



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840
11 Town Square • PO Box 100
Phone: 603.431.7111 • Fax: 603.430.3761
Website: greenland-nh.com

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, March 13, 2023 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Randy Bunnell, Jamie Connelly, Vaughan Morgan, Steve Smith, Richard Winsor

Staff Present: Paul Sanderson, Town Administrator

Also Present: Marcia McLaughlin – Library Trustee

Chair Smith opened the Board of Selectmen meeting at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken, and it was announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Monday, February 27, 2023

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to approve the minutes of Monday, February 27, 2023. Second – R. Bunnell; four in favor, one abstained (J. Connelly). MOTION CARRIED

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. Coakley Update

No new information was available.

2. Audit Update

TA Sanderson updated the Board that Plodzick & Sanderson will be here between July 10, 2023, and July 14, 2023, to work on the field portion of the audit. There is a 46-page packet of requested information. TA Sanderson and the Finance Department have been working on the audit request. There is a significant amount of work to be done on the IT Policy. Financial policies will also need to be reviewed and updated. Corrective action can be taken moving forward in 2023.

3. Computer Update

TA Sanderson reported that there is an operational server installed. There is a switch that still needs to be removed and a new one installed. TA Sanderson has moved to the next step: he has ordered four new desktops and monitors, two laptops to be used as pool laptops, and a laptop to be used by TA Sanderson. Associated Microsoft licenses have also been ordered. Machines that were ordered are HP

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Windows machines. Responding to a question from R. Bunnell, TA Sanderson stated that the IT team will be installing the laptops and software on all computers, migrating from the Google platform to the Office platform.

4. Vanasse & Associates Proposal: Peer Review of PDA Traffic Study

TA Sanderson has contacted David Moore, Stratham Town Administrator, as requested by the Board. He will be discussing the traffic study with his Board on Friday, March 24th. TA Sanderson reported that he has spoken to the Executive Director of the Rockingham Planning Commission, who is in the process of developing a planning charrette to be held jointly with Stratham and Greenland. RPC would be sponsoring an effort to have the Rt.33 corridor looked at by two towns and the public.

It was questioned by V. Morgan what the consequences would be to wait to authorize the traffic study review. TA Sanderson stated that there would be no consequences to the litigation with the Town of Newington due to that being a different site. The traffic review involves 80 Rochester Avenue/100 New Hampshire Avenue. Responding to V. Morgan, TA Sanderson reminded the Board that Stratham declined to be involved in 2018; he did not think there was anything there that would change their mind.

R. Winsor noted that Mark Fougere, Planning Board Consultant, emailed a letter for the Selectmen to explain the inconsistencies with the address and the location being on multiple roads, adding that was part of the problem at the last meeting. R. Winsor stated that Vanasse reviewed the traffic study in 2018 and the results were vastly different from the one proposed by the developer. If the Board was serious about addressing traffic on Rt. 33, it was important to do. It would go through the Portsmouth Planning Board next. Incremental erosion occurred each time a parking lot was added at Pease and more vehicles meant more people on the road. There would never be a single catalyzing event; there would be several. S. Smith explained that the property location was the vacant lot across from Seacoast Media.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to authorize the expenditure of the fixed fee from Vanasse & Associates for the Traffic Engineering Peer Review, not to exceed \$5,500. Expenditures over \$5,500 must be approved by the Board of Selectmen. Further, the Town Administrator is authorized to sign the agreement with Vanasse & Associates. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

5. Other Old Business

There was no 'Other Old Business'.

IV. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Transfer Station Attendants

There are currently two openings at the Transfer Station. The positions were advertised at \$17 per hour; two applications have been received. TA Sanderson requested the authority to hire attendants if they were qualified and Bob Grodan, Transfer Station attendant, agreed.

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to authorize the Town Administrator to hire applicants for the two open positions at the Transfer Station. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Employee Wages

TA Sanderson explained that if the operating budget was passed by voters, the calculations could be made and available for the new Board on March 27th. If the operating budget was not approved, the calculations could still be done for the next Board for discussion on how to implement the default budget. S. Smith noted it has been done in the past and would be retroactive.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to authorize employee wages to be paid at the 6% increase, retroactive to January 01, 2023, contingent upon the operating budget being approved. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Other New Business

Meeting with DOT Bureau of Traffic and District 6: On Thursday, March 16th, TA Sanderson and others will be meeting with the head of the DOT Bureau of Traffic and District 6 engineer regarding several pending issues. The Truck Stop is one issue; the traffic at this location has gone into virtual failure. TA Sanderson noted there are three pumps at the Truck Stop that have been damaged and not pumping. They have also advertised a reduction in the price of diesel. TA Sanderson continued that after researching the Town's land use files, there are no site plans available; the Truck Stop was started in 1979, which was prior to when State law allowed for site reviews. There have been no site reviews of the entire site. Access to the site is controlled by two State driveway permits. TA Sanderson noted that the Bureau of Traffic controls the lights, signage, and pavement markings on a State-wide basis. The District 6 engineer is the supervisor of the entire District 6 area, from the seacoast to Salem. R. Winsor questioned if DOT could do anything about the Truck Stop. TA Sanderson replied that according to the Driveway Permit statute, they have absolute ongoing perpetual authority to order necessary changes to maintain safety.

TA Sanderson also planned to discuss the crosswalk at the School. There has been progress on the crosswalk and it should be installed in the spring so it is in compliance with MUTCD. TA Sanderson stated the safety project on Rt. 33 will also be discussed (the Winnicut River Bridge to the Stratham line). Rt. 33 would be two-lanes with wide shoulders to three-lanes with narrow shoulders. TA Sanderson will request an incident management plan during that project; the chances of an incident may be high. TA Sanderson added it would be an opportunity for traffic counts on Rt. 33.

Portsmouth Avenue Drainage (Near the Country Club): Problems start in the Great Bog with beaver dams causing a back-up onto Sanderson Road and as far up as Anne's Lane and Fairway Drive, which is a State maintenance area. The culvert under Portsmouth Avenue, which drains the Sanderson Road area, is an open box granite culvert and may be sized incorrectly due to its age. Residents on Sanderson Road are getting a lot of damage to their homes; the chokepoint is Portsmouth Avenue.

Planning Board Selectmen's Rep: The Planning Board would be meeting on Thursday, March 16th. The Board of Selectmen's current Planning Board Representative's term will be over. TA Sanderson asked that another representative be appointed and attend the meeting on Thursday night. When the Board of Selectmen reorganize on Monday, May 27th, a representative will be appointed.

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V. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Veteran's Tax Credit: The assessor has approved the Veteran's Tax Credit for the resident at 59 Tidewater Farm Road (Map R13, 65) in the amount of \$750.
2. Payroll Manifest: \$46,382.15
3. General Fund Manifest: Total: \$225,636.12

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

S. Smith presented mugs to J. Connelly and R. Winsor for their years of service on various Boards. Members of the Board joined S. Smith in thanking J. Connelly and R. Winsor. J. Connelly thanked members of the Board, stating it had been an absolute pleasure to with the Town and get to know its staff. Both J. Connelly and R. Winsor stated they would return after a short break.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: R. Winsor moved to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, March 27, 2023 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant