

Hillsborough, New Hampshire

NEWS FROM THE TOWN

Website: www.town.hillsborough.nh.us

Phone: 603-464-3877

Follow us on Facebook ~ Town of Hillsborough, NH

January - March 2023

Apologies for the delay in getting our 2023 first quarter newsletter out but with year end and the writing of the reports for our Town Report, all departments have been extremely busy.

Town and School ballot voting will be taking place on Tuesday, March 14th from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. at the Middle School on Hillcat Drive. Town Meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. that evening at that same location.

The Town's proposed 2023 Operating Budget, including all the Selectmen supported warrant articles, carry a 1.37% increase over 2022 and if the estimated revenues stay on track, the Town's portion of the tax rate should go down a bit. Even if there are some revenues that don't quite come in the way they are estimated, the Town's portion should at the very least stay the same. You can view the Warrant and budget documents on our website (town.hillsborough.nh.us).

Speaking of our website, we'll be putting a couple new enhancements on the site this year. We'll be making our site ADA compliant to make the content accessible to everyone. The second will be a new feature called ClixFix which will enable the public to report any non-emergency issues they come across which they would like to bring to our attention (i.e.: potholes, municipal property damage, streetlight issues, etc.). This feature will allow those issues to be delivered to the department which would be responsible to handle the specific concern. It also enables the reporter to receive status reports via email or text on the progress of their issue. Users will be able to choose to receive notices on reports that come in from others as well. We'll be putting out more information as to how to use the feature once it is set up on the site.

We currently have open positions on the committee's listed below. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me via email at:
Laura@Hillsboroughnh.net.

Conservation Commission
Economic Development Commission
Parks Board
Zoning Board of Adjustment – Alternates
Planning Board – Alternates

Due to the outpouring of support and requests, the 250th Committee has decided to stay together and plan four events in 2023. The first event is a Sock Hop on Saturday, April 8th at 6 p.m. at the American Legion. To stay in the loop as to what events they will be sponsoring, as well as when and where they will happen, follow them on Facebook at "250th Anniversary of Hillsborough, NH (2022)".

Please also follow the official Town of Hillsborough's Facebook page "Town of Hillsborough NH" for municipal information.

Our next Newsletter will be out in April when we'll be getting ready to enjoy springtime in NH!

Laura Buono
Town Administrator

Supervisors of the Checklist

The Supervisors of the Checklist will be in session from **10-10:30am on Saturday, March 4** at the Hillsborough Town Office for the purpose of making additions or corrections to the Checklist. Anyone who wants to register to vote may do so at that time. Please bring your photo ID, proof of domicile and if you've not previously registered in the State of New Hampshire, proof of citizenship. Also, if you wish to change your party affiliation, address or name, you can. This will be your last opportunity until the elections on March 14.

Weight Limits



All roads are limited to a 6 ton limit beginning on February 20th. If you have questions please call 464-7986

From the Fire Department

Now that there is snow covered ground, there is no need for burn permits until the snow is gone.

The Hillsboro Fire Department does not install car seats, as we are not certified to do so.

Also, the Fire Department does not fill pools for the public come Spring time.

Fuller Public Library News

603-464-3595, fullerlibrary.info, follow us on Facebook and Instagram

Winter happenings at the library, call to find out more information!

Preschool Storytime: Tuesday or Thursday at 10am, join Ms. Laura for stories, songs, playtime, and a craft. Registration is required.

Five Book Groups meet monthly: Popular Fiction, Military History, Cookbook, Mystery and Teens. Call the library to find out what is being read and how you can join!

How To's Day: Monthly on the first Tuesday of the month, learn something new!

Flex & Stretch: 30 minutes of light weights, cardio, and stretching. 3 times each week, 9-9:30am (\$5 per week).

Scrabble & Cribbage: Played every Thursday at 1pm.

Knitting Purls: Bring your knitting, crochet, weaving, or whatever project you are working on, every Monday at 1pm.

Other programs happening:

January 10: How To's Day at 1pm– Start the New Year with Less Stress: Dr. Naomi Hall will share strategies for reducing stress, guided breathing practice, and tips for reducing your stress load.

February 28: Dogs of Chernobyl: 35 Years Later, a Story of Hope and Resilience with Steve Quandt at 6:30pm.

Check the library's website or FB page for more programming.

Office of Community Planning

The Planning Board is finalizing the warrant articles to be on the ballot at Town Meeting 2023. The majority of these articles are new definitions to be added to the Zoning Ordinance. The reason for this is, if a use is not defined in the Zoning Ordinance it is prohibited. The Planning Board wants the Zoning Ordinance to be friendly to businesses that want to come to town with permissions that take the characteristics of the zone, neighborhood, and abutting properties into account.

Other articles include the reduction of the minimum dwelling size for apartments in the Central Business District, allowing Conditional Use Permits which will in many cases eliminate the need to go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a Special Exception. An article regarding the amount of time a building permit is valid is also a proposed change. This is a housekeeping item that changes the language in the Zoning Ordinance to state that building permits are valid for one year. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance states that building permits are valid for two years. This is deceptive because State Building Code allows for only one year. State Building Code preempts zoning, so their requirement takes precedence.

Also up for consideration this year is a new Dark Skies Ordinance. This Ordinance is intended to preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting policies and public education. Upon certification, the International Dark Sky Association works with communities to promote their work through media relations, member communications, and social media. An IDA Community designation will help enhance the reputation of Hillsborough and foster increased tourism and local economic activity. The achievement of this designation would make Hillsborough one of only 37 IDA Dark Sky Communities in the world and help conserve our treasured dark skies for future generations.

All of the proposed changes are on the Town Website www.town.hillsborough.nh.us and at the Town Offices. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me, Robyn Payson, Planning Director at robyn@hillsboroughnh.net.

The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment are always looking for alternate members. If you have an interest in serving on either of these boards, please send an e-mail stating your interest in the board you are interested in to robyn@hillsboroughnh.net.

Important Dates



The Office of Youth Services and Project

Genesis would like to formally invite you to our Open House! Please join us for some tacos and a tour of our new space on School Street. We hope you can join us--- and help spread the word!

March 14, 2023 Town and School ballot Voting from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm located at the Middle School on Hillcat Drive

March 14, 2023 Town Meeting beginning at 7:30 pm located at the Middle School on Hillcat Drive



April 30th Deadline All Dogs 4 months and older must be licensed by April 30th of every year

Happenings at the Police Department Chief Chris Parsons

I am happy to announce that Officer Davy and Officer Patten are continuing their in-house training and will be solo officers on patrol in March and April respectively. They are doing great; this will bring the department up to 13 out of 14 full-time officers.

We continue to host training at the Police Department which gives the Department a break on some of the training costs. We hosted a 2-day class in January that was sold out with 36 people attending from all over New England. This class gave our officers a tuition rate that was half of the normal costs. We have another class scheduled for March that will include free seats in the class because we are hosting.

Officer Normand and I will be participating in the Law Enforcement Winni Dip for Special Olympics on March 11 at Lake Winnepesaukee. This is a fundraiser that supports more than 3,000 Special Olympics New Hampshire athletes across the Granite State.

I would also like to promote our website at **www.hillsboropd.com**. Please go to the website and follow us through Crimewatch. I have also included the QR code in this newsletter. This website is the first of its kind in New Hampshire and we were recently able to get the Concord Regional Crimeline to adopt Crimewatch as well.

A blue graphic with white text and a police badge. The text reads: "WE SUPPORT" at the top, "HILLSBOROPD.COM" in large letters in the middle, and "IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CRIMEWATCH" at the bottom left. There is also a QR code and "SIGN UP FOR NOTIFICATIONS" at the bottom right. The badge in the center says "HILLSBORO POLICE", "GLEASON'S FALLS", "STONE ARCH BRIDGE", and "N.H.".

Another Item from the Planning Office

The Planning Board is proposing a new lighting ordinance for the Town of Hillsborough. The ordinance is designed to protect property owners from light trespass from other sources and still provide adequate street lighting for public safety and security for commercial and other properties. It is also designed to protect natural flora and fauna and the ability to view and enjoy the night sky.

The Dark Skies Committee, chaired by Adam Charrette, was appointed by the Planning Board to develop the ordinance for adoption by the residents at the Town Meeting, March 14, 2023. Before discussing the value of the Dark Skies Ordinance, you will want to know what the proposed ordinance does **NOT** regulate. Please read the following summary of the Ordinance.

NOTE: The Dark Skies Ordinance permits the use of outdoor lighting that does not exceed the minimum level specified in the Illuminating Engineering Society of America recommended practices for nighttime safety, utility, productivity, enjoyment, and commerce.

What's **EXEMPT** from the ordinance?

1. "Lighting within public right-of-way or easement for the principal purpose of illuminating streets or roads."
2. "Lighting for public monuments of statuary,"
3. "Lighting for illumination of the American and state flags,"
4. "Lighting solely for signs (lighting for signs is regulated by the Sign Ordinance),"
5. "Repairs to existing [light fixtures] not exceeding 25% of total installed [light fixtures]"
6. "Temporary lighting for theatrical, television, performance areas and construction sites,"
7. "Underwater lighting in swimming pools and other water features,"
8. "Temporary lighting and seasonal lighting provided that individual lamps are less than 10 watts and 70 lumens," (this includes Christmas and Halloween lights)
9. "Lighting that is only used under emergency conditions, including any temporary emergency lighting needed by the police, fire or other emergency services or required by federal regulator agencies,"
10. "All vehicular light [fixtures]."

What does the ordinance **INCLUDE**?

1. Automatic switch-controlled lights shall be off when sufficient daylight is available.

Exceptions: lighting under canopies, lighting for tunnels, parking garages, garage entrances and similar conditions.

2. Automatic lighting reduction *other than those exempted* requires all outdoor lighting lumens shall be reduced by 30% or extinguished by 11:00 PM. –

Exceptions: lighting reductions are not required for lighting for residential properties including multiple residential properties not having common areas; when the outdoor lighting consists on only one light fixture; code-required lighting for steps, stairs, walkways, and building entrances; when in the Planning Board's opinion, lighting levels must be maintained; motion-activated lighting; lighting governed by special use permit in which times of operation are specifically identified; and businesses that operate on a 24-hour basis.

How does the Dark Skies Ordinance **BENEFIT THE HOMEOWNER?**

It curtails light pollution, reduces sky glow and improves the nighttime environment for stargazers and astronomers, minimizes light trespass and obtrusive light, and promotes neighborly relations by preventing glare from outdoor lights from intruding on nearby properties or posing hazard to pedestrians and drivers. Conformance with lumen regulation will reduce electric bills.

How does the Dark Skies Ordinance **BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY?**

The Dark Skies Ordinance will help conserve energy and save on the town's energy bills. The Energy Commission has worked with the town to replace all streetlights and has saved over \$4000 a month in electricity costs.

The natural environment will be protected from adverse effects of night lighting. One example is the depletion of the firefly population because the fireflies cannot locate one another for mating in the presence of too much light. Preserving the visibility of the nighttime skies will help preserve the rural character of Hillsborough.

Passage of the Dark Skies Ordinance is a significant step in the process of the International Dark-Sky Association's certification of Hillsborough as the second Dark Skies Community east of the Mississippi. The certification will promote tourism and bring business to the community.

The full text of the Dark Skies Ordinance can be found on the Town Website.

More information about the International Dark-Sky Association can be found at: www.darksky.org