



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, July 17, 2023 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Randy Bunnell, Laura Malloy, Vaughan Morgan, Steve Smith, Paul Stanley

Staff Present: Paul Sanderson, Town Administrator

Also Present: NH State Senator Debra Altschiller; NH State Representative Dennis Malloy; Susan Parker – Greenland/Newington PDA Representative; Chief Tara Tucker – Police Department Department; Chip Hussey – Chairman, Conservation Commission

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.

S. Smith noted the passing of Ted Connors, a former Newington Selectman and former Portsmouth Mayor. L. Malloy added that 'he was a good guy'. Susan Parker, Greenland/Newington PDA Representative, added for the record that Chairman Connors was an ongoing source of encouragement for her. He always said, 'stick to the facts and where the facts appear to you to be missing, start asking questions and build your case according to the way you think the case should be built.' S. Parker continued that his stability and kindness were noteworthy: she proudly said it was municipal government and he did not think being nasty was necessary. S. Parker stated that she would be remiss if she did not give profound thanks for his help along the way.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Highway Safety Grant – Chief Tucker, Police Department

Chief Tucker stated that annually they apply for, and receive, a Highway Safety Grant. Chief Tucker explained some of the specifics of the grant. Over the last several years, they received \$3,000 to \$4,000. This year they are receiving \$13,640. In addition, for equipment they were granted \$3,034.

MOTION: L. Malloy moved to accept and expend the Highway Safety Grant approved for the Police Department in the amount of \$16,674.88. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Responding to S. Smith, Chief Tucker stated that the 'Move Over' campaign is Statewide. Approximately 40 states have something similar. R. Bunnell questioned if the grant was posted as revenue or a grant. TA Sanderson explained that is accounted for as a grant because it was coming from State funds; it is not budgeted as part of the budget. It is received and expended as a grant in accordance with grant conditions received from the State.

II. APPOINTMENTS

1. NH State Senator Debra Altschiller

Senator Altschiller provided the Board with a legislative update. She has been a member of the House representing Stratham for the last six years. Stratham has a practice of receiving legislative updates three times a year. Senator Altschiller will continue that practice with all the towns she represents in the district. There is an opportunity between now and the fall to have legislative issues addressed.

The session for the fiscal year was finished on June 30th. Highlights included:

- The bipartisan budget passed both chambers with a minimal amount of problems. The budget is \$121.1 million for the fiscal year 2024, with a potential increase to \$123.5 million for fiscal year 2025 in meals and rooms tax distribution to municipalities. The Meals and Rooms statute was amended to set the municipal distribution at 30%.
- There is \$32.56 million in Highway Block Grants.
- There will be an annual registration surcharge of \$100 for electric vehicles and \$50 for plug-in hybrids. Those proceeds will go to the NH Highway fund.
- A one-time Highway Block Grant for municipal road maintenance and municipally owned bridges will be released for application.
- Senator Altschiller received an update from Bill Watson, NHDOT Project Manager, regarding the plan for the construction of the Winnicut River Bridge. The project number is 43849. The project scope includes an engineering assessment to improve resiliency and capacity. The next step after completing the assessment is to identify funds to make any appropriate improvements. The assessment is scheduled for FY 2024.
- There is a one-time \$10 million Highway Block Grant for municipal road maintenance and an additional \$10 million for bridges. Senator Altschiller suggested discussing available bridge maintenance funds with B. Watson. She noted that funding became available July 01st.
- \$2 million is available for PFAS remediation.
- \$10 million is being released to increase Cross Roads House bed nights, which serves Greenland. Welfare Services should be contacted about revenue coming in.
- \$1.2 million is available for the State to match a federal grant for local cyber security. This will be direct assistance to towns. \$1.6 million is appropriated for FY 2025. Department of Justice is administering the program.
- The Medicare Granite State Advantage Program has been extended for seven years. Reimbursement has been increased, which should significantly change how care is accessed. Dental is now included.

Senator Altschiller shared that she was able to get a budget appropriation of \$500,000 for each fiscal year to the New Hampshire Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. This will allow them to purchase another cruiser, hire a part-time person to screen incoming tips, and do more training. It will also allow the Task Force to take care of the dog that is an integral part of the department.

Senator Altschiller also informed the Board that the Department of State will be investing approximately \$660 million to develop an online voter information portal. She was hoping it would provide links to each city and town with information about registering to vote, voting locations, etc.

R. Bunnell stated that it was great Rt. 33 has been taken care of. He questioned why it was so difficult to have the speed limit changed on Rt. 33: why did it have to go through State Congress to change the speed limit? It was still a 50-mph roadway when there are lights, new neighborhoods and multiple stop signs; it

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was absolutely insane it was a 50 mph road. It is 1.1 mile into Stratham, which then drops to 40 mph and past Dunkin' Donuts it drops to 40 mph. L. Malloy noted that there were 50 houses between Van Etten Drive and Stratham Hill Park, so it is a residential area. She added it was better with the center turn lane. Dennis Malloy, NH State Representative, stated that his understanding was federal money was used for the center turn lane because it was determined that was a dangerous stretch of road. Lines were painted two years ago to eliminate passing. D. Malloy noted it was a State road and managed by NHDOT. The speed limit was 50 mph because it was a 'straight shot', and line of sight was quite long. That was allowable at 50 mph. Senator Altschiller responded it was a State road and had to go through NHDOT. If it was a priority, she would get clarification from NHDOT on how to reduce the speed limit. R. Bunnell stated the speed limit should be uniform with Stratham, which is 40 mph. Senator Altschiller clarified that it should be 40 mph from the circle to the Target/Lowe's area; R. Bunnell added 'whatever was the State's responsibility'.

The Board thanked Senator Altschiller and welcomed her back anytime. She reminded that Board to reach out to her with any legislative concerns. She would like to meet with the Board again in January.

2. New Hire – Chief Tucker, Police Department

Chief Tucker has a candidate who is in the process of being hired; the process has not been completed. She asked the Board permission to hire the individual upon successful completion rather than requesting a special Board of Selectmen's meeting. The process is 75% complete. The candidate is certified and currently working in another department. They would like to start training as soon as possible. The candidate is not a Greenland resident and has three years of experience in New Hampshire. Chief Tucker stated the advantage of a little less experience is that they can be trained within the department, pay a little less and still get the certification.

Chief Tucker noted that the other new hire starts the Academy on July 31st. He has passed his entrance physical exam.

Responding to a question from V. Morgan, Chief Tucker stated that hiring this candidate would bring the department to full staff. Responding to L. Malloy, Chief Tucker stated that they are waiting for the doctor to release the officer who is out on a medical leave. Chief Tucker explained the remaining steps in hiring the potential candidate. Someone in another department recommended Greenland to the candidate.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to allow Chief Tucker to hire a certified police candidate contingent upon a successful background check. If hired, that individual may start as quickly as possible. Second – L. Malloy; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Chief Tucker will keep TA Sanderson up to date on the hiring process.

3. New Ambulance – Chief Cresta, Fire Department

Chief Cresta was not available for this meeting. This item has been continued to a future date. V. Morgan noted that the new ambulance is a 'moving hospital' and 'quite the machine'.

R. Bunnell asked if Chief Cresta hired the two full-time officers approved at Town Meeting. TA Sanderson stated that one hire has been successful and the other has not. It has not been to the Board of Selectmen. TA Sanderson stated it may be contingent on some pre-testing and a final offer has not been made.

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4. Summer Employee—Chip Hussey, Conservation Commission Chairman

Chip Hussey, Conservation Commission Chairman, introduced Phoenix LaFlamme-Howe to the Board. The Conservaiton Commission would like to hire her as a summer employee to monitor property and conservation easements that are the Town’ responsibility. The rate of pay has been increased to \$18 per hour plus mileage. C. Hussey reviewed the highlights of P. LaFlamme-Howe’s resume.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to authorize the Conservation Commission to hire Phoenix LaFlamme-Howe as a summer employee to monitor property and conservation easements that are the Town’s responsibility. The rate of pay will be \$18 per hour plus mileage; funding will be through the Conservation Commission’s budget. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Monday, July 03, 2023

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to approve the minutes of Monday, July 03, 2023. Second – L. Malloy; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Impact Fees

TA Sanderson explained that impact fees are an innovative type of zoning that is allowed under RSA 674:21, which allows some of the cost of a capital item to be recovered. Mark Fougere, Planning Board Consultant, prepared an analysis for the Weeks Library. Included was the impact fee for a new home that would be due upon the Certificate of Occupancy being issued. Impacts fees will be used on the Library debt and other projects in the future. The impact fees must be used on the specific purpose within six years, or the funds are returned to the developer. Impact fees are paid by the developer.

R. Bunnell questioned if the focus was on the Library, adding there were other services that were being impacted. TA Sanderson stated it was done for the Library because it was already well-known. As facilities are worked on, it is possible there will be proposed impact fees for Town facilities. S. Smith added it would not be limited to the Library. This was to lessen the impact of the bond payment for the Library. Answering R. Bunnell’s question, TA Sanderson stated that developers will be told it was a Library impact fee. The impact fee will not be applied to projects in the recent past, it will be prospective. Once the Ordinance is in place, any development that does not have a pending application at the Planning Board will be assessed impact fees.

R. Bunnell wanted to change the name to Public Service Impact Fees. S. Smith and TA Sanderson stated according to the statute, the need had to be identified. TA Sanderson further explained it had to be a capital item; public service is not eligible (police services would not be eligible but a potential police station would be). Responding to L. Malloy, TA Sanderson stated there would be different formulas for different purposes based on who uses them (a town hall used by every citizen would be assessed a fee based on the town’s population).

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MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve and implement the Weeks Library Impact Fee Analysis as prepared Fougere Planning & Development. Second – L. Malloy

Discussion: R. Bunnell's concern was that the impact fee would be passed on to the consumer by the developer and was another tax to the citizens; why not just increase the taxes and let everyone contribute to the costs. TA Sanderson stated that was the central issue with impact fees. Taxation is the only other source of income. The alternative to not going to the development that is causing some of the additional capital expenses is to increase everyone's taxes to pay for the items that residents want. An impact fee will be charged on each lot in a subdivision. R. Bunnell stated it was a 'back door tax'. P. Stanley stated that one way or another capital items had to be paid for. People coming into the community now will be 'catching up'. TA Sanderson stated that because the impact fees will be assessed on new development, it is money that will not have to be raised in the Town-wide tax rate. The tax rate that is adopted will be slightly lower than if there was not an impact fee. R. Bunnell questioned the age-restricted impact fee vs. the single-family impact fee and why a single-family home would be charged more than a 55 or older community. R. Bunnell did not feel the Planning Board did a good enough job on the impact fee. He preferred to table any further discussion and would oppose it if voted on by the Board. S. Smith offered to call M. Fougere and discuss any concerns. R. Bunnell's questions were fairness to the residents of Greenland. P. Stanley understood R. Bunnell's point, but the breakdown made sense because they would be paying for services the residents were already paying for or had access to; the concept made sense to him. It would actually be a reduction to taxes. R. Bunnell noted an age-restricted community put more demand on the services.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve and implement the Weeks Library Impact Fee Analysis as prepared Fougere Planning & Development. Second – L. Malloy; four in favor, one against (R. Bunnell).
MOTION CARRIED

2. Audit Update

Staff members from Plodzick & Sanderson were in the Town Hall for three days the week of July 10th. The audit went better than the previous year. They were happy with the amount of information provided, and they were extremely thorough with their probing of the accounts. There will be one more day of field work. TA Sanderson anticipates the audit will be delivered before budget season starts and the tax rate is set. TA Sanderson thanked the Town Office staff for their hard work. It was a positive process.

3. Facilities Update

TA Sanderson updated the Board that he received a report from the structural engineer for the Maintenance Building across the parking lot. He indicated the structure can be saved and was in better condition than expected. Major issues include the roof: metal panels that were nailed down to the trusses. The roof has not rotted through--the nails have lifted, and water is getting in; one truss needs a minor gusset repair; there are two structural columns in the rear that need repair. A detailed report is available.

TA Sanderson met with the structural engineer earlier in the day to assess the facilities on this side of the parking lot. Salt tent: some of the turnbuckles may have been knocked off or rusted out. Second building down: significant structural issues in that building; he will report on what needs to be done for that to remain a serviceable building. The Fire Department has parked a vehicle in that building; the Town truck will be parked in there also. A structural analysis will be done on the Town Office. TA Sanderson noted the exterior walls are foamed with urea foam insulation and has trapped the wiring in the walls. The air

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handlers were also foamed in and cannot be repaired when they fail. The ducting cannot be repaired because it was foamed in and failed. TA Sanderson asked the structural engineer if the building could be renovated. It is unknown if any walls are load bearing. If it can be renovated, there should be discussions about the feasibility.

TA Sanderson hopes to have a proposal available at the next meeting. The Facilities Committee can continue their meetings and develop alternatives that can be presented to the residents. He does not expect a concrete proposal to be ready for the 2024 Town Meeting. Some or all of the existing Fire Department CRF (\$300,000) may need to be repurposed to allow for planning for a particular facility. A good deal of structural data will be available to present to residents.

The Town Office was designed in 1975 based on an analysis by Wright-Pierce Engineers. It was designed to last until the year 2000 and serve a population of 2,000 people. The building has lasted more than 20 years over its life expectancy. The population has more than doubled over the design limits. That information would be included in an impact fee analysis.

Structural plans were not available in the original building plans. The Facilities Committee will meet once all the information is available. L. Malloy recommended gathering all the information and having a strong data point before scheduling a meeting. TA Sanderson noted there may be a much better idea of the planning costs at that time.

4. Other Old Business

Taxes and Deeding: Responding to R. Bunnell, TA Sanderson reported that through the hard work of the Tax Collector, all potential tax deeding has been resolved, with a payment or payment arrangements. There are no properties that are being proposed for deeding. This was a testament to the Tax Collector's hard work and developing solutions for those in tough situations. TA Sanderson explained that once an individual has exceeded three years of tax assessment, the Town is required to either deed the property or notify the Selectmen of a solution to not deed. This is a statutory calendar item that occurs annually. TA Sanderson stated that the total taxes to be collected were approximately \$9 million; very few individuals did not pay their taxes. S. Smith noted that the interest would continue to accumulate on the unresolved balance; TA Sanderson stated that the interest on unresolved taxes was 14% by statute. D. Malloy asked if the 14% was negotiable; TA Sanderson stated it was the statute. He continued that there are things that can be done if an individual qualifies for a certain type of relief.

Policies: R. Bunnell noted that the second reading of policies was not on the agenda, and requested it be included for the next meeting. The two policies to be reviewed are part of the audit. R. Bunnell would like those to be adopted.

VI. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

1. 2024 Budget

TA Sanderson stated that now was the time to set some policy goals in this area. Due to this being a revaluation year, the Town is currently valued at approximately \$900 million. The assessor has indicated that the property assessment will increase by almost 50%. The total value of the Town is expected to be approximately \$1.4 billion. That will create a wider tax base, which is good. Residents are concerned that taxes will be the old rate times the new assessment and the tax rate will increase substantially. TA Sanderson stated that is not likely to happen. What will likely happen is that the rate will decrease; the

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amount of the decrease depends on the discipline used by the Selectmen in the budgeting process. It is expected that the larger businesses will file for an abatement, which may put the Town into significant litigation next year. This happens in every town that has large commercial properties, and is not unique to Greenland.

TA Sanderson stated that the initial goal was to keep to the default budget, which was approximately \$6.3 million. R. Bunnell stated that the legal budget should be increased for additional litigation during the assessment period. TA Sanderson agreed, adding he would get an opinion from the Town Attorney as to a reasonable amount. The legal budget was increased from \$35,000 to \$49,000 in the current budget. Approximately 50% of the legal line has been expended to date. TA Sanderson hoped departments could submit budgets with less of an incremental approach and more of a zero-based budgeting approach.

5. Other New Business

There was no 'Other New Business' to discuss.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Payroll Manifest: \$79,063.11
2. General Fund Manifest: \$291,123.04 (Trustees of Trust Funds: 2023 Warrant Articles - \$99,400; Road Improvement CRF - \$3,767.50; NH Retirement - \$45,161.68; Other - \$142,793.86)

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

VIII. NON-PUBLIC

1. RSA 91-A:3, II(e)

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(e) at 7:37 pm. Second – V. Morgan; roll call vote: R. Bunnell, yes; L. Malloy, yes; P. Stanley, yes; V. Morgan, yes; S. Smith, yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

The Board moved to return to public session at 7:52 pm.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve the Lowe's Home Center abatement as recommended by the assessor in the amount of \$37,619.96 plus interest. Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

The Board approved the cyber security request by TA Sanderson.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, July 31, 2023 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant