

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board Meeting
MINUTES
Monday, July 5, 2022, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
Or on ZOOM**

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Steve Robbins called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Select Board Attendance: Kevin Knapp, Katie Williams, Mike Graham, Steve Robbins, Fred Garofalo (Absent). A quorum was met.

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager (TM): Brigitte Codling
Assistant Town Manager (ATM): Jennifer Boucher
Welfare Administrator: Valerie Morse
Tax Collector: Justin Boulter
Veterans Coordinator: Mark Locke

Members of the Public Present

In Person:

Lorraine Prescott
Matthew Bjelobrk
Howard Hatch
Chris Caderat
Joe Longacre

Alex Nuti-de Biasi (*Journal Opinion*)
Dawn Lavoie
Lynn Graham

Online:

Melinda Boutin
Ron DeRosia
Joanne Young
Robert Maccini
Mark Codling
Mary Brooks
Tom Mangels
Skip Gadwah

Jacob Cochran
Carol Norcross
Margo Longacre
Caleb Hatch
Dorothy Long
Charlene Aldrich
John Aldrich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION #1: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the agenda as amended.

- Vice Chair Robbins added to the agenda: 1) Matt Bjelobrk under Public Wanting to Address the Board and 2) Joe Longacre's appointment as a Planning Board alternate under Scheduled Public Appearances. Vice Chair Robbins added under Correspondence the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOTION #2: Williams made the motion and Graham seconded the motion to approve the Minutes of the Select Board Meeting of June 20, 2022, as written.

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

SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

Joe Longacre, Planning Board Alternate Appointment

MOTION #3: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Graham seconded the motion to approve the appointment of Joe Longacre as a Planning Board alternate.

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

TOWN EMPLOYEE APPEARANCES:

Valerie Morse, Welfare Administrator, *Public Assistance Guidelines*

Administrator Morse discussed the updates to the Haverhill *Public Assistance Guidelines* since 2014. TM Codling noted that there were additional updates to the model Guidelines at the state level, and the Haverhill revised Guidelines were reviewed by the state for any changes. Graham complimented the work on the Guidelines. Discussion continued about the responsibility of applicants to obtain the required documents for their files. Vice Chair Robbins noted that Fire Ordinance requirements for property owners are not stated as policy in the Guidelines. TM Codling noted that the state would probably deny that inclusion because it could punish the renter rather than the property owner.

MOTION #4: Graham made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the Haverhill *Public Assistance Guidelines* as rewritten.

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

PUBLIC WANTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

Matt Bjelobrk: Bjelobrk noted that in March of 2021 during the Town elections, as Vice Chair of the Select Board, he observed conduct by an election official that was improper, and he made a formal complaint to the NH Department of Justice (DOJ). Bjelobrk received the letter from the DOJ stating that Regis Roy, Supervisor of the Checklist, was engaging in electioneering, which violated her oath of office. Bjelobrk stated that the DOJ ordered a Cease-and-Desist order relating to Supervisor Roy.

Vice Chair Robbins responded that the Board will go into Nonpublic Session to discuss this issue and make a decision.

Marilyn Blaisdell noted that prior to the March 2021 election, Kevin Shelton sent a letter to all Woodsville voters to vote for Mike Graham and to vote “No” on Article 2, and he was found guilty of electioneering.

[Audience member] discussed at length the long service and the integrity of Regis Roy.

MOTION #5: Graham made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to table the request by former Vice Chair of the Haverhill Select Board, Matthew Bjelobrk, to address the DOJ Cease-and-Desist letter in Nonpublic Session.

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

PENDING OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

North Haverhill Fair License

Vice Chair Robbins stated that the North Haverhill Fair (July 27 to July 31) has applied for an annual license to operate.

MOTION #6: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Graham seconded the motion to approve the license for the North Haverhill Fair Committee.

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

PA-28 Inventory of Taxable Property

Vice Chair Robbins asked ATM Boucher to discuss this inventory document. ATM Boucher noted that annually the state sends the Town a letter asking if the Town will use the PA-28 form to manage the inventory of taxable property, and generally the Town does not participate. ATM Boucher noted that this document may assist the Town if preparing the Residents’ Tax, especially for renters. The PA-28 provides a list of renters for each property owner. ATM Boucher stated that the deadline for return of the form is August 28, 2022, and each property in Town receives one with a penalty assessed for not returning the form. ATM Boucher stated that the PA-28 picks up on changes to properties that may not be filed under a building permit.

Howard Hatch stated that the Residence Tax is hard to enforce, and this shows properties that have been altered without a building permit application, which would help the assessor. ATM Boucher stated that use of this form is voted on by the Select Board annually and may be changed from year to year.

Religious Exemption / House of Faith Ministries

The Board were provided with documents including the State of New Hampshire Exemption Claim form and the House of Faith Ministries Constitution and Bylaws to review. ATM Boucher stated that she discussed this property with the DRA staff member and the Select Board does have the right to research this property because a number of questions have come from the public. ATM Boucher noted that any rental and the acreage should not be included in the tax exemption. Graham asked for the financial records of the Ministries, and he suggested sending a letter and requesting a public appearance at a Board meeting.

MOTION #7: Graham made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to authorize sending a letter to the House of Faith Ministries raising the question of rental occupancy and requesting additional information and invite the owner to a Board meeting to help the Board determine the validity of the House of Faith Ministries.

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

ATM Boucher noted that all religious, educational, and charitable organizations should be voted on by the Board annually.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TM Codling prepared highlights of her report:

- The Health Officer issued an order to vacate 1139 Clark Pond Road. because a family of 10 persons moved into the building that is not suitable for habitation.
- There is a bid opening for a Town towing rotation list.
- The Railroad Park caboosie renovations are out for bid.
- At 42 Ammonoosuc St. demolition is ongoing.
- TM Codling submitted a 100% grant for the replacement of Flat Iron Bridge with a box culvert to mitigate flooding.
- TM Codling sent the Board overviews of the Woodsville intersection project and the No. Haverhill crosswalks.
- A vendor public WiFi has been set up at the ball fields specifically for the Fourth of July event vendors.
- TM Codling conversed with Northern Borders Regional Commission announcing that the Town is in the running for the \$1 million broadband grant.

Vice Chair Robbins asked about the bidding process for 42 Ammonoosuc St., and TM Codling noted that she is working on a grant for that project.

- TM Codling received a letter on June 28 from the State of New Hampshire Grafton County Superior Court, and she reported that the Superior Court has closed the books on the Woodsville lawsuit with no further action signed by the attorneys for both parties.

ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Finance Department:

- ATM Boucher noted that the Town's 2020 audit will begin next week.
- ATM Boucher noted that the state is recording a record surplus this year, and the legislature has passed a few bills to provide one-time property tax relief, and lump sum payment will come to the municipalities at the end of the calendar year. Grants are also available for body-worn and dash cameras for the police department. Signed into law is a 7.5% employer contribution to the state retirement fund for teachers, police, and firefighters.

Assessing Department

- The 5-year assessment review with the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA). Vicky Ayer, the DRA Real Estate Appraiser for Haverhill, is completed, and she is preparing her report. The DRA will meet with the Select Board for review of the audit report.

DRA Meetings

- Haverhill will host two DRA meetings on Tuesday, July 26, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon discussing Current Use Criteria, and the afternoon class from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM is on Excavation and Timber Tax.

Building Permits

- ATM Boucher noted that the Administration has processed 45 building permits in June.

Planning Board

- The Planning Board will be meeting Tuesday, June 28 for their regularly scheduled meeting, and will hear two subdivision plans. The Board is currently working on the Master Plan chapters and the report from the Community Survey. A meeting for Town residents related to the Community Survey results will be held on Thursday, September 15 in the evening at the CMB.

Zoning Board of Adjustment

ATM Boucher stated that there are no active applications for the Zoning Board; thus, there are no scheduled meetings.

Tax Department

ATM Boucher noted that the tax deeding will take place on Friday, June 24, at 12:00 PM, and, to date, \$4,234,076.00 has been collected on the 2022 first-issue tax bills. Four properties were waived from the Homeowners' Assistance Fund. ATM Boucher discussed the tax deeded properties and whether the fund applies. Boulter noted that the fund would cover that.

Vice Chair Robbins asked about the grant money and if it was going to the districts. ATM Boucher replied that she will have to get additional information on the grants outline in SB401, which has not been signed by the governor. TM Codling noted that with all highway money, Woodsville will get their proportional share.

COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Knapp (Planning Board) – Knapp noted that Joe Longacre is rejoining as an alternate.

Robbins (Parks & Recreation Commission) – Robbins noted that a meeting is coming up.

Graham (Airport Zoning Commission [AZC]) – Graham noted that because he has had problems with his email, he may not have all the information from the Commission.

Williams (Zoning Board of Adjustment) – Williams stated that the Zoning Board has not met.

Graham (Fire Department Committee) – Graham noted that there have been no meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Town Manager's Leave Balance Request Letter

- The Board discussed a letter from TM Codling requesting a pay out of accrued leave of 336 hours. Williams requested a breakdown of when the comp time was earned. TM Codling replied to Graham's request for explanation noting that per the Town Manager's contract, all sick and comp time is accrued on January 1 of each year. Vice Chair Robbins noted that if employees are accruing so much comp time, then they are working too much. TM Codling noted that for any employee who has high comp time hours, it is a liability for the Town. Williams discussed the policies in the Town of Littleton.

MOTION #8: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Graham seconded the motion to pay out the accrued leave for the Town Manager at \$16,442.00.

- Graham asked if sick leave accrues each year for all Town employees, and ATM Boucher replied, "Yes," but the Town employees' and the Town Manager's comp time are capped.
- Knapp requested delaying the vote because the contract and the personnel policy do not match.
- Graham asked if the Town is contractually obligated to pay at this time. ATM Boucher replied that there is no max and at some point it will have to be paid out.

Roll Call Vote: Knapp voted Nay, Williams Abstained, Graham voted Aye, and Vice Chair Robbins voted Aye. The motion passed with two Ayes, one Nay, and one Abstention.

Grafton County Senior Citizens Council

- Vice Chair Robbins read the announcement of 50 years of service by the Council with a celebration on Wednesday, July 13, at the Horse Meadow Senior Center from 11:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Call 603-787-2539 to reserve a lunch meal.

Ebenezer MacIntosh Celebration

TM Codling announced on Saturday, July 16, at the Horse Meadow Cemetery at 1:00 PM, there will be a ceremony for Ebenezer MacIntosh who participated in the Boston Tea Party. TM Codling hoped that the Select Board will send a representative.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Zoom CHAT):

- Dorothy Long asked if ATM Boucher gets paid more when TM Codling is on vacation. TM Codling noted it would have to be after 5 consecutive days of absence.
- Zoom audience member asked if the Select Board has a personal subcommittee to negotiate contracts. ATM Boucher noted that the Board negotiates with the Town's attorney.

COMMENTS BY SELECT BOARD MEMBERS:

Graham: No comments.

Williams: Williams stated that at the last meeting the Board requested that a letter go out to Tom Friel related to the Planning Board. TM Codling noted the Board asked that the Town send a letter to Friel expressing the Planning Board's perspective, and that was done. TM Codling mentioned this issue to Chair Hebert of the Planning Board.

