



Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes December 13, 2023

Bob opened the meeting at 5:15 p.m. Marybeth texted she would be late. Bob made a motion to enter into nonpublic session at 5:15 p.m. under RSA 91-A II (a) and RSA 91-A II (b). Karl seconded the motion and it passed 2-0. (Marybeth joined the meeting at 5:30 p.m.)

Present: Marybeth Quill, Chair, Karl Pruter, Vice Chair, Bob Hamilton, Selectman, Lori Rautiola, Town Administrator, Laurie May, Finance Director, members of the public.

The meeting reconvened at 6:00 p.m. Marybeth led the Pledge of Allegiance. Bob made a motion to seal the nonpublic session as it may adversely affect the outcome. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Selectmen's Announcements: Karl announced the Firefighter's Association has received a grant from the Roy Hunt Foundation for \$10,000 to repair the 1936 Engine 2. This is not a town expense. Karl thanked the Roy Hunt Foundation. Bob announced the Wreaths Across America Foundation will lay wreaths on the graves at Hillside Cemetery on December 16th. Marybeth stated Lori went to Concord to accept the grant from the Land, Conservation & Heritage Commission (LCHIP) for \$91,850. Bob thanked the Meetinghouse Oversight Committee and gave a special thank you to Lori Rautiola and Karla Macleod.

Consent Agenda: Bob noted he will abstain from the 11.29.2023 minutes since he was not present, only by telephone. Karl made a motion to accept the Payroll and Accounts Payable for 12.07.2023 & 12.14.2023 and the meeting minutes for 11.01.2023 & 11.08.2023. Bob seconded the motion and it passed 3-0. Karl made a motion to accept the 11.29.2023 minutes as written. Marybeth stated she did not have time to read them. The motion failed.

Citizen's Forum: Karla Macleod stated she would like to applaud and thank Lori Rautiola for her hard work in applying for the grant. The Town will receive the \$91,850 from LCHIP and \$20,000 from the Moose Plates grant for a total of \$111,850 that will go towards maintaining the Meetinghouse with no taxes coming from residents. Karla stated the Board should consider all grant opportunities available to the Town and, at a minimum, investigate them; adding, whether they are local, State, Federal or private, the Board should rely on the town's hired employees' expertise and follow their recommendations. She questioned the Board asking if they had a duty to inform the taxpayers that a violation had occurred against them. She explained she had not known her assessment was inaccurate, had she not heard Roberta explain it at a public meeting. Karla continued stating it may not have happened had the Board hired qualified employees in certain positions which were recommended by the town's employees. She stated the Town has four elections coming in 2024 and expressed the need for a Selectmen's secretary and a Deputy Town Clerk. Bob pointed out it is the responsibility of the taxpayer to pay attention to their assessments.



Roberta stated by law, the property owners are supposed to be made aware of the changes and that KRT should give the Town a refund as they were supposed to send each resident a property card with an explanation of the property adjustment. Craig Clark questioned the County portion of taxes and if residents were accessing the new ambulance services. Karl stated the town is paying for those services through the county portion of the tax bill.

Earl Robertson expressed his concerns regarding the social media post banning the Police Department's cat from Facebook, adding it was a way to foster relationships between the PD and its residents. He stated he was looking for clarification regarding the social media policy and requested a copy of the document. He continued expressing the need for the Department to use the cat as a resource and encouraged the Board to give the Police Department tools to help them do their jobs and at no cost to the Town. Bob responded the policy was written by the Police Department. Al Lefebvre stated the Town has no way of knowing if this would cost the town money further down the road. Roni Hamilton stated she has not heard the Board of Selectmen decide to ban the cat from social media, adding it was the Town Administrator's decision. Judy Unger Clark stated the whole thing had blown out of proportion and requested a policy at the end of the meeting. Marybeth stated she was not taking any more comments related to the cat or social media policy.

Old Business:

Community Power Committee (CPC): Bob mentioned he did not see any reason to move forward with the CPC since residents have an opt-in choice for Community Power through the County Community Power which he was unaware of due to wrong information from the NH Community Power Coalition. Marybeth stated she did not feel it was necessary to research it further. Karl thanked Bob for his commitment to research. Bob stated the Committee will meet on Dec 16 at 7 p.m. Tom Coneys mentioned he researched the town's electricity rate, adding the Town is paying more now since they are locked into a rate versus Eversource's current rate.

ARPA Updates: Lori noted the septic design (for Meetinghouse) has been approved by the Board and paid. She added the DPW Director has requested quotes for the installation, however, companies are short-handed and the work will not commence until the spring of 2024. Bob stated he would like to move forward with Chief Donovan's decision and purchase all twenty-five SCBA units. Marybeth agreed adding the Board took this off the warrant last year because their plan was to use ARPA funds. Karl agreed to move forward. Bob made a motion to allow Chief Donovan to move forward with the purchase. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0. Tom Coneys stated he did not feel it met the COVID-related requirements to fall under ARPA.

New Business:

Treasurer's Report: Helene Rogers, Treasurer, stated she brings the Investment Policy to the Board each year. The town has been conservative with its money. She reported interest rates are fairly high, adding November alone the town made over \$109,000 in interest. Some of the smaller accounts are gaining about \$2,000 a month. Lori mentioned the only budget item she and Helene have discussed was that the Treasurer has not had an increase in salary for as long as anyone can remember. Lori recommended an increase of no less than what the Board approves for the COLA.



Assessing Request for Proposals Award: Lori stated Avitar Associates of New England was the only solid proposal the Town received after sending the request out to at least ten firms. She received a small spreadsheet with some figures but no proposal. She explained the shortage of assessors within the State and that most firms are in crisis mode as no new assessors are coming into the field and many are retiring. She recommended going forward with Avitar's proposal and expressed her confidence in their ability to handle the Town's assessing needs. The Board discussed the terms of the contract and all agreed it would be best to accept the two-year contract which included the revaluation in 2025. Bob mentioned the need to add funds by town warrant to go towards the revaluation cost. Karl made a motion to accept the two-year assessing proposal from Avitar Associates of New England as stated in the contract. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Disposition of Police Cruisers & Cruiser Fleet: Chief Malynowski stated she had two requests. She stated she would like to dispose of the car as soon as possible. She was seeking permission from the Board to forego the Procurement Policy and allow her to sell it for what she feels is fair market value as she has an interested party to purchase it. Bob stated he would rather follow the policy and advertise it for a minimum of a week on the PD webpage and Town webpage. Marybeth agreed. The car would need to be stripped before it leaves the PD.

Rachel explained the Department currently has a fleet of six cruisers and requested to decrease the fleet to five. She explained the Ford pickup truck was not a reasonable patrol unit. She continued stating she does not want a cruiser to take home and feels it puts a target on her family. She proposed putting the chief's car (2023 Ford Explorer) in the rotation as a patrol vehicle and gifting the Ford pickup to the Rec. Department. The Board would like to speak with the Rec Director on the need for the pickup. Karl questioned if the town would be liable if the chief was in an accident on the way to a scene. Rachel noted she would report to the station first and she would be liable if an accident occurred. Karl read an email from Primex regarding liability. Bob noted an accident would be covered under Workman's Comp. Karl also questioned if a car was out of commission that would leave only four cruisers available which could be an issue. All were in agreement to allow the chiefs car to become a patrol car starting January 1, 2023. More discussion was needed regarding the Ford pick up truck.

Boston Post Cane: There was a brief discussion on who had the Boston Post Cane in town. It was determined Bernice Martin last had the cane. Karla Macleod stated there is someone in the Payson Village that is over 100 years old. Karla and the Town Clerk will determine who is eldest resident is.

Abatements: Bob made a motion to grant the abatement recommendation from KRT for 13 Butternut Lane and 1499 NH Route 119. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Equalization Rate: The equalization rate was discussed briefly. The Board signed the document to upload to the DRA.

Road names for Placid Acres: There was a brief discussion on the existence of the Roadway Committee and also having road names with historical names and meanings. Dan Whitney asked if naming the road



was a step in the process of accepting the road as a town road. Chief Donovan submitted a recommendation letter for approval of five road names. The names are Placid Drive, Serene Drive, Pleasant Drive, Harmony Court, and Pacific Drive. Bob made a motion to approve the names as recommended. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Special Events Permits: Marybeth made a motion to approve the special events permit for the Live Nativity Event at the Horse sheds. Bob seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Informational Items, Communications & Updates: Marybeth stated the Transfer Station will close at noon on December 23 and December 30 for the holidays. The Town is seeking volunteers to assist with the Primary Election in January. Karl stated he would like to make “an intent of motion” for next week's meeting to set the wages and a COLA for employees so that a final decision can be made on the budget.

Other Business: Bob mentioned the passing of Dick Isaacson and expressed his gratitude for his service to the Meetinghouse Oversight Committee. Bob suggested posting an ad for a replacement on the Meetinghouse Oversight Committee. It was also mentioned the need for a volunteer on the Town & Gown Committee. All interested parties should contact the Town Administrator.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Rautiola