

**Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2023**

Present: James Bailey – Chairman, Iris Campbell – Selectwoman, Richard Pelletier - Selectman and Laura Buono, Town Administrator.

In Attendance: Riche' Colcombe, Ernie Butler

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Meeting opened at 6:00 pm

1. OPEN SESSION

Cemetery Maintenance/Brush Disposal: Cemetery Trustee, Iris Campbell said the contracted maintenance for the cemeteries is being charged for brush disposal at the Transfer Station. Currently the contractor is stacking the brush at the back of the cemeteries. Ms. Buono said if it's in his contract to remove brush from the cemeteries then he shouldn't be piling it up at the cemeteries. Chairman Bailey said disposal of the brush should be in the contract. Ms. Campbell will talk to the contractor.

Park & Ride: Riche' Colcombe said she spoke with the Department of Transportation Commissioner. She said the state does not want to have the park & ride open because of the homeless, the complaint calls and the trash. Ms. Colcombe said the state would like to have a meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Police Chief to draft a memorandum of understanding. Ms. Colcombe did not share with the state the lot is used for fire training and school bus training. The state asked Ms. Colcombe to arrange the meeting either by zoom or conference call. Chairman Bailey would like to meet with the Police Chief first before meeting with the state.

Highway Department: Road Agent, Ernie Butler said his staff attended an Eversource class as well as chainsaw safety certification.

Kimball Hill Road: Mr. Butler talked to the Board about the Class VI section of Kimball Hill Road. Currently Mr. Butler does not want to take over the road nor does he see the need to in the future. Mr. Butler is expecting the current plow route to be extended due to the upcoming workforce housing development. Adding another road to the route would result in a new truck and more staff. Ms. Buono said when a property owner develops on a Class VI Road an agreement between the property owner and the town is signed and recorded at the registry of deeds that stays with the property. Ms. Buono said before she meets with the two property owners (Timothy Lacey and Lawrence Dacey) (One has lived on the road for about (1) year the other for about (2) years) on Kimball Hill Road she would like to know how the Board stands. Ms. Buono also said people who live on Class VI Road, their property taxes are adjusted. The Board stands by the current procedure and does not want to set a precedent, the property owners signed the agreement.

Selectwoman Campbell asked why the town doesn't do what was done to Mary Rowe. The town brought Mary Rowe Road up to spec. and then the property owners were charged a betterment tax for 5 years based on the length of the road in front of each property. Ms. Buono said that could be done through a warrant article. Mr. Butler prefers that the developer builds the road.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Bailey made a motion to approve the *Consent Agenda for October 11, 2023*. Selectman Pelletier second the motion, motion passed.

- Intent to Cut – Map 7 Lot 135 - Hall Road

3. MANIFEST

Chairman Bailey made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign Payroll Check numbers 18882 – 18908 a/k/a Vouchers 40 & 41 in the amount of \$194,885.07 (includes 238 direct deposit stubs) and Accounts Payable Check numbers 030326 – 030396 a/k/a Vouchers 31 & 32 in the amount of \$115,494.51. Selectwoman Campbell seconded the motion, motion passed.

4. REMIXING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Ms. Buono talked to the Board about the fact that based upon the age group of the majority of the town employees, we face the danger of having many retire within years of each other which will result in a lot of positions needing to be filled. She said one thing that was discussed at the recent conference she attended was the need for us to mix up our benefits. Ms. Buono said currently, we offer great benefits but as was pointed out at the conference, there are many of the younger generation who are not looking at contributions to retirement as much of a benefit when they are dealing with daycare costs, or student loan payments, etc. She said she would like to put together a plan where we give a menu of items that instead of only matching retirement contributions, employees would be able to use that money instead, to be placed against other qualifying expenses that the Board agrees upon in advance. The Board was receptive to the idea and Ms. Buono will put together something for the Board to review after budget season.

5. WORKFORCE HOUSING

Ms. Buono reported that the Town has already received the check for \$840,000 grant from the State for the workforce housing project and reminded the Board that there are no restrictions on how they choose to use the money. She said she is requesting that have a serious discussion about what to do with the money where the most benefit is realized. She said one possible project is to build a much-needed municipal complex which she has not be shy about recommending on an ongoing basis. She said there will be a public hearing to accept the funds as unanticipated revenues but as far as spending them on projects, the money will end up being part of a warrant article since it will already be in the general fund.

6. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 10-YEAR PLAN

Ms. Buono said she attended the 10-year plan meeting, and she said it was a very good presentation. At the meeting they talked about doing something at the four corners on route 9, either a set of lights or a roundabout. Selectman Pelletier said there is no plan in place. The state will start planning in 2025 and before they do so, the State will sit down with the Selectmen for input. Selectman Pelletier feels it's important for the Board to have that input. Another future project is the bridge-on-Bridge Street.

It was noted in the meeting that the sidewalk project would not start until 2025. Ms. Buono said she has been talking with a member of NHDOT who attends the bi-weekly meetings for the

sidewalk project, and he is aware the town would like to see the project constructed sooner than 2025. The earliest the Town could possibly go out to bid is the fall of 2024 because of the drainage changes that were needed, and they are also still working on the easements with one resident so far, being somewhat difficult. The goal is still to try to go to bid in the spring of 2024 but with the understanding that it may not happen until the Fall.

7. BRIDGE STREET/MAIN STREET/SCHOOL STREET INTERSECTION

Ms. Buono brought up the subject of the past request to the Board to remove the turn lane at the Bridge Street/Main Street/School Street intersection and asked if the Board actually supports the removal of the lane. She said based on past discussions; she did not get the feeling the Board was behind the request. Chairman Bailey said doesn't believe it will work and he doesn't believe the State will pay for the engineering as the requestor mentioned. He said removing the turn lane will make traffic worse especially with the angled parking the requestor feels would be able to be put in with the lane gone. Selectwoman Campbell agreed that it would not work. Ms. Buono said she is bringing this up because at the 10-year plan meeting with NHDOT, Representative Fedolfi told DOT that the Town officials support the turn lane removal, however, that was never stated at the Selectmen's meetings when the subject was discussed. Chairman Bailey said Mr. Fedolfi has never asked the Board that question. He said the Board had looked at the cost for an engineering study (\$7,000) as was a requirement of the State, and decided not to have it done.

8. CLICK FIX

Ms. Buono reported that the Click Fix will be going live next week on the town website for residents to report issues such as potholes, broken streetlights, code enforcement, etc.

9. WEBSITE

Ms. Buono reported that the new website is currently being created and various photos have been sent and there are ongoing discussions with regard to content. She said the goal is to have a user-friendly website that is fresh. Selectman Pelletier said he feels that instead of having the focus group review our current site, to have them take a look at the new one once it is complete and test it. Ms. Buono said that it makes sense not to focus on the current site since that will be gone but suggested the same manner of testing be used that was going to be done on the current site. She said when you have a couple of people who are consistently critical of everything, it's not productive. The Board agreed that once the website is done and before it goes live that the focus group will look at the new site using 20 items to find and their input on finding those items will be reviewed. Riche' Colcombe said that she is one who points out problem areas on the website and said it's not meant to be critical but feels she provides another set of eyes. She said there is good content on the site as well. Ms. Buono said unfortunately all the staff hears is criticism from Ms. Colcombe and suggested she could strive for balance when coming in to speak with them about what she doesn't like.

10. PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Buono said the public hearing hearings for the parking regulations and animal ordinance, along with the Community Power Committee's public hearing, will be held on November 8th at the Police Station.

11. WHITTEMORE ENGINEERING

Ms. Buono reported that she signed off on the \$30,000 reimbursement to the Water/Sewer Department for part of the engineering for the Whittemore Street project as had been previously agreed to by the Board.

12. COMMUNITY POWER

Selectman Pelletier provided a Community Power questionnaire that will be distributed throughout town, at the Library and Town Offices and at local businesses and the website. There will be (2) public hearings scheduled as well and then presented at Town Meeting in 2024.

13. ASSOCIATED ELECTRIC

Selectman Pelletier asked if the Associated Electric property is scheduled to be mowed and was told yes. He asked if it could remain on the mowing schedule during the summer months next year.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm

A true record
Mary Whalen
Recording Secretary

Date: _____

Approved by:
Hillsborough Selectboard

James C. Bailey, III, Chairman

Iris Campbell, Selectwoman

Richard Pelletier, Selectman