



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840**  
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**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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Tuesday, January 02, 2024 – 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, State Representative; Chief Ralph Cresta, Fire Department; Chief Tara Tucker, Police Department; Members of the Police Department; Members of the Energy Committee; Stuart Ormsbee, Colonial Power

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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 HEARING
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1. Acceptance of 2023 Rooms and Meals Tax

The Town received a check from the State of New Hampshire for 2023 Rooms and Meals Tax in the amount of \$387,214.93. TA Sanderson explained this is anticipated revenue and will be deposited into the General Fund. There is no restriction on the use of funds. S. Smith opened the hearing to public comments. There being none, S. Smith closed the public hearing and returned to the Board. The 2022 Rooms and Meals Tax was approximately \$350,000.

SUGGESTED: R. Bunnell moved to accept and expend the 2023 Rooms and Meals Tax in the amount of \$387,214.93. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Community Choice Aggregation Program

This was a required public hearing held jointly with the Town's Energy Aggregation Committee and Colonial Power; the next public hearing will be held at the meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024. Stuart Ormsbee, Colonial Power, made a presentation to the public (the Power Point presentation is on file). Colonial Power Group is an energy consulting firm that the Town has chosen.

Community Choice Aggregation is an opportunity to form an optional buying group on behalf of residents and commercial enterprises. This is an opt-out program: if residents vote to move forward with the program and sign a contract, residents and businesses in Town who are currently getting power from a utility company will receive information in the mail. Residents and businesses will automatically be enrolled in the program and must opt out if they do not want to participate. S. Ormsbee explained the benefits of the program. The program is self-funded; there are funds coming from the Town. Administrative costs are built into the rate. The local utility is responsible for 'keeping the lights on'; residents/businesses would call Eversource or Unitil with any problems. There will be a single bill from the utility company. For those enrolled in the program, only one line item will change on their bill

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indicating enrollment in the Town's energy supply. The program does not guarantee savings at all times. Net-metered customers (solar) may benefit from staying with their current company and will not be automatically enrolled in the program.

Colonial Power and the Energy Aggregation Committee have worked on a plan for the program. If approved by the Board of Selectmen, it will move to Town Meeting. A favorable vote at Town Meeting does not mean the program has to move forward. The Selectmen could decide not to move forward if favorable pricing was not secured. S. Ormsbee stated that the program would not be launched if secure pricing was more favorable to the utility option. If approved at Town Meeting, the plan must go to the Utility Commission. Once approved by the Utility Commission, the plan will be ready to go to the market for favorable pricing.

S. Smith opened the public hearing to public comments. Dennis Malloy, 10 Van Etten Drive: Questioned if this would be considered 'enabling legislation'. TA Sanderson responded that RSA-53 requires the Town to vote in favor of adopting the program; to that extent it is enabling. It does not control what the Energy Committee is doing with their provider to try to get the best market prices; it allows the Town to participate.

Jennifer Branch, September Drive: S. Ormsbee responded to questions from J. Branch: Residents can opt in or out at any time; there is no fee to do either. It does not normally take a couple of months to enroll; it could take a couple of billing cycles. RFP's would be issued on a periodic basis for a fixed term agreement with a supplier. Term length will depend on market conditions. There will be a contract between the Town and the supplier; Colonial Power would be administering the program. The service fees are 1/10 of a penny per kilowatt hour. There is an option for the Town to recoup additional costs depending on other services or administrative programs they may want. Colonial Power is dedicating a section on their website with rate information for Greenland; the Town could include some of the information on its website.

J. Branch noted that there are four homes on September Drive that have added solar. Eversource is legally allowed to give credit for production that is over the homeowners usage, if they buy from Eversource. She continued that due to current legislation, solar owners in Town would not be able to participate in this program due credit only be allowed for over production if buying from Eversource. This program would not be an option for people trying to find another way to make energy more available. S. Ormsbee stated that currently net-metered customers are better off to stay with a utility company.

There being no further public comments, S. Smith closed the public hearing and returned to the Board. Responding to a question from L. Malloy, S. Ormsbee stated there is no minimum 'stay in' period. Alice Passer, Energy Aggregation Committee, stated that Eversource customers are automatically enrolled. Direct Energy or other non-Eversource/non-Unitil customers are ineligible to participate in the program. The Town buildings are no longer with Direct Energy; Eversource is the provider.

A. Passer clarified that the program could not be launched if the rate was not lower than Eversource's. S. Ormsbee responded that best practice was not to launch if the rate was not lower than Eversource.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Monday, December 18, 2023**

MOTION: L. Malloy moved to approve the minutes of Monday, December 18, 2023, as amended. Second – V. Morgan; three in favor, two abstain (L. Malloy, P. Stanley). MOTION CARRIED

R. Bunnell commented that he had made a last-minute change with the Administrative Assistant regarding his comments during the discussion about the cistern.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Ratify Discussions of Monday, December 18, 2023, Meeting**

The motion made by V. Morgan regarding Fire Department hiring using funds from the 2023 warrant article was not voted on by the Board at the meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to encumber the funds in 2023 Warrant Article 10 (\$93,546). Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

The second item was the abatement that was approved by the Board for Tractor Supply in the amount of \$14,906.16. Interest in the amount of \$653.63 was not included.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to approve the interest payment to Tractor Supply in the amount of \$653.63. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

**2. Audit Update**

TA Sanderson reviewed the 2022 audit timeline, which was conducted in 2023 by Plodzik & Sanderson. Field work was conducted in the Town Office in July 2023. The MS-535 (audited Balance Sheet) was received in October. TA Sanderson did not hear from Plodzik & Sanderson again until an email was received on December 11<sup>th</sup>: as a result of comments made during the Selectmen's meeting in October, they would not provide any services for 2023 but would conclude the 2022 engagement. The draft report was initially promised for the first week in December and that did not happen. In the email received December 11<sup>th</sup>, they also stated the Town would receive formal notification terminating engagement and indicating they would not be providing auditing services for 2023. A formal letter has not been received.

After the close of business on Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, TA Sanderson received the draft audit report. The Board received a copy electronically over the weekend. The most important part in the initial draft is the basic opinion of Plodzik & Sanderson. TA Sanderson explained the types of opinions given by auditors. Their basic opinion was 'adverse', which is essentially an 'F', and has significant implications: an audit report is needed annually for the public and Town report as well as bonds, grants, tax anticipation notes, donations, long-term debt, and banking relationships. Clean audits need to be in place; 2022 does not have a clean audit.

A comment was included in the report regarding a 'material weakness', which helps to lead to an adverse opinion. The material weakness indicates no accounting manual and no basic financial policies and procedures are in place. Some improvements were made in 2023: software, computer equipment, and some policies were adopted as well as work on other issues. At the end of 2023, there were not sufficient

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accomplishments made to have Plodzik & Sanderson remove the 'material weakness'. Auditors hired for 2023 may have a similar opinion. There is no indication in the report that money is missing. The concerns are about policies, procedures and practices, and how accounting systems are working: sufficient progress has not been made and the reason the Town is in failure.

Corrective actions include but are not limited to implementing financial policies and procedures. TA Sanderson has provided the information to Town Counsel and discussed the basic facts. TA Sanderson has also spoken to Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI); the Town is working with MRI on the wage and classification study. TA Sanderson noted that the Personnel Policy must also be reviewed. A strong suggestion from MRI was to create a Finance Director position. A Finance Director would provide a centralized accounting system that is adopted and operated in accordance with rules and procedures that apply to everyone and all departments across Town government.

TA Sanderson stated this situation needed to be taken extremely seriously and there were serious implications. The Board needed to move forward with policies; NHMA will provide help, or an accountant hired as a consultant for that purpose. MRI can also provide help. Policies must be dealt with.

L. Malloy requested a copy of the checklist and to include deadlines associated with items on the checklist. TA Sanderson noted that the Board must do better than they have done in the past. Responding to L. Malloy's question, TA Sanderson stated the grade for 2023 may be a 'D-'. He felt it would be better than 2022 but not much better, and not sufficient to be at the 'C' level. He added that it was a long way to the unqualified 'A' grade. Responding to P. Stanley, TA Sanderson stated there was an adverse opinion in 2021. TA Sanderson will report back to the Board on the number of adverse opinions there have been.

There were staffing changes over the last several years: a long-time administrator left in 2019, and a long-time bookkeeper became very ill and passed away. In 2022 it was the first time that neither individual was involved in the accounting system. That appeared to be where of decline accelerated.

R. Bunnell commented that there is a new system and some new policies that were of critical importance; he felt the Town had definitely done better this year. He suggested a half Human Resources and half Finance Director position. He also suggested bringing someone in to help with monthly ledgers. L. Malloy agreed with the half HR and half Finance Director position. TA Sanderson suggested the Board meet with MRI to discuss the different options. L. Malloy questioned the Board on the best way to move forward with everyone together for a discussion. S. Smith recommended a work session and not a regular meeting night. TA Sanderson will schedule a work session with MRI. L. Malloy stated the Board needed to hit January hard and get things in place. TA Sanderson noted that an auditor will also need to be in place.

### 3. Health Insurance Update

TA Sanderson updated the Board on the status of health insurance. Greenland is the first community to move away from Health Trust to this type of health insurance: a high-deductible plan backed up by a third-party administrator (ClaimLinx). The process has not been perfect: The Town did not meet all its obligations trying to put everything in place by January 01<sup>st</sup>. The Anthem portal was available this afternoon; electronic copies of cards are available. Electronic cards are available from ClaimLinx. TA Sanderson apologized to employees for the anxiety caused by the change in health insurance providers.

TA Sanderson also updated the Board on the success of working with retirees, which was the most difficult part of the transition. Information received from Health Trust was misleading regarding the subsidy received from the State. The amount quoted by Health Trust was a combination of the State subsidy and

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what the retirees were billed for insurance coverage. Paperwork will be filed so the Town is now the recipient of the subsidy. All retirees are Medicare eligible and on new Medicare supplement plans with ClaimLinx that are substantially less expensive while providing the same level of care.

TA Sanderson noted that the monthly charge to the Town for health insurance is now \$31,800 monthly compared to over \$50,000 per month paid to Health Trust. The difference in cost will go into the Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan fund. The amount charged to employees for coverage is anticipated to be lower than previous years.

R. Bunnell questioned drug coverage and confidentially. The pharmacy advisor has been made aware of concerns and will be working with individuals who may have questions and/or problems. Employees will have a point of direct contact.

L. Malloy asked Jennifer Drew, wife of Officer Nick Drew, if her concerns had been addressed. J. Drew responded that she had accessed the Anthem portal and was able to get her Anthem insurance cards. She added it was difficult because if there were things you did not know you needed, ClaimLinx did not realize they had to find it for you. Employees want to know that they can go to the doctor and be covered. Prescriptions over \$250 will initially be denied and ClaimLinx will look for vouchers and coupons; it may take minutes or days. L. Malloy noted 'denied' should be used carefully: they will shop and look for the better price but not deny the benefit. J. Drew noted there will be a little more leg work on the part of the employee. She recommended an HR portal be available to employees with all the contact information available.

L. Malloy commented that if the Board had taken a year to discuss changing health care providers, there could have been the same 'blip'. She did not want employees to think anyone was deceptive, dishonest, or not doing it with all good intentions; the Board wants it to work. The banter and constant communication with everyone at the table and the user needs to happen more often. TA Sanderson acknowledged J. Drew's comment regarding a central location for information and would make the information available in a central place. J. Drew offered her help; she is currently the healthcare contact where she works.

#### 4. Warrant Articles

A draft of the 2024 warrant articles was provided to the Board.

**Articles 01 and 02:** No action required.

**Article 03 – Operating Budget:** The default budget was slightly less than the 2023 operating budget, which was \$6,147,265. The 2024 default budget is \$6,082,662; a difference of \$64,603. The proposed operating budget before warrant articles is \$6,621,999. The difference between the proposed operating budget and the default budget is \$539,337. The tax impact, if the proposed operating budget passes, will be \$0.04. Warrant articles total \$456,000, which would bring the operating budget to \$7,077,999, if passed.

**Article 04 – Police Station Maintenance:** \$3,000 – Unreserved Fund Balance

**Article 05 - Police Station Capital Reserve Fund:** \$3,000 – Unreserved Fund Balance

**Article 06 – Ambulance Billing:** \$6,500 – Special Revenue Fund

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**Article 07 – New Fire Station Capital Reserve Fund:** \$75,000 – Taxation: The Board discussed removing this warrant article due to the audit concerns. The Board opted to let the voters decide.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to remove Article 07. Second – P. Stanley; two in favor (R. Bunnell, P. Stanley), three against (L. Malloy, V. Morgan, S. Smith). MOTION FAILED

**Article 08 – Change of Purpose, New Fire Station Capital Reserve Fund:** This warrant article is to use the funds for design purposes. No action required.

**Article 09 – Retirement Liability Capital Reserved Fund:** \$25,000 – Unreserved Fund Balance

**Article 10 – Town Equipment Capital Reserve Fund:** \$25,000 – Unreserved Fund Balance

**Article 11 – New Firefighter Positions:** \$186,000 – Taxation: The Board discussed the need for two additional full-time firefighters vs. a Financial Director/HR position. Chief Cresta was asked for his opinion: he agreed with one additional full-time fighter this year with the understanding he would submit for an additional firefighter in next year's budget. The change will bring the amount raised through taxation to \$94,000.

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to change Article 11 – New Firefighter Position, to one full-time firefighter, in the amount of \$94,000, with the understanding that an additional firefighter will be requested in the 2025 budget. Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

**Article 12 – Modify the Municipal and Transportation Improvement Fee:** No action required. A public hearing is required no less than 15 days or no more than 30 days before the vote on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Article 13 – Rescind Adoption of the Budget Committee:** No action required.

**Article 14 – Creation of Cemetery Expendable Trust and Regulations:** No action required. D. Malloy, Trustee of the Trust Funds, strongly supported the adoption of Article 14.

**Article 15 – Discontinue the Library Future Growth Fund:** No action required.

**Article 16 – Readopt the Solar Exemption:** No action required.

**Article 17 – Community Power Authorization:** No action required.

**Article 18 – Rescind the SB2 Form of Town Meeting:** No action required. A public hearing is required no less than 15 days or no more than 30 days before the vote on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Article 19 – Modify the Blind Exemption:** No action required.

**Article 20 – Modify the Elderly Exemption:** No action required. After a brief discussion, the Board opted to hold on this article for another year.

**Article 21 - Salary Adjustment Expendable Trust Fund:** \$125,000 – Taxation: TA Sanderson explained that a wage and classification study will be done by MRI. The Expendable Trust Fund can be used during 2024 to implement the changes where necessary from the study. A public hearing will need to be held with written findings to explain where the changes are being made and why. This warrant article is in addition

to the wages included in the operating budget. Funds cannot be used to hire a new employee and will expire at the end of 2024.

**Article 22 - Recreation Capital Reserve Fund:** \$7,000 - Recreation Revolving Fund – No action required.

**Article 23 – Recreation Advertising Revolving Fund:** \$7,500 – Recreation Revolving Fund – No action required.

The Board discussed how to fund the Finance/HR Director position. TA Sanderson stated history suggests that positions have not been created without a warrant article, but it is not legally required. Positions can be created through the operating budget. TA Sanderson suggested it could be included in the operating budget and cuts could be made in other areas within the budget. V. Morgan did not want to leave the position to chance; it should not go on a warrant article. The consensus of the Board was to include the position in the operating budget.

5. Other Old Business

S. Smith would like the Board to consider reviewing and updating the Transfer Station fees in the near future.

IV. NEW BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE
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1. Storage Trailer: 3 Kelsey Way

The property owner is requesting a permit for a storage trailer at Kelsey Way. The garage was used as a storage trailer for Country View Restaurant and it burned down in the fall. The permit will expire in one year.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to allow a storage trailer at 3 Kelsey Way to be used by Country View Restaurant for storage. The permit will expire on January 04, 2025. Second – V. Morgan; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Wage and Classification Agreement with Municipal Resources Inc.

TA Sanderson clarified that the cost will \$400 per classification reviewed. The cost will be \$6,400 to be paid in two installments: \$3,200 upon execution and \$3,200 upon submission of the final report to the Town. R. Bunnell would like the stipends reviewed as well.

MOTION: R. Bunnell moved to approve the Wage and Classification Agreement with Municipal Resources Inc. in the amount of \$6,400 and authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract. The first payment of \$3,200 is payable upon execution of the contract; \$3,200 is payable upon submission of the final report to the Town. Second – L. Malloy; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Other New Business

TA Sanderson discussed a request from a former Selectman. He is having significant difficulties with the medical transport of veterans. He approached TA Sanderson about using the second ambulance to transport veterans for medical services. TA Sanderson has contacted Primex; they have indicated there



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are no coverage issues in creating this service. Primex recommended continuing with discussions. If this program is successful, it would be a revenue item and deposited into the existing Fire and Ambulance Special Revenue Fund. It is a good use of the second ambulance and good for the staff in keeping up their certifications. Chief Cresta voiced his concern of having staff return for non-emergency transports. He would like to sit down with the Veterans Association to discuss the time frame and revenue.

### V. CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Veterans Credit:** The assessor has approved the Veteran's Tax Credit in the amount of \$750 for the resident at 15 Sanderson Road.
2. **Margarita Half Marathon:** Evan Dolecki, Ventures Endurance, has requested the Margarita Half Marathon be held in Greenland on Sunday, May 12, 2024. This race has been held in Greenland for several years. Chief Tucker has approved the race, which will travel through Newington and Greenland.
3. **Accounts Payable Manifest:** \$1,016,740.04
  - HealthTrust: \$4,769.26
  - Piscataqua Landscaping: \$111,810
  - School: \$860,000
  - Town: \$40,160.78
4. **Payroll Manifest:** \$81,392.31

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

### VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

### VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: V. Morgan moved to adjourn at 8:09 p.m. Second – R. Bunnell; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, January 16, 2024 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By – Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant