

**TOWN OF NEW HAMPTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OFFICE, NEW HAMPTON, NH 03256**

Thursday, December 5, 2024

MEMBERS

Present were Mr. Drake, Mr. Shaw (by phone) and Mr. Harvey.

PRESENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Town Administrator Mr. Davenport, Fire Chief Cathy, Scott Provencal, Richard Morse, and Ronald Howe.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Drake called the meeting of the Board to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

- Mr. Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drake to approve the 11/21/24 minutes as corrected and minutes of 11/26/24 as written. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harvey to approve the sets of sealed non-public [(c) & (l)] minutes of 11/26/24. Vote was unanimous.

WORK SESSION:

The Board reviewed/signed manifests, invoices, requisitions, purchase orders and leave request forms.

APPOINTMENTS:

6:30 PM

Fire Chief Scott Cathy

Chief Cathy suggested Paramedic only rate of \$26.50 as he has a hire in process. This rate of pay was discussed along with the current scale for pay grade to incentivize members to obtain various certifications, so they agreed a Paramedic-only rate was not the best way to paying a paramedic appropriately. The Board expressed concern with this Paramedic-only wanting additional certifications, which using the current scale, would be a lower hourly rate. Mr. Drake suggested there could be an individual contract for a specific person, but Chief Cathy said he wants to remain consistent. Mr. Drake suggested keeping the certification scales in place to incentivize but to increase the paramedic cert to \$10/hr. with future discussions on other possible adjustments to the pay scale.

Chief Cathy said he's identified 4 items purchased on 2024 that were repaired or replaced and is requesting those costs come from the Repair/Replacement Expendable Trust Fund. He said the outboard motor on the boat, had been getting repaired internally but mechanic has advised it couldn't be fixed, and a new engine was purchased.

Mr. Drake said they need to look at the warrant article which states how that trust fund can be used before they decide on any of these items. Chief Cathy advised of the costs he must still incur before the end of the year but it was the consensus of the Board to wait until the end of December before deciding to take from the expendable trust and to be cautious with expenditures until the end of the year.

Chief Cathy said the department failed to get the Leary Firefighters Foundation Grant to replace the gear extractor and now needs to decide whether to pay a quoted cost of \$1,676 to attempt another part replacement in the hopes of getting the extractor working, as other parts replaced - have not

fixed it. A new extractor is \$22,000 but is not up for replacement in the CIP until 2026. It was the consensus of the board to repair the extractor and consider a new one as a warrant article in 2026 to come out of the Special Revenue Fund.

Engine 1 is back and should be in service on 12/9.

Chief Cathy brought a list of ambulance bills for collections and proposed write-offs, according to the guidelines. The Board signed off on the recommendations.

Quick Med Claims sent some collections to another company, who sent the collection bills out to another collection company due to an error made by Quick Med Claims. Chief Cathy asked if the claim company should explain this error to the affected patients, though no complaints have been received and all resulting payments were handled appropriately. It was the consensus of the Board to have the claim company report it and the draft letter by Quick Med Claims is to be reviewed by Town counsel and Selectmen prior to mailing. Chief Cathy said they have created an RFP for ambulance billing but have not sent it out.

WORK SESSION:
(cont.)

Mr. Davenport to get PTO balance for Ms. Schofield prior to the Selectmen approved time off for 12/24.

Board reviewed P.O. for \$11,225 (Capital Alarms) for PSB security cameras, with the recommendation to encumber funds from 2024 with service in 2025. Three quotes were obtained, but the Board asked for one more from Advance Lock & Alarm.

OPEN ITEMS

1. Tax Deeded Land – no update
2. Personnel Policy – Mr. Davenport said he obtained input from department heads. There was discussion on longevity and that this policy will include what qualifies an employee to receive it. Relative to the Fire Dept working on a holiday, the Board agreed they shouldn't get overtime but should get holiday time. He said department heads expressed concern with the requirement that 3 or more days of unplanned time off requires a release from a doctor in hopes for some flexibility. The Board agreed that it could be changed from "3 or more" to "4 or more days". The department heads suggested adding, for bereavement of three 8-hour days, to add aunts, uncles, and cousins to the list of qualifiers. The Board did not agree to this change. Mr. Davenport to bring more policy recommendations to the Board on 12/12.
3. Timber Harvest – no update
4. Fish Hatchery project – no update
5. #17 Main St. property – no update
6. 911#'s – no update
7. Grants – no update
8. Carter Mountain Rd unregistered vehicles – no update
9. Town House – no update
10. Drake Road – no update
11. Job Postings – Two candidates for the Hwy Dept position. Interviews

will be done.

12. Town Roads – no update
13. Dr. Childs Rd discontinuance – no update
14. NHS PILOT – No update
15. Grant status of culvert replacement – No update
16. Dry Hydrants – no update
17. Coolidge Woods Rd erosion – no update

7:00 PM
2025 Executive Budget Discussion

Mr. Davenport said the updated 2025 budget includes the 5% COLA and the \$5,000 deductible medical plan. Mr. Drake asked for the estimated revenues for the 12/12 meeting.

Highlights:

- Mr. Davenport said he will confirm that the Day Away Program is looking to decrease their budget request.
- Mr. Davenport suggested the mini splits be replaced in the future as they've needed a lot of repairs, and are nearing end of life.
- There was discussion on purchasing TVs to aid in meetings - for attendees or Zoom connections.
- Data Processing is increased due to the new finance software licensing fee, spread out over 3 years, a new server for the Town Office, some security features, and two new computers for the Town Office.
- Mr. Davenport asked if the Board wanted to consider any increase in the stipends for Treasurer and the Deputy, to be more in line with other towns and they agreed to increase the Treasurer to \$4,500 and the Deputy to \$750.
- Relative to a possible part-time Code Enforcement Officer recommending \$35/hr at 20 hrs/week. The Board agreed to start with 8 hrs/week at \$35/hr.
- Relative to overall wage increases the Board agreed they had to find a balance between what the town can afford but recognizing that with many years of no increases, wages may not be at par with other towns and may not encourage applicants or keep current employees interested in staying. The Board agreed to use 5%. Mr. Davenport said he and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Ms. Schofield were looking to increase Mrs. Van Lenten's position, being shared between Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Selectmen's Office and Welfare. The Board wanted to review the changes at the next meeting.
- Relative to the Conservation Commission request for a \$5,000 budget increase, it was the consensus of the board to keep it level-funded.

There was discussion about the Solid Waste 2025 Budget needing further changes relative to wages and after Mr. Davenport discusses some individual wage increases with Public Works Director Mr. Cote.

ACTION & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 2024 Fire Fighter Warrant Article Memo from Finance Officer Mrs. Capone confirmed with the auditors that the full-time Firefighter warrant article balance could be carried over one year. The Board spent time discussing Mrs. Capone's recommendations to reduce some Fire Dept budget lines while increasing others. The Board asked to have the budget spreadsheet calculated two ways - the 2025 operating budget decrease,

with, and without - the ambulance wage budget line increase.

- Review Draft Flag Policy – amended:
 1. To remove the flags between Veteran’s and Memorial Day at the Veteran’s Parks along Route 104 and the All-Veteran’s Park at the Public Safety Building, areas are not maintained for access so replacing and lowering to half-staff is difficult.
 2. To ensure a flag is up during any elections or events at the Town House.

Mr. Davenport advised that the light at the Veteran’s Memorial along the river needs replacement.
- Warrant Article follow-up discussion: Hwy Dept proposed truck F550 purchase with 2 options for financing being a 5-yr lease/purchase or rolling it into the 10-yr bond. It was the consensus of the Board to consider the 10-yr bond.
- Bond Counsel Discussion: Mr. Davenport’s recommended using Drummond Woodsum & Steven Whitley to assist in the process. Mr. Drake asked Mr. Davenport about an escape clause written in the agreement. Mr. Davenport said he would look into it and see if bonds typically had escape clauses. Mr. Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drake that the Town retain Drummond Woodsum for our bond counselor for any items that need to be bonded, and to have the Town Administrator execute an engagement letter with Attorney Whitley on behalf of the Town. Vote was unanimous.
- FYI – NHRS Audit Results & Memo: An audit was done with 3 items were found, which Ms. Capone outlined in her memo. Corrections are needed as far back as 2018 and BMSI incorrectly labeled items that need correction.
- FYI – Registrations through November
- FYI – Budget Update for November
- FYI – Moultonborough Cell Tower Public Hearing Notice
- FYI – NHVP Lead & Copper Consumer Report
- FYI – Belknap County Budget Hearing
- FYI – NHDES Beach Issue Letter; Sharon Fawcett Revocable Trust; 101 Old Bristol Rd; Map R12, Lot 4 – states issue is resolved.

New Business after Agenda was posted:

- Citizen Proposal for Engagement: Mr. Davenport said this proposal which talks about considering a few companies that offer citizen engagement software would be a lot to take on and may be costly. Mr. Shaw asked to have this looked at in the future.
- Chairman Drake signed the Primex Letter of Authorization.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Mr. Drake asked when the trees that are marked are going to be cut. Mr. Davenport said the plan was to begin on 12/16.
- Mr. Harvey asked that Mr. Davenport advise Mr. Cote to wing back the snow further, beyond the edges of the roadways.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mr. Provencal said the property at 3 Carter Mountain Road has even more vehicles which have been brought in and some are behind the garage too.
- Mr. Provencal asked if there was a plan to re-assess properties in Town and Mr. Davenport said this must be done every 5 years, but will visit all

the properties over the first 4 years while performing regular pickups. He said any major adjustments to be made are based on sales and would take place in 2028.

The public left the meeting at 9:43 pm.

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION:**

At 9:44 PM, Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harvey to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II(a) Personnel Matters. A roll call vote was held: Mr. Drake – Y, Mr. Shaw – Y (by phone), & Mr. Harvey – Y.

PRESENT:

Mr. Drake, Mr. Shaw (by phone), Mr. Harvey, and Mr. Davenport.

**RETURN TO PUBLIC
SESSION:**

At 9:50 PM, Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaw to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes for 10 years. Vote was unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:51 PM, Mr. Drake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harvey to adjourn the meeting. Vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Vose