assistant Director Brian Jackes to proceed with the next step in the grant process; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Town Hall Holiday Party:

The Board will close Town Hall from 12:30 – 1:30 pm, Wednesday, December 20th for the employee holiday luncheon.

2024 Holiday Schedule:

Next year is an Election Day year. Often the Board has floated the holiday to another day such as the day before or after Christmas, but Christmas falls mid-week this year. Another option would be to float to the Friday after 4th of July, which falls on a Thursday. Staff in attendance at the meeting were polled and the Board decided to float the Election Day holiday to Friday, July 5th.

Old Business:

4 Leisure Lane Update:

The law requires that the Town allow the prior owner the option of repurchasing the property before it is auctioned. If we had owned the property for three years and held it, it could be auctioned without that requirement. Once the offer is made we need to wait 90 days to auction the property. Unfortunately the mailbox does not exist for the mailing address on file but we have to follow the law. The auction will take place March 8th at 2pm. B&G Supervisor Golden reported that no additional trash has appeared on the site recently.

TRADZ, LLC / George Condodemetraky Update – 194 Gilmanton Road:

TA Jipson reported that the court sided with the Condodemetrakys but we have filed for a motion to stay while the decision is reconsidered. The Condodemetrakys have met the Zoning Board requirement, however there is also a Planning Board requirement for a Site Plan that has not yet been filed. They cannot apply for the driveway permit required until the road is discontinued in March. They seem to be operating as usual and we will need to wait to hear from the court.

Amend 2024 Budgets:

There were some last minute changes to the budgets such as the addition of the two new grant positions for the Police Department. It needs to be included in the budget even though there will be offsetting revenue.

R. Mooney moved to approve the amended Police Budget of \$3,189,477.40; seconded by Selectman Patten. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

The Budget Committee increased the salary for the Building Inspector and it was then reviewed by the BOS. The change has now come back to the Board for final approval of the Building Inspection budget.

R. Mooney moved to amend the Building Inspection budget to \$143,128.38; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

The Board agreed to an updated Household Hazardous Waste Commitment after their vote on the Solid Waste budget.

R. Mooney moved to amend the Solid Waste budget to \$706,384.00; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Other Old Business:

Elevator Update:

Adjustments will be made on 12/08/2023 and the state should be here 12/13/2023 for the inspection. Building & Grounds will need a day or two to move everything but it is anticipated that we will return to meetings on the 4th floor starting Monday, December 18th.

Public Comment: None

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 20th, 2023 at 10:00 am.

Non-Public:

Selectman O'Hara moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (b) at 10:40 am; seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call: 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 and Fire Chief Deb Black.

Chief Black and the Board discussed the anticipated hiring process for the new Assistant Fire Chief. She is working on a board for the interviews. The intention would be to hire with succession in mind so that appropriate training and mentoring can take place.


Chief Black also reported that staffing is almost up to 100% and the new ambulance is off schedule with an anticipated delivery of February 2025. Chairman Mooney said that due to long lead times, it may be necessary to start thinking now about the next ambulance replacement with a delivery in 2027.

The Department has been active this year in Town activities such as Old Home Day and the BBQ, parades, the Boot Drive, job fairs, Deck the Village and more. They will be holding a department get together after the holidays. There have been 1,387 calls so far this year, 250 fire marshall/inspections and 1,259 permits to burn or for oil burners, and 163 multiple calls. Chief Black will be attending training for staff mental health next year.

Chairman Mooney moved to exit non-public session at 11:09 am; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call: S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Adjournment:

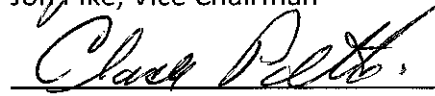
Chairman Mooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 am; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).




Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman



Jon Pike, Vice Chairman



Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman



Travis O'Hara, Selectman

Sharon Ciampi, Selectman