

**Town of Haverhill  
Select Board  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 27, 2020  
6:00 PM**

(All members participated by videoconference because of the COVID-19 pandemic)

**DRAFT subject to review by the Select Board**

**Board Members Present:** Darwin Clogston, Chair; Matthew Bjelobrck, Vice Chair; Howard Hatch; Fred Garofalo; Steve Robbins

**Town Employees Present:**

**Town Manager:** Brigitte Codling

**Finance Officer:** Jennifer Boucher

**Chief of Police:** Brandon Alling

**Parks & Recreation Director:** Sherri Sargent

**Members of the Public Present:** Tim Northcott, Mark Lang, Patty Hammond; Don Hammond

**Meeting Called to Order** at 6:00 PM by Darwin Clogston. A quorum was met.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Darwin:** Per Gov. Sununu Meeting Compliance Checklist to Ensure Meetings are Compliant with the Right to Know Law During the State of Emergency (abbreviated)

- This public body is authorized to meet electronically
- Confirming a) providing public access by telephone, with additional access by video or other electronic means, ZOOM conferencing is being used. All members of the Select Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously, the public has the ability to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting by dialing the following number: 1-929-436-2866 (US) or the website <https://ZOOM.US.meeting> (ID# 98172615314; password: 046397); b) public notice has been provided of the necessary information for accessing the meeting though ZOOM or telephonically, instructions have also been provided on the website of the Town of Haverhill at [www.haverhill-nh.com](http://www.haverhill-nh.com), and c) providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body if there a problems with access (call 603-728-5192 or email at [townmanager@haverhill-nh.com](mailto:townmanager@haverhill-nh.com)); d) adjourning if the public is unable to access the meeting. In the event that the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes taken during this meeting will be taken by ROLL CALL vote.

**Roll Call Attendance:**

Fred (no one in room), Steve (wife in room), Matt (no one currently in room), Howard (no one in the room), and Darwin (no one in room)

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**Agenda Approval:**

**MOTION #1:** Fred made a motion and Matt seconded the motion to approve the Agenda as written.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (Aye), Darwin (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Consent Agenda:**

**MOTION #2:** Darwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Select Board meeting on April 13, 2020, and, also, to sign manifest, forms, and other warrants. Is there a motion? Matt made a motion and Fred seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Town Employee Appearances:**

Darwin asked to introduce Sherri, Rec Commission. Brigitte noted that Sherri will be included in the Town Manager's Report.

**Scheduled Public Appearances:**

None

**Public Wanting to Address the Board:**

**Jennifer:** We have Tim Northcott with us. He is our assessor and will answer questions about the Land Use Change Tax for the warrants for both the Blaisdell and Witcher gravel pits.

**Darwin:** We can back up to Scheduled Public Appearances. What can you tell us about the pit?

**Tim:** For the position dealing with the Land Use Change Tax, two have expanded into Current Use lands. One expanded 6 acres and the other expanded 11.63 acres.

**Darwin:** Is there paperwork for the Board to sign?

**Jennifer:** It's in the packet of information in the center room. The Land Use Change tax forms, the amounts are around \$11,600 for one and the other is around \$6,500.

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**Darwin:** Something else?

**Brigitte:** There was an exemption request in Haverhill Corner for the Wentworth Brown House submitted by HHI.

**Tim:** The exemption was reviewed. It appeared to qualify, but more information is needed. There seems to be no change for a few years. Information about what has been done to develop or preserve the property is needed to indicate why an exemption would be granted.

**Darwin:** What do you recommend?

**Tim:** It's a request for full exemption. The property is posted, so I looked at the exterior only. The purpose is to develop and improve.

**Brigitte:** I visited with HHI last year and we walked through the Wentworth Brown House, all that was done was a new roof and early stages of renovations.

**Darwin:** Greg Matheson requested by phone call to find out the status of submitted paperwork.

**Tim:** It was approved. It was filed in the Town.

**Darwin:** He will need something in writing.

**Pending Old Business:**

**Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual Approval**

**Brigitte:** Revisions were based on our lawyer's feedback, including rewording. If the Board adopts the manual tonight, then minor edits can be made later.

**MOTION #3:** Matt make the motion and Steve seconds the motion to approve the Policy and Procedures Manual as written in its latest form.

**Discussion:**

**Howard:** It's clear that the Town manual was written by employees and not employers.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

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**New Business:**

- **Selectboard Goals for 2020**

**Darwin:** Fred could you begin?

**Fred:** Personal goals—To remember the safety of residents of Haverhill in any decision I make on the Select Board; to spend money wisely and with transparency; to serve the Town of Haverhill as a whole and not favor any precinct over another; to refer decisions back to the precinct commissioners so as to not overstep bounds as a Select Board member; to listen to all issues brought up to the Board and all possible solutions; to put my personal feeling aside and cast my vote for the best solutions possible for the Town of Haverhill; to strictly follow all State of NH regulations, RSAs, and the current COVID-19 emergency orders issues by the governor of NH; and to attend Primex, NHMA, and annual budget conferences to learn about any changes in NH state law or state departments that effect how towns and cities in NH should function.

**Darwin:** I appreciate keeping us up to date. Comments?

**Steve:** My goals are to listen and learn and to make informed decisions.

**Matt:** This year I want to make some determinations on the long-term decisions about the airport. I like to look into disengaging the Town from agreements and long term leases that don't benefit the Town. I'd like to see the lapsed funding issue resolved. I'd like to see the new Town fire department ground work done. I'd like to address the issue about the use of Town property and have an ordinance about it.

**Howard:** I'd like to see the Clark Pond bridge completed this year. I'd like to see the sewer line, Lily Pond Rd, French Pond Rd, and the fire department seen to. And, we need to bring up the places in Town who are not paying taxes.

**Darwin:** I'd like to work with the tax assessor and the tax collector. I'd like to learn more about the tax-exempt properties throughout Town.

**Steve:** There's a meter on Budget Lumber's power?

**Howard:** The electricity is not Town electricity; no utilities are paid.

**Brigitte:** Shelter on lot across from Aldrich's?

**Howard:** Shelter was put up on Town property.

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**Consider Continued Use of Augie’s Bypass Trail**

**Darwin:** Mark? Any issues with the ATV trail?

**Mark:** No, maybe minor issues related to speed. Speed is 5 miles/hr under the posted speed limit.

**Darwin:** Good alternative?

**Mark:** If you are seeing construction, we use Briar Hill Rd to get ATVs away from construction. We just need a few signs.

**Howard:** Turn ATVs onto Briar Hill Rd is best temporarily.

**Darwin:** When ATVs need to move, and you can tell Mark to move signs?

**Mark:** It has to be put to the Trails Board, which is easy.

**MOTION #4:** Howard made a motion and Matt seconded the motion to change the ATV Augie’s Bypass trail to accommodate construction and to detour onto Briar Hill Rd.

**Matt:** For reroute, any community complaints?

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Mark:** May 23 is when trail opens according to the State. [update now mid-July, phase 3]

**Update of Black Mount Trail Status**

**Brigitte:** Contacted 91A NH Dept of Transportation for original grant application for funds that establish that trail. They do not have that grant information. The Transportation Enhancement grant was to establish a bicycle and pedestrian path on an abandoned railroad corridor multiuse trail. Sherri has sought insurance companies to cover the Town’s interests.

**Sherri:** We have made progress to open the trail.

**Sewer Treatment**

**Brigitte:** I have done investigations in the history—1996 Grafton County Complex quitclaimed a deed related to their sewer to the Town. In 1998, the sewer line agreement

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was established priority order to hook-up fees to Town of Haverhill to pay off debt. In 2001, warrant article that passed that stated there is no more priority order. The Town has paid for upkeep and maintenance of the sewer and pump station, including the out-of-district sewer. Another issue is that Woodville has exceeded their sewer treatment capacity.

I had a discussion with the North Country Council, and they have found grant monies for a feasibility study for a sewer treatment plant in N. Haverhill.

**Matt:** With the development of the commercial park, was there some calculation done for sewer treatment in Woodsville?

**Steve:** The treatment plant was put in 1986 and a lot of growth has occurred since then.

**Brigitte:** I don't think Woodville could consider allowing more sewage to their plant.

**Darwin:** We have a lot of questions about the sewage system. Should we pursue a grant for feasibility study?

**Howard:** The responsibility should be from the County. A feasibility study has been done.

**MOTION #5:** Howard made a motion to do a feasibility study of the sewer system with grants and matching and Matt seconded the motion.

**Brigitte:** The study would be to evaluate the pros and cons for creating a sewage treatment plant in N. Haverhill.

**Steve:** If we have a feasibility study, we need to look at the whole picture whether more financially responsible to add on to the Woodsville plant or to look at another option.

**Brigitte:** Dick said the Town hired an engineer to study expansion of the treatment plant in Woodsville about 5 years ago, and the cost was about \$5,000,000, which would increase rates by 250% to pay for it. If by chance we could obtain grants for a N. Haverhill plant, it would free space in Woodsville.

**Fred:** Are you considering all precincts hooking into a N. Haverhill plant?

**Brigitte:** You can build it big enough for future development.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

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**Town Manager's Report/Comments:**

**Brigitte:** Annual Meetings—Haverhill Corner has pushed it into June and no date for Woodville has postponed theirs, but I have no date. Town of Haverhill Fire Department—We have scheduled the kick-off meeting for Wednesday, April 29, at 5:00 PM. At this meeting we will set a schedule and get rolling on the planning of the new Haverhill Fire Department. COVID-19—I am still sitting in on meetings almost daily of the Emergency Management meetings and the governor's legal team. Another team created by the governor to oversee the opening of the state.

**Matt:** Are they still on track for a May 4 opening?

**Brigitte:** That has been extended. Department of Safety—For the Clark Pond bridge, there is quarterly reporting. Airport—There has been money set aside for the airport. Haverhill Happenings is virtual and scheduled for Friday at 9:00 AM. Clark Pond Rd.—We have sent in the reimbursement request for \$111,000, and we can put in another \$8,000. We sent in the first quarterly report today. Lime Kiln Rd.—We are still working on this. Central and Forest Intersection—After COVID orders end, we can finish up this project. Public Opinion Survey—There was a question about the intersection and, almost unanimously, the public wanted this project addressed. Dean Memorial Airport Safety Study—This is still on pause. The airport was awarded a \$20,000 stimulus grant through the Cares Act. County Rd Property Clean-Up—I'm working with Gary Hebert on that. Handbook—We're continuing to work on that. Town Clerk's Office—They are busy. The public is transitioning well to the online services. Tax Collector—She is getting ready to print tax bills. Property Records—She is continuing as usual. The staff have continued working on what they do every day and also transitioned well to online work. Maintenance Department—Alliance completed heating system and have installed the heating control on key staff computers.

**Howard:** Is there a way to put a control on the heat in the gymnasium?

**Brigitte:** There was a steam trap study done and found some faulty. According to Alliance, we can shut off the gym heating. We can now see the problem heating areas. Planning and Zoning—We met with our attorney regarding the gravel pits and he is working though the permitting. Three issues are involved, including intents to excavate, local permitting, and pits working within the boundaries of the law. Highway Department—They are grading roads, ordering a new dump truck, and a bid opening is Thursday. Dean Memorial Airport—We can retrofit the large John Deere equipment to use for mowing with a 84 inch mower deck and sell the zero-turn equipment.

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**Howard:** That's a good deal.

**Brigitte:** Welfare Department—We're processing applications, but no increases in applications. Police Department—Police are not doing outside trainings and Chief Alling is attending daily conference calls regarding COVID. Emergency Management—Gary and Mike are attending daily conference calls. Parks & Recreation Department—Mona Sanville has been hired to assist Sherri and Donny Bowman is returning as head counselor. Sherri's Senior Stretch ZOOM classes have increased. The litter program was a huge success. Public Health—There was a noise complaint, which was addressed. They have begun an inventory of sites of junk violations.

**Darwin:** Last week was the first anniversary of your position in the Town. Thank you for your work.

**Finance Officer's Report/Comments:**

**Jennifer:** The tax warrant was prepared and went out for signatures. Regarding tax bill wording, which is sometimes misleading, states the criteria for eligibility for a tax credit. The wording is specific in the RSA and is in our tax bills right now. Additional wording as a qualifying statement was suggested, as follows:

“Per RSA 76:11-a, if you are elderly, disabled, blind, a veteran or veteran's spouse, or unable to pay taxes due to poverty or other good cause, you may be eligible for a tax exemption, credit, abatement, or deferral. Applicants may need to meet certain income, or residency requirements to qualify. For details and application information, contact the Assessor or Property Records clerk.”

**Brigitte:** Melinda will be printing tax bills soon and she needs to know.

**MOTION #6;** Darwin made a motion to accept Jennifer's suggested wording (above) to the tax bill and Fred seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Jennifer:** There's a resolution for the Board to pass to go back to Health Trust to be official, as follows:

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“Resolve that the Town of Haverhill shall participate as a member in the Health Trust risk pool management program for the provisions of group medical and/or benefit plans in accordance with the application and membership agreement and NHRSA 5-b. Resolve that [Brigitte Codling] is, hereby, authorized to direct and to execute .... to Health Trust on behalf of the Town of Haverhill the application and membership agreement in substantially the form presented at this meeting.”

**MOTION #7:** Steve made the motion and Matt seconded the motion to approve the agreement with Health Trust.

**Fred:** Explain Health Trust?

**Jennifer:** They are a pooled medical plan, including medical, counseling, and prescriptions, and has many benefits. We are in a larger pool of small towns.

**Darwin:** This is for municipal entities?

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor, under protest), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Comments of Commission Members:** None

**HEEC Broadband**

**Darwin:** HEEC meeting to put on agenda for next meeting. I'd like to bring forward a discussion of broadband. From their minutes: "...expanded cell coverage...."  
Topics:

- Cell Tower Improvement fund; approved by commission
- January 22, USDA Rural Block grant \$10,000 matched \$20,000 with a March 2020 deadline

We need to think about this topic of no progress and the lost grant opportunity. Should we address cellular broadband? It will be put on future agendas.

**Brigitte:** For consideration, Article 15 warrant, was not specific for the expansion of broadband for the HEEC to act upon, the Select Board are the agents to expend those funds.

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**Correspondence:**

**Fred:** Property tax for Gibson House B&B—what are we doing? They don't want to pay taxes due to COVID-19. They want the Town to forebear property and room taxes.

**Brigitte:** The Board can waive interest and fees per the governor's order.

**Jennifer:** Executive order allows the Board to waive interest, but it has to be a case-by-case basis. Tax bills are not due until July 1. We can send them a letter to see what comes later with federal aid. We will respond.

**Fred:** 2581 Dartmouth College Hwy, N. Haverhill, from Edward Gallagher.

**Jennifer:** There's legal issue, and we plan to sell in tax auction this year.

**Matt:** He wishes to purchase it.

**Darwin:** Please send the list of auction properties to the Board.

**Comments of Select Board Members:**

**Darwin:** We need to go into the office to sign documents.

**Matt:** There are two openings in the Police Department?

**MOTION #8:** Matt made a motion and Darwin seconded the motion for having a moratorium on recruitment of police officers and looking at the number of offices in the police department with a feasibility study.

**Jennifer:** It was voted on by the legislative body to increase the police officers from 7 to 8 at Town Meeting.

**Brigitte:** Brandon Alling and I spoke of the criteria for a study of the Police Department looking at data, including census numbers. We agreed that we will do a study and, when completed, we'll come back to the Board. You can take a vote, but it is not binding. Hiring is the Town Manager's decision. The number of officers can be modified at a Town Meeting, but I can take advisement from the Board.

**Fred:** The Town voted to have an 8-person force. How can you limit the number of officers?

**Matt:** I have withdrawn the Motion (#8) and Howard withdrew the second.

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**MOTION#9:** Matt made a motion and Darwin seconded the motion that the Town Manager and Police Chief do a feasibility study of the Police Department related to the number of officers (8) in the Town of Haverhill.

**Roll Call vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Adjourn Meeting**

**MOTION #10:** Steve made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Matt seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Fred (in favor), Steve (in favor), Matt (in favor), Howard (in favor), Darwin (in favor). The vote was unanimous. The Motion passes.

**Adjourn: Meeting Adjourned at 8:24 pm**

*Transcribed by Joanna Bligh*