



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Monday, December 04, 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: Dennis Malloy, New Hampshire State Representative; Members of the Energy Committee

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. APPOINTMENTS

1. Recreation Committee

Sharon McLaughlin and DJ Haskins, Recreation Committee Co-Chairs, introduced Mickey Smith, Girls Soccer Coach at Portsmouth High School; M. Smith also runs summer camps at Maloney Field. They were proposing a soccer wall (kick wall) in Greenland, Rye, Portsmouth for youth through high school age students. A soccer wall enables an individual to have a more productive practice with one soccer ball.

M. Smith approached the Rec Committee about the feasibility of a soccer wall in Greenland. The wall would not involve Town or Rec funds; it would be paid for by the Portsmouth Girls Soccer Boosters. DJ Haskins distributed a Google map of Maloney Field with the proposed location of the wall noted; it would not interfere with the softball or soccer fields. The flat spot would be beneficial to soccer and lacrosse players.

Responding to a question from L. Malloy, M. Smith stated that a little soil may have to be removed for the built-in goal in the wall. There will be no interference with other activities that are currently offered at Maloney Field. DJ Haskins described the location of the wall. The benches and shed are still located on the field.

M. Smith stated that pressure-treated lumber would be used; posts would be set in concrete. The wall would be similar to a pressure-treated fence with a goal. M. Smith has measured the proposed location; 64 feet in length should accommodate the wall. Maintenance should not be needed for approximately 20 years. The ideal height would be up to 12 feet (drawing on file). M. Smith explained that without the wall, a great deal of time is spent retrieving the ball.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to approve a kick wall being built on the far side of Maloney Field between the soccer and softball fields. The wall size will not exceed 64 feet x 12 feet. Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

DISCUSSION: L. Malloy would like to schedule a site walk to make sure the location will work. TA Sanderson requested that the Rec Committee check with the City of Portsmouth Public Works

Department because of the 400 foot well radius around the Greenland Well. They are in the process of doing engineering to add significant treatment. S. McLaughlin will contact the Public Works Department.

2. Energy Committee

Alice Passer, Energy Committee Co-Chair, introduced Mark and Joshua Cappadona, Colonial Power Group. The Energy Committee selected Colonial Power Group as the Town's vendor. The Board received a copy of the Aggregation Plan as well as a consultant agreement, which is different from the supplier agreement. Hoping enough information was provided to the Board so they could move forward with Community Power in March, A. Passer stated she felt there was enough time to do what was required by law.

P. Stanley questioned how they chose Colonial Power Group. A. Passer responded that every group they interviewed was very good. Committee members liked the professionalism of Colonial Power and believed they offer residents of Greenland the lowest electricity rates and special projects would be tailored to Greenland. A. Passer stated they considered CCPNH as well as Colonial Power Group. The Committee felt Colonial Power Group would provide a better rate for the Town.

TA Sanderson has reviewed the agreement. There is the non-profit approach (Community Coalition) chosen by many neighboring communities, and the for-profit approach (Colonial Power). The Community Coalition puts aside funds from various rates to help fund local projects years ahead. The for-profit group is not proposing that at this time. The focus is currently on the rate. Both programs are valid and have been approved by the Public Utilities Commission in various communities across the State. The purpose of the committee was to review the details and come back with a recommendation.

Responding to L. Malloy, A. Passer stated that the vote was four for Colonial Power and one for CCPNH. TA Sanderson explained the next steps. If the Board approves the basic plan, a warrant article will be written to go on the ballot in March. It will then go to the PUC for final approval and the committee can get a rate to become the Town's default energy provider. A. Passer noted that before going to Town Meeting, there needed to be two public hearings, with 10 days notice, to present the aggregation plan to residents. TA Sanderson clarified that the residents would ultimately approve the plan in March.

A. Passer, responding to P. Stanley, stated that residents with Eversource or Unitil would be an eligible customer for community power. A Direct Energy customer or other supplier would be ineligible until their contract expired. M. Cappadona stated that residents will receive a letter 30 days before the program start date; they can opt out of the program. Enrollment is automatic. Residents may opt out of the program at anytime, there is no fee or penalty. P. Stanley questioned why a resident may not want to participate. M. Cappadona stated there has been pushback because some residents do not like the town or city to choose their supplier.

R. Bunnell questioned why they were not on the market like Direct Energy if they were a for-profit company. M. Cappadona explained they are a consultant and do not supply electricity. They work with communities to get out to the market place, create a plan and educate the consumer. M. Cappadona explained how their program is different than what is offered today through a distributor similar to Direct Energy. They currently support approximately 650,000 customers in Massachusetts. Colonial Power makes money through a fee.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to approve *Colonial Power* as the Board of Selectmen's choice, as recommended by the Energy Committee, to provide community power aggregation to the Town of Greenland. Further, the Board of Selectmen authorize the Energy Committee to work with the Town

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Administrator to bring this option to the voters of Greenland. Second – P. Stanley; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

S. Smith thanked the Energy Committee for all their diligent work.

3. Legislative Update: Dennis Malloy, NH State Representative

Dennis Malloy, representing Greenland and Rye, introduced Peggy Balboni who represents Rye, North Hampton, and Greenland; Jaci Grote represents Rye and Greenland.

D. Malloy stated that Greenland has a seat on the PDA and has done a lot with drinking water. Coakley Landfill started much of the PFAS and PFOS awareness in the State. J. Grote is Chair of the Seacoast Long Term Drinking Water Commission. D. Malloy stated they were going to work diligently to move Rt. 33 up in the corridor study plan; the Board's help will be needed with that. Everyone needs to pull in the same direction to get the attention of the Executive Council and DOT. D. Malloy explained his role on the Ways and Means Committee.

J. Grote reviewed the Private Well Testing Initiative and the meeting held at Greenland School at the beginning of November. This program was done as part of the Seacoast Safe Drinking Water Commission, which is a legislative commission. She explained that the commission is also looking at interconnectivity between towns and the possibility of helping with the water supply in the future. There is also an education component. Data from well testing is not available yet; a report will be available when all testing is complete. J. Grote discussed House Bill 494, which affects Berry Brook and Coakley. DES was required to have a plan to remediate Coakley Landfill. A plan was promised by the end of 2023. Also discussed was building codes with an environmental impact. J. Grote informed the Board there is a push to delicense some professional areas.

P. Balboni is a member of the State Education Committee. She explained the statewide education property tax. For the last several years, Greenland has received approximately \$600,000. The federal government has announced that ESSER Funds for schools will no longer be available and that may have an impact on school budgets. P. Balboni discussed the voucher program. There is legislation for establishing a voucher program on the local level.

R. Bunnell commented that small towns tended to struggle with technology and cybersecurity. Small towns, like Greenland, are challenged to bring in those kinds of resources. R. Bunnell continued that someone to help us get there would be appreciated. A '.gov' address provides additional security measures rather than a '.com' address. TA Sanderson stated that the Town did apply to DOIT for some of the funding and were told Greenland is on the waiting list. J. Grote responded she would try to find out how the Town could be moved up on that list.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Monday, November 20, 2023

MOTION: L. Malloy moved to approve the minutes of Monday, November 20, 2023. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

III. OLD BUSINESS

1. Transfer Station

The employment situation at the Transfer Station is very challenging. There are currently three individuals at the Transfer Station who have been there over the past year. TA Sanderson informed the Board that there has been a recent applicant, who is younger, for a position at the Transfer Station. Ross Bourdon is local and a graphic designer. Starting wage will be \$19.50 per hour and increase to \$21.07 per hour when certified as a Solid Waste Operator. TA Sanderson noted that three people are needed on Wednesday when it is slower and four people on Saturday, which is busier. L. Malloy suggested that the Town utilize R. Bourdon for Town communications and marketing.

TA Sanderson stated that the Board will need to have a discussion about continuing the Transfer Station in its existing model. As the Town grows and waste increases, adding a fifth person will be difficult. The community should discuss whether to consider curbside pick-up. Responding to L. Malloy, TA Sanderson stated the discussion should start at the Board level and possibly appoint an advisory committee. P. Stanley would like to see a price comparison for curbside pick-up vs. the Transfer Station. TA Sanderson noted that the Town will be paying for recycling this year at \$110 per ton. V. Morgan and S. Smith noted that fees needed to be reviewed after the first of the year.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to hire Ross Bourdon as a Transfer Station employee. Starting pay will be \$19.50; once certified as a Solid Waste Operator, wages will increase to \$21.07 per hour. Second – L. Malloy; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Municipal Resources Inc. Contract

S. Smith recently spoke to Carol Granfield, Municipal Resources Inc., about reviewing employee wages. Information was forwarded to C. Granfield by TA Sanderson. She recommended starting with a pay/classification review. S. Smith explained that C. Granfield would make a statewide comparison with the Town's pay scale. The Board could then determine how to go forward with a pay scale or a step program. The cost would be \$400, depending on how in-depth the Board wanted to go. This will take approximately three months to complete.

C. Granfield reviewed the current Personnel Policy and recommended throwing it out and starting over. Some of the language and RSAs are outdated or need to be updated. Salaries and a benefit package will be added into the Personnel Policy as well as a retirement structure. They also discussed budgeting moving forward.

TA Sanderson added that because the wage and classification study will not be done during the current budget cycle, he will include place holders in the budget for what the amounts may be to provide basic resources. He stated those amounts may not be what is approved and may not bear any relationship to what the classification provides for guidance. The resources will be available when the decision is made. The Budget Committee appeared to be supportive of the concept.

Chief Tucker clarified that MRI would be looking at similar size towns and not the local region. S. Smith explained it would be similar size towns but not necessarily the local region due to department size. Chief Tucker, personally, had a problem with just size and makeup of towns. She used the example that a police officer in Portsmouth is doing the same thing that a Greenland police office does and would be stealing her officers. She questioned if the amount to do the study covered the Police Department; S. Smith

responded that was his understanding. Chief Tucker questioned if she should include place holders rather than what she submitted in her budget, which may be low. R. Bunnell recommended waiting to see what MRI brings back to the Board. No decisions will be made; it is advisory to provide guidance. S. Smith added that it would be going forward next year, not this current budget cycle. R. Bunnell noted that at the Budget Committee meeting, the Board would have discretionary capabilities for the Town and Fire Department similar to the Police Department this year. TA Sanderson stated that the Board had to make sure the budget had enough room so the recommendations could be reviewed and make a determination on wages. The Board discussed the percentage increases in the wages. TA Sanderson stated that what the Board presented to the Budget Committee and advocated to voters at public hearing and deliberative session provides enough resources for the goals of retention of the Town's current staff. Chief Tucker stated that the MRI survey may come back at higher wages than what she included in her budget. R. Bunnell stated they were going forward with the budget and the Board would have discretion to make adjustments where advice and counsel had been given. TA Sanderson noted that the Board had transfer authority across departments and lines.

TA Sanderson stated, in fairness to both public safety departments, there is program service income to fund increases for people who are so severely behind in wages: building permit fees, motor vehicle fees, transfer station fees; there is the ability to raise revenue to fund those necessary changes. The Police Department does not have a source of additional revenue or the ability to go to other sources and fees. The Fire Department has a limited amount due to the Building Inspector, who is also a Fire Captain.

S. Smith stated that the recommendations from MRI would not be available until after Town Meeting. He recommended taking their recommendations and implementing them when the Board knew what was going to happen, leaving the budget as is for 2024.

MOTION: S. Smith moved to enter into a contract with Municipal Resources Inc. to revise the Personnel Policy and wage schedule. Second – L. Malloy; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

R. Bunnell requested that MRI include a stipend review.

3. 2024 Budget Review

School: TA Sanderson updated the Board that the School budget increased by approximately \$600,000; the increase for the School would be approximately \$0.05 on the tax rate. Town: The 2023 default budget was \$6,146,000. That amount was decreased by \$55,000 (revaluation) and \$9,000 (debt service). The 2024 default budget will be approximately \$6,082,000. The proposed operating budget is \$6.5 million. The Budget Committee felt they could present the budget at \$6.5 million for the Town; it was on par with the School's increase.

The Budget Committee will meet again on Thursday, December 14th. Warrant articles may be given to the Budget Committee for review at that time. TA Sanderson is hoping to use the Unreserved Fund Balance to fund some of the warrant articles. After tonight's manifest, there will be approximately \$800,000 remaining in appropriations to get to the end of the year. That will be discussed at the meeting on December 18th as well as any encumbrances.

The warrant article for hiring an additional firefighter (\$93,400) will be encumbered. A firefighter will be hired on December 19th; that salary does not have to be included in the 2024 operating budget because the position was a warrant article. TA Sanderson reviewed the road reclamation projects (\$400,000); there is approximately \$1 million in Capital Reserve Funds available for roads. There has been a suggestion

there may be a warrant article to increase the fee for vehicle registrations from \$2.50 to \$5 so the fund will grow faster; between 5,000 and 6,000 are registered in Greenland per year. There is a year-round comprehensive maintenance agreement with Piscataqua Landscaping. There is approximately \$14,000 in ARPA Funds remaining; the Board will receive a list at the next meeting of possible expenditures from that account, including the heater in Station 2 (\$8,000).

R. Bunnell questioned if the Unreserved Fund Balance could be used in an emergency. TA Sanderson noted there is a Town Equipment Capital Reserve Fund to handle those types of repairs. R. Bunnell also questioned if there was a warrant article to support another emergency. TA Sanderson stated there is approximately \$57,000 in the Town Equipment CRF. More money should be put in the CRF to deal with any emergencies. It was suggested that the Fire Station CRF be repurposed to include design. There is approximately \$300,000 in that fund. Repurposing must pass by two-thirds vote. Warrant articles will be ready for Board review on December 18th.

R. Bunnell discussed the Fire Department and Police Department donor. He suggested that if the Chiefs know an item that will need to be replaced, those funds should be used to purchase the item. Chief Tucker stated it was one donor and they have received the donation for two years. She also stated that the ballistic vests are good for five years before they have to be replaced; they cannot be purchased in advance. The donation is not supposed to supplant the budget; it is for items over and above. TA Sanderson added the donor is looking to provide something that will not be funded.

TA Sanderson reviewed other warrant articles: close out a Library fund that has no balance, Recreation Department will be setting up a CRF for monies received for advertising (to be primarily fund with a transfer from their revolving fund), the Energy Committee will present a warrant article, and possibly one more. The Budget Committee will receive warrant articles on December 14th.

4. Health Insurance Rates

On November 06th the Board gave its approval to move from Health Trust to ClaimLinx. The primary driver for ending the relationship with Health Trust was the 15.6% projected rate increase. The Town's monthly cost currently is approximately \$50,000 per month; the rate increase would have raised the amount by \$7,800 a month. The immediate cost avoidance savings is \$93,600.

Plan for Active Employees: TA Sanderson explained that a high deductible Anthem plan will be purchased to provide a stop loss against large claims. The high deductible plan has varying rates based on age. The Town will create a Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan (MERP) under Section 105 of the tax code. The Town would be funding enough money to pay the ClaimLinx commission, and to pay ClaimLinx for the reasonable and projected claims from Town employees. The cost is projected to be under \$100,000. The difference in the cost of the Anthem plan is approximately \$32,000 a month. It could save the Town over \$200,000 in premium costs. The MERP would be funded from the \$200,000 for between \$100,000 and \$120,000, depending on the claims experience. Also funded would be the secondary ancillary coverages (dental, vision, short-term disability, and long-term disability). TA Sanderson has made the arrangement for an FSA (Flexible Spending Account) through Aflac; they would administer the plan. No one in the Town Office would be aware of any claims made by employees. TA Sanderson explained the information that would be available on the dashboard. Medical information on the employee, spouse or family member would not be available.

Plan for Retirees: TA Sanderson commented that under Health Trust, the retirees plan was not transparent. There are less than 10 retirees, and most are Medicare eligible. A Medicare supplemental

plan (Part A and Part B) should cost approximately \$159 per month. TA Sanderson stated that he has contacted ClaimLinx: is anything being done for charges inside the MERP. Under the statute, 100-A:50, the Town has a duty to offer retirees the ability to participate in a plan. TA Sanderson noted that the high deductible is the only plan being offered. The Town does not administer Medicare plans. Medicare plans can be paid through Social Security deductions or a medical subsidy plan through the State of New Hampshire. TA Sanderson explained the medical subsidy plan.

TA Sanderson noted that there are no retiree files in the Town Office. Information is being provided by HealthTrust. TA Sanderson introduced Karen Anderson, former Town Administrator. K. Anderson stated she did not receive the medical subsidy; it was police and fire only. TA Sanderson will forward contact information for the Town's consultant at ClaimLinx to K. Anderson. K. Anderson explained her current costs for health and dental as well as the projected cost of the new plan. She told the Board that her biggest complaint was that retirees have not been notified. She started asking for information on rates on November 07th; on December 01st, she was told the Town was no longer using HealthTrust. K. Anderson continued that as of December 31st she will no longer have insurance. Former police chiefs and police officers have not received any information: disrespect to retirees. There was discussion with the retirees who were present at the meeting.

Chief Tucker questioned the availability of a prescription plan; TA Sanderson responded there will be a prescription plan. L. Malloy asked for clarification through ClaimLinx.

5. Other Old Business

There was no 'Other Old Business' to discuss.

IV. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE

1. Liaison Reports

Police – L. Malloy: Chief Tucker reviewed her report with the Board (copy on file). She updated the Board on personnel. There will be a promotional process for Sergeant beginning at the end of January. A part-time officer has resigned; his full-time job in Barrington needs him as much as possible. A full-time certified officer has applied for a part-time position. They have participated in a DWI saturation patrol. Officer Brian Leahy was honored as the outstanding officer at the McDonald's event. Chief Tucker also spoke about the tree lighting on Sunday, December 03rd.

Fire/Building Inspector/Code Enforcement – V. Morgan: There was nothing new to report. TA Sanderson noted that logging may start at the Summerwind project in December.

Library – P. Stanley: Nothing new to report.

Planning Board – S. Smith: Summerwind Place is moving forward. The project at 125 Dearborn Road is still at the Planning Board; there will be a site walk on Thursday, December 07th. S. Smith noted there have been quite a few comments from the public about the project. Eversource project at 141 Ocean Road has been continued to January 18, 2024. Stephan Toth has submitted an Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure to the Planning Board; this will be Version 9.

Budget Committee – R. Bunnell: He felt that the Budget Committee meeting went well for the most part. R. Bunnell stated that he was pretty disappointed in the Budget Committee. The School budget was discussed for 1.5 hours, and there was literally no debate on a \$14 million budget. The Town was put through the wringer, particularly Chief Tucker, for a lot less money. R. Bunnell questioned the value of the Budget Committee in Town. Governor Sununu talked a lot about bureaucracy. R. Bunnell thought the Town Budget Committee was bureaucratic because they are not as invested as the Board is and the people who run the departments when it comes to understanding the budget. These folks are elected officials that show up for two to three meetings a year and then go to the Deliberative Session, which is mostly run by the Selectmen or TA Sanderson. And then the Town votes. It is a checkmark: the Budget Committee recommends or not recommends. R. Bunnell did not think it was fair to the public. It was not a trusting verification of how the budget really is. They are just an advisory committee; they do not have any power. R. Bunnell stated that Greenland should 'get rid' of the Budget Committee.

L. Malloy added that every time the Budget Committee has a question, they ask the Selectmen or Town Administrator to verify something. They are being informed by the Selectmen. It seemed redundant. The Selectmen have to manage the budget. R. Bunnell noted it was added work. A lot of people were giving up Saturdays to do what needs to be done. L. Malloy noted they are elected officials: how did it start; did it go on a warrant? TA Sanderson stated it did go on a warrant article and was established when there were three members of the Board of Selectmen and a traditional Town Meeting. When there was a traditional Town Meeting, a public hearing was not required until February. The three Selectmen provided information to the people they felt was important. The Budget Committee and statute is designed to be able to get more information out and have a review so the people have confidence that the presented budget has been well-thought out and is well-supported.

TA Sanderson continued that one of the more important functions in Greenland is the people are well-trained in the contents of the Town and School budgets. In the SB2 format, 800 people vote in March who are woefully uninformed. Voters look carefully at the recommendations by the Budget Committee. R. Bunnell questioned if all that was needed was a petition with 25 signatures and a warrant article, and it could be dissolved in March. TA Sanderson noted it would be by majority vote. He also mentioned considering SB2 so there would be more time to prepare budgets. That would also require 25 signatures. R. Bunnell will prepare both petitions. S. Smith felt there were too many people on the Budget Committee. L. Malloy stated she appreciated the questions, their willingness to learn and everybody trying to do the right thing. The Selectmen needed to know what was in the budget and how to allocate the funds. The Selectmen are the managers of the budget; they might as well create the budget.

2. Health Officer

Dennis Cote is the Town's Health Officer. His term needs to be renewed by the Board of Selectmen. TA Sanderson explained that the Health Officer position is created through the Health and Human Services statute and not the Emergency Management statute. The local Health Officer deals with the potential health risks. The primary job for the Town's Health Officer is for failed septic systems as well as other health problems and bio-hazards.

R. Bunnell questioned the stipend. S. Smith explained that there was grant money available from Seabrook to support the EMD function. R. Bunnell suggested bringing the position in-house and offering it to someone in the public service areas to give them an opportunity to do what he does, especially if a stipend is involved. TA Sanderson stated there is the opportunity for a Deputy Health Officer. That would

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allow him to train someone. TA Sanderson felt it was a good suggestion and would be appropriate for someone in the Fire Department with a medical background.

Further discussion was continued to the meeting on December 18, 2023.

5. Other New Business

Two heaters in Station 2 are no longer working. The cost will be \$8,200 and protects the \$400,000 ambulance and \$30,000 in medication. Pro HVAC, the company that installed the mini-splits in the Town Clerk's office, will be doing the work. There will be a 10-year warranty. Funds will be through the ARPA Fund.

R. Bunnell stated he felt horrible about what happened to the retirees. He also felt bad for TA Sanderson: health and benefits were normally an HR function; the Town does not have an HR function. R. Bunnell was surprised that files were missing.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

1. General Fund Manifest: \$2,457,492.72

- o School: \$2,200,000
- o Rec: \$859.66
- o Health Trust: \$50,113.85
- o NY Life Insurance: \$590.47
- o NH Retirement: \$21,172
- o Misc. Town: \$184,756.74

2. Payroll Manifest: \$163,303.04

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

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stephan Toth, Palm Drive: Questioned the status of the Historical Society providing a list of street names. TA Sanderson stated that it would be next year because of the holidays, and not because it was a bad idea.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Second – P. Stanley; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, December 18, 2023 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant