



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2022**

Present: Bob Hamilton, Chairman, Marybeth Quill, Vice Chair, and Karl Pruter, Selectman, Lori Rautiola, Town Administrator, Laurie May, Finance Director

Bob opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Bob made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 5:00 p.m. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

The meeting reconvened at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm. Bob made a motion to seal the first, third, and fifth sessions of the non-public meeting pursuant to RSA: 91-A:3 II (a). Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Selectmen Announcements: Bob thanked Charlie Eicher and all of the Election workers and commended them for a well-done job. He also was pleased to announce the Town has a 67% turnout rate at the polls. Bob announced the Town Office will be closed on November 17th for the installation of the new septic system and the Town Clerk's Office will be closed on Wednesday, November 23rd. The Town Offices will also be closed for Thanksgiving on November 24th and 25th.

Citizen's Forum: Charlie Eicher, Town Moderator thanked the Election volunteers and all who participated. He added the Election was a success thanks to the volunteers and all who participated. Craig Clark also thanked everyone for their hard work in making it a success. Craig announced the Rindge Veteran's Association will hold a Veteran's Ceremony on Friday at 10:30 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Pines.

David Drouin stated he would like to see the building permit process revamped and create a better flow of the process of approval so that issues such as the most recent issue with the temporary building at Heritage Christian School, are not being allowed in the setbacks without proper permitting in place.

Consent Agenda: Approval of:

- Minutes 10/12/2022 minutes (tabled)
- Payroll & Accounts payable 10/20/2022, 10/27/2022

Marybeth made a motion to approve the consent agenda without the 10/12/2022 minutes. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Old Business:

ARPA: Bob noted the Police Department is in need of tasers. He stated he would like to see three quotes on tasers. Chief Malynowski stated the contract is with Axion and the Towns really do not have a choice because Axion has the market on tasers for NH Police Departments. Bob mentioned he would like Mike to move forward of getting quotes for the Meetinghouse septic and carpet.

COLA: Marybeth stated she had done some research on the cost of living (COLA) increase and feels the percentage should be combined with the town's pay scale and not whatever the percentage rate is for the year. She gave an example that the COLA is set at about 9% for next year and adding that to the Town's wage scale is an increase the taxpayers cannot afford. Karl mentioned the Town adopted the wage scale which the intent to retain employees and be competitive with surrounding towns. He mentioned a 4 % COLA seemed fair and was still competitive. Bob stated he the Board needs to come to a decision on this as soon as possible to get the figures into the budget. He agreed with Karl that a 4 % COLA increase was fair.

Marybeth asked the Chair to open the discussion to the public. The Chair responded and opened the discussion to the public. Tom Coneys stated the Board should consider the benefits package the employees receive when factoring the COLA into the wages. He also mentioned the Town could contract some of the wages out. For example, if the Town could not find someone to mow the lawn, perhaps we contract that out and save some money on wages and get the lawns mowed. Sharon Rasku stated she would like to see a breakdown of employees' wages and benefits. Laurie May stated she could not give all information as some of it is protected by law, she could, however, give them wages as that is public information. The discussion continued with public input regarding benefits and health insurance. The discussion was tabled.

New Business:

Police Department Budget: Chief Malynowski presented the budget for the Police Department. There is a slight increase in uniforms, and administrative supplies have increased due to inflation. Chief noted she finds the lowest/best prices for supplies but is the cost is still high. New licensing fees for the new MDTs in the cruisers are added, and a gym membership was added. Chief noted the importance of physical fitness for our officers. Ammo has increased substantially. The NH Police Standards & Training has made a mandatory training increase. By 2025 they will go from 8 hours of service training to 24 hours and go up four hours per year thus making our training line increase. Chief Malynowski noted the Comfort Canine line will not be used and should be removed from the budget and the mileage line decreased due to the use of the old training vehicle the Board allowed the Chief to put into use.

Chief Malynowski mentioned there are a few areas within the budget that the Department has been under budget, especially the administrative supplies. The Department is in need of new tasers and is hopeful these will be covered under the ARPA funds. Radar units were also discussed and it was determined that these may be considered under the CIP.

Board of Adjustment: Lori presented the budget for the Zoning Board. There were a few increases the BOA was requesting including wages/hours.

Conservation Commission: David Drouin presented the budget for the Commission. The budget was flat except for a small increase in wages for the secretary.

Elections: Karla Macleod mentioned the supplies come from the Town Clerk or Selectmen's secretary. She noted the town will have just one election this year so the budget has been decreased. She mentioned a new RSA will be in place next year which requests the Supervisors of the Checklist to send letters to property owners who have moved. Due to this, the postage line has been increased. Overall, the budget has decreased from \$16,592 to \$8,506.

Trustees of the Trust Fund: Craig noted the budget is flat but may want to speak with Dwight. Lori will reach out to Dwight.

Town Office Budget: Lori presented the Town Office Budget. Code Enforcement is over budget currently due to hours/wages but will be kept at the same rate for 2023. Some minor decreases were made within the operating budget. It was noted the Town Administrator position went from part-time to full-time which triggered an increase in wages and benefits.

Harassment Policy: The Town's harassment policy was reviewed by the Board. Lori explained the policy is a section within the Town Employee Handbook and suggested the Board review, revise and vote to adopt it so that it is current. The Board reviewed the policy and were all in agreement on making it a separate policy. Bob made a motion to approve the town's harassment policy as is. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Informational Items/Communications/Updates: Bob announced the tax rate for 2022 will be \$23.03 which is up \$0.38 from the 2021 rate. Bob made a motion to allow Lori to sign on behalf of the Board to set the new tax rate at \$23.03. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Any other business before the Board: No other business.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola
Town Administrator