

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 4, 2021
6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785**

The meeting was **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM by Darwin Clogston, Chair. A quorum was met.

Pledge of Allegiance

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager: Brigitte Codling

Financial Officer: Jennifer Boucher

Road Agent: Colton Grant

Chief of Police, Interim: Derek Sullivan

Office Administrator, Police Department: Lori Aldrich

Meeting Assistant: Alex Collins

Members of the Public Present: Alex Nuti-de Biasi (*Journal Opinion*), Mike Lavoie, Doug Dutile, Albion "Albe" Esties, Ron Willoughby, Robert Long, Morton Bailey, Erik Erickson, Stephen Howard, Joe Longacre, Pauline [unknown online], Cindy [unknown online], Daniel [unknown online].

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

- **January 4, 2021**, Select Board Meeting
- Executive Order—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: 1-312-262-6799 (US) or the website <https://ZOOM.US/meeting> (ID# 95112071684; passcode: 768714); 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, and c) providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body if there a problems with access (call 802-793-0535 or email at 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: Matthew Bjelobrk (Present), Howard Hatch (Present), Fred Garofalo (Here), Steve Robbins (Here), Darwin Clogston (Here). All present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Agenda Modifications:

- Clogston added Haverhill Corner Commissioners under Scheduled Public Appearances.

MOTION #1: Bjelobrk made the motion to approve the Agenda as modified, and Hatch seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes Approval

MOTION #2: Bjelobrk made the motion to approve the **December 21, 2020**, Select Board Meeting Minutes as written, and Garofalo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

Haverhill Corner Commissioners

Mike Lavoie, Precinct Commission Chairman, asked the Select Board about the funding of the Haverhill Corner Fire Department.

Clogston presented the first version of the Town budget, which he stated is under review by the Advisory Budget Committee during the next few weeks, then it goes to a Public Hearing, then to the Select Board, and finally to the voters at Town Meeting. Clogston stated that the funds for the Haverhill Corner Fire Department were included in the Haverhill Fire Department section. Clogston stated that Haverhill Corner voted not to join the Haverhill Fire Department, therefore, the Town does not have to fund the precinct Fire Department. Codling noted that in preparing her budget, she made sure the Fire Department had level funding. The Advisory Budget Committee will decide to retain the funding under one town or return the line items to the precincts.

Lavoie stated that the funding does not follow Article 22, which he shared with all attendees. However, the Precinct Commissioners needed to know the funding process to present this to the voters.

Codling noted that the Public Hearing for the Select Board is February 8 because the budget is sent to the NH Department of Revenue Administration on the following day. Jennifer Boucher stated that the precinct has until February 22 to post their budget (14 days prior to the precinct meeting per the RSAs). Codling stated that the precinct can budget the costs and not put the revenue from the Town in the budget.

Doug Dutile stated that paying for the fire truck needs funding from the Town. Lavoie noted that the precinct pays double taxation for the Town fire service and the Haverhill Corner Fire Department.

Codling noted that she is prepared to come to the precinct and offer the operational plan and funding and training models for the Town of Haverhill Fire Department. The Commissioners agreed to meet with Codling prior to a Public Meeting. Discussion continued. Clogston stated that the Board wishes to work with the Commissioners, and he appreciates the coordination among attendees.

Derek Sullivan, Interim Chief of Police

Sullivan began by noting that Officer Brown will be starting the academy today, which includes some remote learning and is, overall, a 17-week process. Sullivan stated that Detective Hendrick will be starting in two weeks and that there is another officer with a conditional offer, which brings the department up to seven full time/part time officers.

Clogston addressed the Police Report:

- Calls for service have been consistent in the last 3 years; however, the times of service calls has doubled. Chief Sullivan stated that since 2017, the Police Department has been linked with Grafton County dispatch who can identify the arrival time and the clear time of each service call. The cases have become more complex. Clogston asked Chief Sullivan about the department budget: the on-call budget has gone up and the shift differential for holidays has changed. Chief Sullivan stated that the Office Administrator received exact information from dispatch. The budget reflects the expense of new equipment, such as Tasers. Staffing has been challenging with overtime required because of fewer officers. Clogston asked Chief Sullivan about the Police Department duty roster. Chief Sullivan confirmed four 10-hour days on duty with three days off duty for officers, and 8-hour days, Monday through Friday, for the Chief. The Board members and Chief Sullivan discussed the shift hours and rotations of the officers.
- Chief Sullivan invited the Board members to ask any questions, email, or come to the Department anytime.
- Robbins asked Chief Sullivan to address the staff turnover. Chief Sullivan noted that the shift differential, the consistent shift rotation, and finding other incentives were all important to implement. Codling noted that the Town has made the Police Department office more workable and provided better equipment for the officers.
- The Board thanked Chief Sullivan and Office Administrator Lori Aldrich for taking the time to come to the Select Board meeting.

PUBLIC WANTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

- Joe Longacre asked the Board to address when the Covid-19 vaccines are to be delivered to the towns. Codling noted that Lori Aldrich and Sherri Sargent are the Town's Public Relations committee and they put together a Do You Know section in the local newspapers each week. Covid-19 vaccinations would be a great topic for them to research. Today, Codling stated that she was on the phone to the Department of Safety to find out when the Town's first responders will be getting their vaccines. Boucher stated that she has brochures on this topic. Codling noted that the first responders are being scheduled now.

- Joe Longacre asked the Board about the land use processes and asked a question for the Town’s lawyer about enforcement of regulations. Codling entered the discussion by saying other towns have more rigorous ordinances, and she discussed the gravel pit discussions occurring at this time by the Planning Board.
- Ed Ballam stated that Haverhill Corner has a junk yard ordinance. Codling noted that precinct-level ordinances should complement any Town ordinances.

NEW BUSINESS

Update COVID-19 Response Plan / Policy

Codling discussed protocols that were in place for opening the Administrative Offices, but she now has the fourth iteration of the plan, which changes quarantining from two weeks to ten days. Codling noted that the employees would like the plan to be Town policy for Select Board vote.

MOTION #3: Bjelobrk made the motion to approve the **December Covid-19 Response Plan**, and Garofalo seconded the motion.

- Robbins suggested that the Response Plan be a “live” document that Codling can revise according to the CDC guidance. Codling suggested approving future changes with the Select Board notification.
- Clogston asked if Bjelobrk and Garofalo would withdraw their Motion. Bjelobrk and Garofalo agreed.

MOTION #3a: Bjelobrk made the motion to empower the Town Manager to modify the Town’s policy on Covid-19 in accordance with the CDC guidelines and the State of NH guidelines without having to come to the Board for approval. The Town Manager is to advise the Board of any changes to the policy. Garofalo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

Lyme Green Heat Purchase Proposal

Codling introduced the discussion of the proposal from Lyme Green Heat (wood pellet plant) to headquarter in the Haverhill Industrial Park, in which a price for the two lots (Lot 6.4 [6.F, 5.11 acres] and Lot 6.5 [6.E, 3.66 acres]) was proposed.

Clogston and other members requested more information, such as the anticipated valuation of the buildings, the number of employees needed, and what the plants will look like. Clogston noted that the lots are on either side of the road, and there is only one sewer hook-up.

Morton Bailey from Lyme Green Heat (Lyme, NH) stated that his company sells and installs automated wood pellet boilers and sells and delivers bulk wood pellets. Bailey is looking to broaden the company’s operations to include manufacturing of the wood pellets—drying wood chips and putting them through a press with heat and pressure to extrude wood pellets. Bailey stated that all wood chips would come from within a 30-mile radius.

Garofalo asked about emissions from the plant, which have to be EPA certified. Bailey noted that the plant will go through the State of NH air permitting process and meet all their regulations. Bjelobrk asked if there are additional chemicals involved in the process. Bailey stated that the premium grade wood pellets have no additives, binders, or chemicals used;

however, the shine that appears on the wood pellets are lignans, which are a natural glue in wood.

Bailey continued to discuss the building size and number of employees required: the milling operation building would be 50 ft by 100 feet; a large, covered area is required to store wood chips; and a 12 foot by 40-foot cylinder/dryer will be located outside. Hauling will be done by Lyme Green—tractor trailers will bring in wood chips in and tractor trailers and small residential trucks will deliver the finished wood pellets. Bailey anticipates 10 to 12 employees to run the plant. Bailey stated the plant will operate initially four days a week, 24 hours a day and then expand hours as needed. Bailey noted that wood chips are available from the local sawmills within the vicinity of Haverhill.

Clogston and Bjelobrck referred to the Business Park covenants, including the FAA height restriction. Bailey stated that Lyme Heat meets all of the covenants, and the engineers believe they can work within the height restrictions. Hatch asked if there was going to be an issue with noise. Bailey noted that there was nothing in the covenants related to sound.

Bailey asked if the proposed offer is acceptable having the two lots with one sewer hook-up fee. Discussion about sewer hook-up continued. Codling stated that the Board might consider Lyme Heat purchasing two lots with one hook-up at \$25,000.00 at purchase and a second hook-up at \$25,000.00 later (if needed). Bailey asked if the Board could provisionally approve the proposed cost for the lots, then he could complete a feasibility study. Codling noted that the plan has to be completed within 6 months and completion of construction after two years of purchase.

Hatch asked what load the operation will have on the sewer system and will there be industrial effluent, which has to be approved by the Woodsville Treatment Plant. Bjelobrck asked about steam stacks. Bailey replied that there will be a single stack within the 35-foot height covenant.

Bailey discussed his personal reasons for providing the wood pellet service to the local area and the importance of this geographic central location in Haverhill. Bailey stated that, for his pellet wood operation, his capital expense is in the order of \$7 million.

Hatch brought up the possible smell and the noise from the pellet processing plant. Bailey will provide decibel levels and other output data from his engineers related to a community-sized plant (10 to 30 thousand tons annually of output). Bailey will attend the next Select Board meeting in person to present more details on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

PENDING OLD BUSINESS

Gibson B&B Abatement Request

Codling noted that the Select Board does not have to make a decision on this topic until July 2021. Clogston requested more financial information, including tax records, income assessment, and asset statements. Garofalo stated that he is against abating the tax because COVID-19 was the reason for the abatement request in 2020 and will be a reason for another request in 2021, as well. Bjelobrck stated that abatement for this business would set a precedent. Discussion ensued. **MOTION #4:** Bjelobrck made the motion asking for more financial information, such as certified tax returns (personal and corporate), assets, poverty level, and proof of inability to pay the tax. Hatch seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

Simonds Road Discussion

Codling produced the map for the members' review of Simonds Rd., Mountain Lakes, showing the roads (dotted lines) that the Town does not maintain.

Steve Robbins stated when he did a site visit on Simonds, he found there was no way a highway truck could turn around near the single house. Clogston went with the plow truck on Simonds Rd. and stated the middle portion is not wide enough for the plow.

Erik Erickson stated that he does have the road completely plowed, which he pays for even though it is a public Class V road, and he measured the maintained versus non-maintained road sections and they are the same width. Garofalo noted that some of the roads in Mountain Lakes are paper roads (for example, Wildwood Rd.). Clogston stated that to take over the road it has be brought up to Town specifications.

Erickson asked the Town to plow to the second house. Codling asked that the Road Agent be consulted about any change in his plowing regimen. Colton Grant stated that he understands from other highway workers that the end of Simonds Rd. has never been maintained. Grant stated he would not recommend trucks going there until the section of road was brought up to specifications. Garofalo noted that many of the Mountain Lakes roads exist on paper only and are not maintained by the Town.

Clogston asked the members if there was a MOTION for the Town to accept the maintenance of the section of Simonds Rd. under discussion. Clogston stated, "Seeing no MOTION, the MOTION fails"

Town Manager's Report/Comments:

Codling reported:

- Fire Department—Codling is preparing a PowerPoint presentation for the public.
- Woodville lawsuit—All documents are filed, and the deposition of witnesses is still going on. The court date may occur in September 2021.
- Dean Memorial Airport—The safety study has been signed off by the Bureau of Aviation and Dubois & King has started their safety study.
- Central Street/Forest Street intersection—Work is being planned for spring of 2021, and Codling has to update the cost estimate and schedule for the NH DOT.
- Blackmount Trail—The appraisal has begun and soon the Town will hav the fair market value.
- Wastewater Treatment and Collection Feasibility Study—Codling will be pursuing that in 2021 and seeks to obtain grants to cover costs.
- Wastewater Collection in Haverhill—Codling noted that meetings will resume.

- Public WiFi—Andy Mosedale (Mosedale Integrated Solutions) is almost at the point of returning to the Select Board with testing results.
- County Road Cleanup—Codling noted that the clean up is complete.
- Grafton County Broadband Committee—Codling stated that the Grafton County Commissioners have approved a budget for the Committee.
- North Haverhill Covered Bridge—Codling stated that an agreement has been signed with Tanner and Assoc. to do a re-evaluation of the structure.
- Administration—Codling announced the hiring of a Financial Administrator Karen Noyes. She is highly recommended by the DRA and has 30 years of experience.
- 2021 Budget and Town Meeting—The annual Town Meeting will be virtual based on HB 1129. The School Board will join the Town for walk-through voting at the middle school on Saturday, March 13, 2021, from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM.
 - Clogston asked to thank the Superintendent of Schools for that change in voting.
- Cemetery proposal—Codling will meet with the Commissioners.
- Tax Collector—The tax bills went out and within the first week, Boutin received \$1.4 million in cash payments.
- Town Clerk—Office was closed the week after Christmas.
- Highway Department—The roads are being plowed and sanded, and the staff are removing trees downed from windstorms.
- Maintenance Department—McKinnon is finishing the two new offices, which are for the Finance Administrator and for Bligh. Also, a new rubber roof was put on the Armory to start the demolition of the interior.
- Police Department—Sullivan has hired a certified police detective.
- Welfare Department—Codling is advertising for a new Welfare Administrator to replace Murtagh who will be working full time in the Police Department.
- Emergency Management—The focus is on vaccinations for first responders.
- Public Health—Hebert is managing mask wearing in businesses and in public areas.
- Parks & Recreation—The ice-skating rink in Woodsville is shut down because of liability concerns. Codling will be attending the Commissioners’ meeting to request reopening the rink.

Robbins and Clogston discussed WiFi from Spectrum and asked Codling to review a second option. Discussion continued.

Finance Officer’s Report/Comments:

- Boucher announced that the new Financial Administrator started today.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fred Garofalo (Conservation Commission): The upcoming meeting is Wednesday night.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Clogston passed out a brochure from Rescue One. Clogston was encouraged by the amount of tax revenue received to date, and he applauded the combined Town and school vote at Town Meeting time.

Comments by Select Board Members:

Garofalo asked about the Town vote. Clogston stated there will be four ballots—two for the Town and Town budget and two for the school and school budget.

Codling stated that she heard back from the North Wentworth Ambulance Service, and Codling will be bringing information to the Board about using North Wentworth as an alternate service.

NONPUBLIC SESSION

MOTION #5: Bjelobrk made the motion to go into **NONPUBLIC SESSION** at 8:58 PM and reconvene in five minutes. Garofalo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

The Select Board came out of NONPUBLIC SESSION and the meeting reconvened at 9:06 PM.

MOTION #6: Bjelobrk made the motion to seal the minutes from the **NONPUBLIC SESSION**. Garofalo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was unanimous.

ADJOURN

MOTION #7: Garofalo made a motion and Bjelobrk seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM.

Roll Call Vote: Steve Robbins (Aye), Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye). The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was ADJOURNED at 9:08 PM.

Transcribed by Joanna Bligh