

Town of Haverhill
Select Board Meeting MINUTES
Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 5:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St. Woodsville, NH 03785

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Select Board Attendance:

Chair Phil Blanchard; Vice Chair Joe Longacre; members Rod O’Shana, Kevin Knapp, and Carolyn Hofman. A quorum was met.

Town Employees Present:

Brigitte Codling, Town Manager (TM)
Jennifer Boucher, Assistant Town Manager (ATM)

Members of the Public Present

In Person:

Dawn Lavoie

Online:

None

ATTENDANCE/ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL:

MOTION #1: A motion was made and seconded to approve the Agenda as written.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION #2: A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approve and sign the Tax Deed Auction List & Agreement

The Board noted that it is helpful that there are signs indicating the places that will be auctioned this year.

MOTION #3: A motion was made and seconded to approve and sign the Tax Deed Agreement.
Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION #4: a motion was made and seconded to give Town Manager Codling authority to sign Quit Claim Deeds on behalf of the Town of Haverhill for all properties sold.
Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Selectboard Involvement with Town Departments

The Board discussed the correct procedure for Selectboard members volunteering and visiting Town departments. B. Codling suggested members not drop in unannounced, but to coordinate their visits beforehand. She also recommended that Selectboard members should not give direction to department heads, but to address any suggestions to her.

They discussed a recent visit by Selectboard members to the airport and guidelines regarding airport use. B. Codling advised members to exercise caution responding to resident complaints and avoid getting involved in issues without a full understanding of the situation.

Town Budget Update

The Board discussed Town departments having frozen budgets. B. Codling explained that she has instituted a moratorium on projects that have not already been expended, so she can get a good look at where the Town budget stands. Due to extraordinary requests for welfare and an increase in employee health insurance costs, the Town is facing a \$250,000 overrun.

Per New Hampshire state law, the Town cannot overspend what was approved at the Town Meeting. She contacted the DRA and asked for permission for an emergency expenditure from the fund balance. However, the Town must show they have done everything possible to not overspend. She is working on budgetary moves that would increase the buffer in the hopes of releasing the moratorium.

B. Codling noted there are many towns in New Hampshire facing the same issue of overspending on welfare, primarily due to housing costs. She updated the Board on the demand for welfare reform in Concord and how it is being addressed. She also explained why the Town is facing such high welfare costs, including the end of housing assistance programs.

B. Codling also discussed the increase in health insurance premiums and what is being done to address this.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Chair Blanchard noted there is a public hearing for the Grafton County Delegation on Thursday, October 12, 2023, to receive public comment regarding receipt of a \$11,969,000 federal National Telecommunications and Information Administration grant. This will fund the Broadband Middle Mile project in Grafton County. The public hearing will also cover a request for a supplemental

