

Hillsborough, New Hampshire

NEWS FROM THE TOWN

Website: www.town.hillsborough.nh.us

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January - March 2024

From the Town Administrator



Happy New Year! We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and were able to spend it in a fashion that gave you some time to do what makes you happy.

As you can imagine, we've been hard at work putting the year 2023 to bed and working on the year ahead. That means our 2024 budget continues to be finalized, along with the various warrant articles to present at the Town Meeting in March. This year, both employee union contracts which cover the next three years will be on the Warrant. The updated contracts carry a first year much needed scale adjustment based on the increased cost of living that happened during this past year, but which we could never have anticipated when they were negotiated in 2020.

Town and School ballot voting will take place on Tuesday, March 12th 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.

At times, we make various changes within our departments as we constantly strive to run the business of the Town more efficiently. For example, we recently placed our diversion program under the Police Department, since the program works hand in hand with the prosecutor's office. This enables us to handle diversion cases more effectively. We also moved parks and recreation back under the Youth Services Department where it was several years ago. Our recreation staff is already working on putting together a schedule that will provide Hillsborough residents with new programs for all ages. These, as well as other changes, will be written about in each department's reports within our annual Town Report. Town Reports will be available in late February and can be picked up at the Library and the Town Office Building, as well as at the polls on March 12th, and are on our website as well.

A few months ago, we went live with a new reporting structure which enables residents to report various types of non-emergency concerns/problems electronically. This is done through our website (town.hillsborough.nh.us), by clicking on the "Report a Concern" button which is on the bottom half of the main page of the website. Once you click it, you can read how to report a concern/problem. We encourage you to utilize this method in order to assure the correct department is contacted about the issue. You will also get updates as to when the reported event is resolved.

We are also working on an updated, more user-friendly website which we hope to have completed over the next few months. While it can be time-consuming to put together, we think the wait will be worth it!

We currently have open positions on various committee's such as Conservation Commission, Energy Commission, Economic Development Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment – Alternates, and Planning Board – Alternates. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me via email at: Laura@Hillsboroughnh.net.

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

Laura Buono, Town Administrator

Transfer Station Sticker Program - Update

Beginning June 2024, residents of Hillsborough, Deering, and Windsor will begin receiving new transfer station stickers each year with their automobile registrations. One sticker will be given for each eligible car registration at the Selectmen's Office. Colors will change each year in alignment with the vehicle registration and inspection stickers. Special short-term permits will be able to be obtained at the Transfer Station (not at the Selectmen's Office) for seasonal property owners and property clean-outs if the property is in Hillsborough, Deering, or Windsor, etc. Proof of property ownership will be required.

From the Fire Department

The Hillsboro Fire Department would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year! However, with this special time of year requires extra vigilance. Consider some of these following tips to ensure you and your family's safety.

1. The leading cause of fire in the kitchen is unattended cooking. This is the number one cause of home fires and home injuries. Maintain a presence during any and all cooking projects and be sure to have a lid handy when cooking on the stove top. If a fire occurs in the pan and you feel safe doing so, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning the heat off and leave oven door closed. Do not hesitate to evacuate and call 9-1-1 when outside.



2. Heating systems are the second leading cause of fires. Consequently, it is imperative that you use your home heating systems, including space heaters safely. Space heaters can cause fires when combustible materials such as bedding mattresses, pillows, clothing or furniture are too close to the heater. When purchasing space heaters look for one that has been tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company and one that will automatically turn off if knocked over. Keep all heaters at least 3 feet away from drapes and flammable material. Never leave them running while you sleep or unattended. Never use in a bathroom, near a sink or running water.



3. During the winter months residents may be eager to skate, play hockey, fish or enjoy other water activities as lakes, ponds and streams freeze. However, frozen bodies of water can be very dangerous. Even during the coldest winter weather ice conditions can vary greatly on the same body of water making the safety of the ice very unpredictable. We ask that parents and responsible adults take an active role in ice safety by talking with their children and teenagers about the ice hazards.



4. Winter time can cause power outages and the use of generators is inevitable. Make sure to run them at least 20 feet away from your home, never inside your home or garage. Also be sure to point the exhaust away from your home. The same goes for charcoal grills.

5. If possible, when out shoveling, snow blowing or plowing your driveway, if you have a fire hydrant near by please clear it out. Cleaning snow away creases its visibility and can save precious time when our fire fighters need additional water.

Lets make 2024 a wonderful year!

Fuller Library Events

Artist of the Month: Each month we ask a local artist to display their artwork. This month one of our Trustees, Bob Woolner, has his photography on display. Check out his photos of a trip his family took to Cuba!

Jan 16: Cookbook Club meets at 12:30pm

Jan 16: Mystery Book Group meets at 1pm or 6:30pm

Feb 1: FPL Book Group meets at 6:30pm

Feb 6: How To's Day – Alcohol Painting on tiles with Paula from Dancing Wind Studios, 1pm or 6:30pm, must RSVP.

Feb 12: Military History Book Group meets at 2pm

Feb 19: CLOSED for President's Day

Feb 20: Cookbook Club meets at 12:30pm

Feb 20: Mystery Book Group meets at 1pm or 6:30pm

Feb 27: Lighthouses of New Hampshire and Maine – NH Humanities Program, 6pm

March 5: How To's Day – Pocket Planter with Daisy Jack Pottery, 1pm or 6:30pm, must RSVP.

March 11: Military History Book Group meets at 2pm

March 12: CLOSING at 5pm for Town Meeting

March 14: Queen Bees – music, trials, and tribulations of the greatest female blues artists of the 1920s, 6pm

March 19: Cookbook Club meets at 12:30pm

March 19: Mystery Book Group meets at 1pm or 6:30pm

Mondays - Join the knitting/crafting group 1-3pm

Thursdays - Join a game - Cribbage or Scrabble or bring your own 1-3pm

Book Sale: We will no longer have an annual book sale; it has become a lot of work storing and lugging boxes of books around for the one day sale. Instead, stop in the Library anytime to visit our Book Nook sale area where we sell books, music, movies, puzzles, and other items, or check out what is for sale on one of the tables. This month's sale is DVDs and music CDs all you can bag for \$5 or \$1 each, tons to choose from!



Winter No Parking Ban

Within the Town of Hillsborough, from November 1 to May 1, NO parking is permitted on any public street between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

From the Office of Community Planning

Greetings, I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season.

The Planning Board held a public hearing and will be presenting the public with the following warrant articles at Town Meeting 2024.

All of these proposed changes are available on the Town website. If you have any difficulty finding them, or have any questions please e-mail me, at robyn@hillsboroughnh.net or call me at 603-464-7971 and I will answer your questions and send copies of the articles to you if you wish.

Below are the articles and a brief description of the changes. If you have any questions about these articles, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warrant Articles for Town Meeting 2024

Article 1

Shall the Town vote to delete the definition “Change of Use from Article II General Provisions section 229-6 Definition and Word Usage.

Article 2

Shall the Town vote to make section 229-23 in Article III Use Districts a Change of Use Ordinance as posted on the Town website, printed in the Town Report and available at the Town Offices.

Articles 1 and 2 together gather the requirements of a “Change of Use” from the Zoning Ordinance Definitions section, and the Site Plan Regulations to combine them into one ordinance. There has been no change in the language, it has only been relocated. This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.

Article 3

Shall the Town vote to amend the definition of Frontage as shown in Article II General Provisions section 229-6 Definitions and Word Usage from:

FRONTAGE: That side of a lot abutting on a street and ordinarily regarded as the front of the lot. For a corner lot, half of the curve of the radius may be included in the frontage.

to:

FRONTAGE-That side of a lot abutting on a Class V Road, State maintained highway, or a private road ordinarily regarded as the front of the lot. In the event of a lot abutting more than one street, the longest side shall not be less than the minimum frontage requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. For a corner lot, half of the curve of the radius may be included in frontage.

Article 3 updates the definition of Frontage is a more expansive definition intended to provide more detail to the one that now exists. This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.

Article 4

Shall the Town vote to amend the definition of Lot as shown in Article II General Provisions section 229-6 Definitions and Word Usage from:

LOT-An individually designed parcel of land.
to

LOT- A parcel of land occupied or to be occupied by only the principal building and the accessory buildings or uses customarily incidental to the principal building. A lot shall meet the criteria of Section 229-21 Dimensional Standards as well as provide such yards and other open spaces as are herein required. A lot shall have boundaries identical to those recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Article 4 is a re-wording and clarification of the current definition to more clearly describe a “Lot” as it applies to lot development. There is no change from the current requirements. This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.

Article 5

Shall the Town vote to repeal the current verbiage of Article II General Provisions section 229-14 Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance and replace it with new verbiage that includes allowing detached Accessory Dwelling Units as posted on the Town website, printed in the Town Report and available at the Town Offices.

Article 5-The current Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance does not allow for “Detached” (ADU)’s. These are ADU’s that are not attached to the main single-family dwelling. Currently, the zoning does not allow for guest houses, granny pods or additional small dwelling units to be on the same property as the main dwelling. If you would like to see a copy of the re-written ordinance with all of its changes, please contact me and I will send it to you. *This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.*

Article 6

Shall the Town vote to amend the Table 4 Chart of Uses, Residential Uses Note number 2, to divide note number 2 under Residential Uses in the Central Business District into two separate notes. Note number 2 will state that Dwellings at street level require a Special Exception. New note number 3 will reduce the minimum floor area of any dwelling unit from 600 square feet to 450 square feet for a one-bedroom dwelling unit. Units two bedrooms or more require an additional 120 sq. ft. per additional bedroom.”

Article 6 Allows for more flexibility in apartment size in the Central Business District. *This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.*

Article 7

Shall the Town vote to rescind the verbiage in Article XV Historic District Ordinance and replace it with new verbiage as printed in the Town Report, on the Town website and available at the Town Offices.

Article 7 is a re-write of the Historic District Ordinance. Definitions have been added as have additional rights and responsibilities for administrating the ordinance. This change enhances the ordinance by granting more responsibility to the Historic District Commission while respecting the rights of the residents. If you want to see the complete text of the re-written ordinance, please contact me and I will send it to you. *This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.*

Article 8

Shall the Town vote to amend the ARTICLE VIA Floodplain Ordinance to include changes necessary to comply with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program as printed in the Town Report, on the Town website and available at the Town Offices.

Article 8 addresses changes required by the National Flood Insurance Program. If you want to see the document and its changes, please contact me and I will send it to you. *This change has been recommended by the Planning Board.*

Alternate Positions

The Zoning Board of Adjustment is in need of alternates. There are two positions available. Alternates substitute for an elected member of the Board when they are absent or need to recuse themselves.

Being an alternate on the ZBA allows you to learn about the zoning ordinance from a “quasi-judicial” standpoint. The ZBA functions like a “court” and acts on variances and special exceptions. Someone seeks a variance when what they want to do is prohibited in the zoning ordinance. A special exception is an allowed use that needs to meet certain conditions.

The ZBA meets on the second Monday of the month when there is business. It is a great opportunity to learn and have a better understanding of your town’s ordinances.

The Planning Board has two open alternate positions. Being an alternate on the Planning Board gives you the ability to participate in hearings on developments in Town. You also have the opportunity to give input on new zoning ordinances as they are developed and amended as well as participating in updates to the subdivision and site plan regulations.

The Planning Board meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

I would be happy to speak with anyone interested in serving on either of these boards. If you have an interest in serving on either the ZBA or Planning Board, feel free to call me at 603-464-7971 for more information or send an e-mail stating your interest to robyn@hillsboroughnh.net.

Robyn Payson
Planning Director

Community Power

Community Power creates new electricity supply choices for Hillsborough residents and businesses with the potential for cost and environmental benefits beyond that of the Default Service supply from the electric distribution utility, Eversource. Hillsborough will bundle together the electricity needs of its residents and businesses and put out a bid for an electricity supplier to provide the necessary electricity at competitive prices. For more information go to the town’s website at, www.town.hillsborough.nh.us > News

This plan will be voted upon at the Town Meeting scheduled for March 12, 2024

Hillsborough Building Inspectors Corner

Greetings and Happy New Year from the Building Department. I wanted to let you know that the Selectboard, in collaboration with the Building Department and the Fire Department, has modified the existing Apartment Occupancy Policy that was created in January of 2020. At that time, an Apartment Inspection Policy to protect both tenant renters and landlords was developed with a letter being sent out to every known landlord in the town explaining the inspection process and the need for the owners to contact the building department to set up inspections. This was supposed to create a pathway for bi-annual (every two years) inspections. We had great cooperation and performed 130 rental unit inspections in town at that time.



Low and behold, along came Covid-19 and the program came to a sudden stop since no one was comfortable going into strangers' homes, unless they were fully protected with PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment). Now we're ready to move forward once again with the program even though we're well aware that the inspections of the initial units are two years past due. As we begin the inspections again, a new document known as a Certificate of Compliance was created which will be required to rent out any apartment, room, Air B&B, motel, or hotel. Basically, any residential occupancy that is rented in the Town of Hillsborough will be required to file this document, requesting an inspection and will receive a Certificate of Compliance once the inspection has been completed.

The main reason for this documentation is to have a database of information that states who the responsible party is, their contact information and where the rental occupancy is located. This will provide assurance to both the landlord and the tenant that they own and live in a code compliant residence. The responsibility to schedule the inspections is on the landlords and there will be a nominal fee to cover administrative costs which include the inspection process and certificates. Landlords who are already having life safety inspections done which cover the same items as these inspections, will just be required to submit those reports to the Town to receive their certificates. No fees would be charged since we won't be going out in the field to conduct the inspections. A letter will be going out once again to all the Landlords in town in the upcoming weeks explaining this and requesting that they contact the building department to

get an inspection scheduled. We'll give a deadline of June 1, 2024 for them to contact us before we contact them.

This process is simply an effort to continue to make Hillsborough an even better place to live than it already is and to ensure that rental occupancies meet Life Safety, Fire Safety, Building Safety and Health Safety codes.

Thank you for your cooperation,
Hillsborough Selectboard
Hillsboro Fire Department
Hillsborough Building Department

Happenings at the Police Department Chief Chris Parsons

School Resource Officer, Danielle Normand and I have signed up for the Law Enforcement Winni Dip to benefit Special Olympics for the 2nd year in a row. We are excited to raise money for Special Olympics New Hampshire. I have included the link to donate to a great cause.

<https://fundraising.sonh.org/fundraisers/hillsboroughpd>

This last quarter has been extremely busy at the Police Department. We were able to host Glock Armorer Class at the PD. This brought 32 officers from all over New England to the PD to use the training room and we were able to get 2 of our officers trained for free. We were also able to host a training class at Osram Sylvania for Google for Law Enforcement. Thank you to Osram Sylvania for allowing us to host the class there which provided training to almost 60 officers across New England. We were able to receive multiple seats at this training for free.

Officer Davy, Officer Gallant and Officer Patten all were nominated and selected to receive the Mothers Against Drunk Drivers awards for their continued efforts to arrest and prosecute drunk drivers. These 3 officers were very deserving of this award as they accounted for 72% of the agencies' arrests for drunk drivers.

Thank you for all your support and if anyone has any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me.