

**Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
April 22, 2026**

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

At the opening of the meeting the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Others present: Cathy Houle, Dianne & Dan Rutherford, Jennifer Schamel, Jim Creighton, James Clough, Riche' Colcombe, Dana Clow, Leigh Bosse, Andrew Dorsett, Lee Ann Moynihan, Robyn Payson

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Riche' Colcombe:*

- At the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting Ms. Colcombe requested audit reports be put on the website, she is wondering if the request will be discussed.
- Ms. Colcombe asked if there would be a policy or a manual regarding the Owl streaming of meetings. Currently the streamed meetings are always interrupted for various reasons.

*Dianne Rutherford read the following into the record:*

“I am the resident on Jones Road whose property value after the most recent revalue “doesn’t look good” according to another Jones Road resident who happens to be our state representative. Not to mention any names, of course.

Without actually accusing me of being unethical, she did. A state rep. insinuating in an open public meeting, a municipal employee of doing something not quite ethical is not a good look for said State Rep. Her words, not mine, “not a good look”.

For the record, the assessed value on my property has gone up a substantial amount since it was purchased in 2015. Insinuating I did something unethical and compromise my integrity in a public meeting and spreading untruths is at the very least wholly unfair and at most slanderous.

This is not the first time this resident has questioned my work ethic and integrity in an open public meeting without my presence. Is that ethical? In my past life, it was required of my position to attend ethic classes. Not because I was unethical but because it teaches one to recognize when someone or something is not ethical. You cannot teach ethics, one either has it or one doesn't. I have it, a code of ethics.

I am not the only employee of this town who has had to endure the wrath of this resident. The reason behind such bitterness and malicious behavior is unclear to me. What is the main goal of this resident? Please do share so the goal can be achieved quickly and end the nonsense, the grandstanding, and wasted time chasing down something that is not there like corruption, fraud, and out-of-control spending.

Never really quite said out loud but definitely implied. The phrase “it is not what I meant, it came out wrong” is old and frankly just words with no meaning. One should either choose their inferences and innuendos more carefully or choose not to say anything until there is complete truth and a background. Unless you are seeking plausible deniability.

This is a statement from my perspective, and I will not engage in an out-of-control conversation. I am also not here to defend my position as I have not been deceitful or disreputable. I do expect, however, a sincere apology both written and verbally in an open public meeting. I would also expect that trying to disparage an employee without due cause in a public meeting never happens again”.

*Response from Riche’ Colcombe:*

Ms. Colcombe said she did attend the April 8<sup>th</sup> Selectmen’s meeting to talk about the assessed values. She said she did not accuse an employee of any wrongdoing; she did not accuse Ms. Rutherford of anything, what she said was that it is not a good look for the town when an employee of the town is the only one who had a substantial tax decrease at that meeting.

## **1. BUS/VAN – UPDATE**

James Clough, Recreation Director, came before the Board after researching available vans for sale and presented them with three options. He said the favored option has been looked at by the Town’s mechanic who gave the vehicle a thumbs up. The vehicle is from Merchants Auto and is a 2016 Ford Transit Wagon for \$31,809.00. He said it has 2,500 miles on it and had been used as a shuttle by a hotel. Mr. Clough is looking for approval from the Selectmen to purchase the van which will be paid from funds in the parks revolving fund and the Youth Services account which has funds from various fund raiser activity.

Selectman Bailey made a motion to purchase a van as reviewed for the recreation department in the amount of \$31,809.00 from Merchants Auto to be paid from the Parks and Recreation Revolving Account and YS Special Projects Account. Chairman Campbell seconded the motion. Selectman Pelletier said in the past when a vehicle is needed, approval was sought at Town Meeting, how is this different. Ms. Buono explained that if the money needs to be raised and appropriated from taxation at the time of the purchase, it goes to Town Meeting. This money is being taken from established funds for purchases such as this. All Board members were in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

## **2. HOUSING CHAMPION AWARD**

Andrew Dorsett, Housing Finance Director from the Department of Business & Economic Affairs, introduced himself and said that he works on affordable housing projects with developers and municipalities. Lee Ann Moynihan introduced herself, she is the Housing Champion Program Manager and congratulated Hillsborough for being 1 of 10 Housing Champion Community in the second round. She said there are currently a total of 28 communities who have the designation of Housing Champions and said that it is a partnership between the State and municipalities who recognize the need for housing and who look at their local ordinances and make changes to become housing friendly. She said the designation of being a Housing Champion Community can benefit the municipality when it comes to available grant programs as well.

Margaret Burns, Executive Director from the NH Municipal Association, also congratulated the Town on achieving Housing Champion status. She said the Housing Champions program is a partnership between the state and local government to address housing, and it does it through incentivizing municipalities to make choices locally that work best for them. Ms. Burns again congratulated the Town for going for the Housing Champion designation since it’s not easy to achieve and noted that this was one of the programs NHMA advocated for.

A plaque and certificate were presented to the Board of Selectmen.

### **3. DEPUTY TREASURER**

Ms. Buono introduced James Ainsworth to the Selectmen as the recommended candidate for Deputy Treasurer from a total of 3 applicants.

Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve appoint James Ainsworth as the Deputy Treasurer for a one-year term. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### **4. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY – WEST MAIN STREET SIDEWALK PROJECT**

Chairman Campbell made a motion to grant the authority to the Planning Director to sign and execute any and all documentation to implement activity on behalf of the town of Hillsborough's business in the Transportation Alternatives program and Highway Safety Improvement Funding for the purpose of the West Main Street Sidewalk Project. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### **5. MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Campbell made a motion to accept the meeting minutes dated April 8, 2026. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### **6. MANIFEST**

Chairman Campbell made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign Payroll Check numbers 20982 – 21014 (includes voided checks 3s 20989 – 20993) a/k/a Voucher 13, 16 & 17 in the amount of \$247,876.77 (includes 289 direct deposit stubs) and Accounts Payable Check number 035727 - 035814 a/k/a Voucher 21 in the amount of \$248,932.66. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### **7. TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE**

Chairman Campbell made a motion to sign the paperwork in anticipation of a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN). Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

### **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve the consent agenda for April 22, 2026. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

- Gravel Tax Levy – Map 7 Lot 71 \$0.00
- Tax Anticipation Note Paperwork – Bar Harbor Bank & Trust
- Elderly Exemption – Map 14 Lot 426; Map 8 Lot 19; Map 23 Lot 95; Map 12 Lot 149
- Designation of Deposit/Financial Functions Authority (Treasurer)
- Intent to Cut – Map 28 Lot 4 – Rte. 31; Map 32 Lot 4 – Rte. 31
- Veterans' Tax Credit – Map 11J Lot 375; Map 25 Lot 46 (spousal)
- Wood Heating Energy System Exemption – Map 12 Lot 149

### **9. TAX DOLLARS OWED**

Ms. Buono provided some information that was requested by Selectmen Pelletier in a past meeting, a list of properties that owe taxes. Selectman Pelletier asked how the yearly short fall is covered if everyone does not pay their taxes. Ms. Buono said the town would use the Tax Anticipation Note if needed while waiting for the tax

dollars to come in. School payments are delayed and some invoices are held off until the tax dollars come in as well.

#### **10. SIDEWALK PROJECT**

Ms. Buono presented to the Selectmen a preliminary schedule for the West Main Street Sidewalk Project and stressed that it is only preliminary at this time. She said a pre-construction meeting will be scheduled for the week of May 4<sup>th</sup> and will let the Board know what date it will be held.

#### **11. EXPENSES AND REVENUES**

Ms. Buono presented a copy of the up-to-date expenses and revenues and noted that the Selectmen have always reviewed and signed off on expenses at each meeting within the Manifest that gets approved. She said she wanted to call it out since a resident requested to watch the Selectmen do it at meetings.

#### **12. JOHN PENNY PROPERTY UPDATE**

Ms. Buono noted that she sent the Selectmen an up-to-date email regarding John Penny's property located at 45 School Street. She said that the barn is now gone and the property has been left in good condition. She said fresh loam and gravel were put down due to the wetness of the area when the equipment was. Ms. Buono said that Mr. Penny tried to stop the process of the barn being removed by calling the Department of Environmental Services, EPA and Elderly Services but we had everything in place as needed and provided a copy of the Court Order to those agencies.

#### **13. OFFICE FURNITURE**

Ms. Buono said that Dan Rutherford's company has generously donated office furniture to the Town (desks, tables, and cabinets), and a crew of employees will be picking up the furniture this week. Ms. Buono thanked Mr. Rutherford and mentioned that it will especially come in handy if the changes to the town offices take place this year and noted that pricing is being sought at this time for the reconfiguration of the open space for a safer environment.

#### **14. WOODS WOOLEN**

Ms. Buono provided a progress report to the Selectmen on Woods Woolen Mill. She said this project is slated to be completed by the end of this year.

#### **15. POLICE UNION**

Ms. Buono said she did receive a request from the police union to begin negotiations; a Selectman's representative will be needed. Ms. Buono doesn't feel the attorney needs to be present at these negotiations; any questions can still be referred to the attorney. Selectman Bailey, who has sat through three negotiations, agrees. Selectman Pelletier feels the attorney knows how to present the town's point of view because they are trained to do so. He feels if the union has an attorney present then the town should. Selectman Pelletier asked if the Board should have a discussion on what they would accept before negotiations. Ms. Buono said the Selectmen can agree upfront about cost of living; other items will come up during the negotiations. A future meeting will be scheduled.

## **16. SEWER SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIRS**

Water & Sewer Commissioner Dana Clow showed the Selectmen the sewer plan with the red indicators as the worst. The red sections are clay pipes with a joint every 3 feet that are leaking ground water into the system, the goal is to get rid of that. The next project will be mostly all of Myrtle Street and part of Church Street.

A cost spread sheet was provide to the Selectmen ranging from 2025 to 2030 that includes a 4% inflation factor. The capital expense was projected in the amount \$370K per year from the town. It was noted that the plans do not factor a storm water asset management plan. There is a funding source from the state called the Clean Water SRF that takes EPA funds for storm water or sewer. Right now, there is a grant program for having a sewer asset management plan done, a pre-application is due by the end of May.

The Commission will continue to put money away for infrastructure repairs, the timing for the next project will be dependent on the town's funding schedule. Any project takes three years from design to construction.

Selectman Pelletier asked if the next project will be like the Park & Whittemore, allowing residents the opportunity to connect their sump pumps to the system. Mr. Clow said a storm water system will be installed that will provide a place to put that water. The Commission is still waiting for the town to develop a plan for the homeowners with sump pumps to connect to the system, no one is connected on Park & Whittemore. Ms. Buono said it would be done like a Betterment Assessment.

To gain funding for the sewer, the Commissioner's will need to go through the qualifications selection system to pick a consultant before any project can start.

Selectman Pelletier asked what it would cost to add Newman and Pleasant Streets to the next project. Mr. Clow said it is going to depend on the town and how the town will get its funding, through a bond or yearly funding, Water & Sewer will continue to put money away. The Selectmen talked about the town and Water & Sewer joining in on a bond. Ms. Buono talked about the structure of the funding that Water & Sewer receives, it's far different from the town portion. Water & Sewer reserves are included in their budget and don't have the same dilemma as the town has financially. A bond is difficult to achieve approval from the voters and saving yearly money can also be difficult for the town portion. Ms. Buono said this question can't be answered by the Selectmen right now, the Selectmen need to get a feel from the public about a bond or an annual capital reserve fund or increase the road work capital reserve, the towns portion is really road work and drainage.

For the 2027 budget, the town would need to come with \$44,125 for engineering and \$370,000 to begin the annual funding.

*Associated Electric Property:* Water & Sewer will be severing the sewer connection and capping it. The town back-hoe needs to be scheduled to complete this task. Ms. Buono asked, because the town is being used for this task, will the town need to pay to have it reconnected? Mr. Clow said the connection would still be there; the difference would be the location of the piping on the property. Water & Sewer will move forward and cap it.

*Office Space for Water & Sewer:* The side door to the second floor needs to be secured and the condition of the fire escape needs to be looked at.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

A true record  
Mary Whalen  
Recording Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by:  
Hillsborough Selectboard

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Iris Campbell, Chairman

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James C. Bailey, III, Selectman

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Richard Pelletier, Selectman