

**Town of Haverhill  
Select Board  
MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, August 31, 2020, at 6:00 PM  
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building  
65 South Court St.  
Woodsville, NH 03785**

**DRAFT subject to review by the Board**

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

**Town Employees Present:**

**Town Manager:** Brigitte Codling

**Financial Officer:** Jennifer Boucher

**Members of the Public Present:** Alex Nuti-de Biasi (*Journal Opinion*), State Senator Bob Giuda, Martin Comer, Richard Clifford, Katie Huggard

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

**Pledge of Allegiance**

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

- **August 31, 2020**, 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: 1-929-436-2866 (US) or the website <https://ZOOM.US/meeting> (ID# 968 6307 2108; passcode: 089955); 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 802-793-0535 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** (Members attended onsite meeting):

Matthew Bjelobrk (Here), Steve Robbins (Here), Fred Garofalo (Here), Howard Hatch (Here), and Darwin Clogston (Here). All members present.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

## **Agenda Modifications:**

- Clogston added under New Business the Heritage Commission resignations and an appointment to the Conservation Commission.

**MOTION #1:** Bejelobrk made a motion and Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Agenda for the August 31, 2020, meeting as amended.

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

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **Minutes Approval**

**MOTION #2:** Clogston requested a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Select Board meetings of August 17, 2020, the August 24, 2020, (Work Session), and, also, to sign manifests, forms, and other warrants. Garofalo made the motion and Bjelobrk seconded the motion.

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

**Town Employee Appearances:** None

**Scheduled Public Appearances:** Senator Bob Giuda

### **Public Wanting to Address the Board:**

**Martin Comer** stated that he and his wife have operated the Gibson House B&B in Haverhill Corner for 15 years. This summer, maintenance has been going on and they are now closed for the season, which is earlier than usual, and they did no business at all this season. His reason for speaking to the Select Board is a request for abatement of interest and penalties on the property tax owed. Pending our application, Select Board review cannot take place until the second tax bill is received in December or January. The Gibson House's unique situation is as follows: 1) It is a seasonal business, and as owners, they live in the community to conduct business only during the summer and fall seasons, 2) Because of COVID, most people are afraid to travel and there was a State prohibition for overnight lodging until late June, and 3) Visitors contribute to the local economy. Property taxes take up one-third of their revenue and that is the reason for this request for property tax relief. They have applied for State and Federal aid and were reimbursed for less than 20% of revenue losses.

**MOTION #3:** Clogston requested a motion to approve the abatement of interest and penalties for the Gibson House, Comer Family, owners. There was no motion advanced.

Clogston stated that with no motion, the Board will not take action on this issue tonight. Clogston clarified stating that with no motion advanced, the Board will not grant the request.

**Senator Giuda** read a letter that he drafted and signed:

“Dear Richard,

I'd like to join with your friends and family to congratulate you on your 13 years of dedicated service to the Town of Haverhill. Your exceptional service set the standard for all work in the public domain. Responsibilities and duties increased over time because [inaudible] to maintain all Town facilities. I applaud your service [inaudible] and all the lives you have touched.

[Inaudible] as we recognize the countless hours you have given assisting others and the example you set. We wish you the best in all your future endeavors. It was an honor to represent you [inaudible]”

“NH Senate RESOLUTION:

Be it known that the NH Senate extends congratulations to Richard Clifford in the recognition of his 13 years of dedicated and exceptional service to the Town of Haverhill. Be it further known that the Senate extends its heartfelt best wishes as he spends more time with family [inaudible].” Clifford stated that this event was much appreciated.

Senator Giuda discussed State revenues were down about \$10 million for this month. Education trust fund is down about \$20 million. Highway funds are 4% off from budget. There is a lot of pressure to get back to business as usual. Giuda discussed COVID in relation to school openings. Boucher asked the revenue to be received from rooms and meals taxes, and Senator Giuda responded that the Town will receive what is normal revenue.

Clogston asked what Senator Giuda plans if reelected. Senator Giuda answered that he will focus on making the State budget work, and he is concerned about absentee owners of NH homes. Senator Giuda also discuss the Omnibus bill that was vetoed that included the House Bill related to the Woodsville Highway Department.

Codling discussed the huge influx of out-of-state visitors to the NH parks and recreation areas.

**PENDING OLD BUSINESS:** None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Conservation Commission Appointment**

Clogston introduced Katie Huggard, who was requesting to join the Conservation Commission. Caitlin Hubbard stated that she lives on French Pond, calls herself a naturalist and outdoor adventurer, and did a conservation stewardship program in college.

Clogston asked Huggard:

- *What is your basic understanding of the purpose, duties, and responsibilities of the Conservation Commission?* Huggard responded that she is currently on a State-wide conservation commission, and the local commission duties are conserving land, educational programing, and fostering outdoor recreation.
- *Do you have any experience or training that will be useful to the Conservation Commission?* Huggard responded that she has hiked everywhere in Haverhill, has experience in geographic information systems (GIS), and has used the State-wide mapping programs.
- *Are you willing to attend training, which may be provided by the State and/or Town?* Huggard replied, “Sounds terrific.”
- *What is your understanding of a conflict of interest?* Huggard replied that at a recent meeting a gentleman recused himself from voting and discussion because he had a financial interest in the topic.

- *Are you willing to state your conflict should one arise and remove yourself from the table and become part of the audience if that issue was being discussed and voted on?* Huggard replied, “Yes.”
- *What is your view on basing your decisions based solely on the facts alone as prescribed by the New Hampshire statutes and ordinances?* Hubbard replied that she is here to learn, become part of the Commission, and, maybe, the youngest on the team.

**MOTION #4:** Clogston requested a motion to approve Katie Huggard as part of the Conservation Commission. Bjelobrk made the motion and Garofalo seconded the motion.

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

Congratulations, Katie!

### **Heritage Commission Resignations**

Clogston stated that the Commission meet recently after not having met in over a year and voted to expend the amount of money in the Heritage account to the General Fund.

### **Letters of resignation by Mona Sanville and Sandi Pierce**

**MOTION #4:** Clogston requested a motion to approve the Heritage Commission resignation letters from Mona Sanville and Sandi Pierce. Bjelobrk made the motion and Robbins seconded the motion.

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

Clogston thanked Diane, Mona, Sandi, Jennifer, and Sherri who pitched in and made the Heritage Commission meeting possible. He appreciates their help.

### **Aviation AIP Grant Approval**

Codling explained that the AIP grant is for a safety and feasibility study that was approved at Town Meeting of up to \$230,000 (with no Town match) for Dubois & King to collect data on airport safety.

**MOTION #5:** Clogston requested a motion to accept the up to \$82,000 in funding from the Aviation AIP Grant and give the Chair (as Sponsor) authorization to sign for the Board. Robbins made the motion and Garofalo seconded the motion.

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

### **Election CARES ACT Grant Approval**

Boucher stated that there was a conflict with deadline dates for the grant submission. Funded through the CARES ACT, this grant looks at absentee ballots from 2016 vs absentee ballots in both elections in 2020. The State calculates an arbitrary value related to the absentee ballots for reimbursement funding.

**MOTION #6:** Clogston requested a motion to accept the funding related to the Election CARES ACT grant up to \$8,712.24 and authorize the Select Board Chair to sign the document. Bjelobrk

made the motion and Garofalo seconded the motion.

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

### **Tax Auction Saturday, September 26, 2020**

Boucher stated that the list is in process, but there are about 37 properties, which will be posted on the Town's website with additional information about the auction process. The auction will be held at 2 PM at the James R. Morrill Building.

Clogston noted that the Tax Collector will send to the Select Board dates for reviewing unpaid tax properties.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **Black Mountain Trail**

The Town has to get back to George Sansoucy for trail appraisal.

#### **County Road Work**

The work on County Road needs to be scheduled.

#### **Sewage System**

Codling had communications with Kevin Shelton about the sewer system and lines.

#### **Head of Maintenance Hired**

Codling hired Jim McKinnon as head of maintenance, and he has lots of skills and experience.

#### **Deputy Town Clerk**

Brittany Grant was hired and started a few weeks ago.

### **FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT**

Boucher reported that she received from the Town's assessor a permission application of abatement from Joseph Martel for a damaged building from unintended fire or natural disaster. The assessor has viewed this property, and his recommendation is as follows:

"Upon review information supply and [inaudible] section of the subject's property on July 16, 2020, I recommend no 2019 abatement proration. The application was not filed by March 1, 2020, or within 60 days of the event. The event took place on the 2019 tax year. The current year value should be zero as the building was a complete loss as of 4-1-2020, and allow a proration, if necessary." Boucher stated that the assessor is recommending that the Select Board deny this application.

**MOTION #7:** Clogston made the motion to accept the recommendation of the Town's assessor to deny the application from Joseph Martel for abatement. Garofalo seconded the motion. Hatch abstains from the vote as an abutter.

**Roll Call Vote:** Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye), Howard Hatch (Abstain), and Darwin Clogston (Aye). The vote was four in favor, one abstained. The Motion passed.

### **MS-1 Form for Assessed Values**

Boucher noted that this is due September 1, and that she has filed for an extension. By the next Select Board meeting, Boucher will have the form complete for signatures.

### **Fire Department Committee SURVEY**

Boucher announced that a survey is being distributed to the community related to the information gathering by the Fire Department Committee.

### **COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Conservation Commission:** Garofalo stated that the committee met, and they are working on student conservation degree scholarship grants. The Commission members would like to change the scholarship amount to \$1000/recipient.

**Planning & Zoning Board:** Hatch stated that things are at a standstill and not moving forward.

**Parks & Recreation:** Robbins stated there was no meeting this week.

**Airport Zoning:** Bjelobrk stated that there was no meeting this week. Clogston asked about the card reader. Discussion ensued. Codling stated that the card reader was voted down at the Town Meeting, therefore, it would only be by donation that a card reader would be installed this year.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Clogston stated at the last meeting the Board granted a waiver for rent to the North Country Health consortium for their flu vaccination clinic October 10, 2020. The Board asked for a proposal document, which they sent.

Clogston read a letter from regarding painting for a donation.

There was also a letter from the Interim Director at Court Street Arts, Philip Coutu, stating that they will extend benefits to December 2021 for supporters who have renewed or donated this year.

### **COMMENTS OF SELECT BOARD MEMBERS**

Garofalo addressed a tax levy for cutting down lumber in Mountain Lakes and noted that 30% of trees must remain on a lot per a precinct ordinance, but in many cases, there is no road access. Discussion ensued.

Hatch discussed the airport insurance bill stating that coverage was declined. Boucher will follow up. Hatch also noted that roadside mowing needs to be more aggressive.

Clogston confirmed upcoming election coverage by the Select Board.

## **NONPUBLIC SESSION – RSA 91-A:3, 11 (a)**

**MOTION #8:** Bjelobrk made the motion to ADJOURN the Public Session and go into Nonpublic Session at 7:43 PM. Robbins seconded the motion.

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

The Select Board entered non-public session at 7:50 PM

Discussion ensued in non-public session

The Select Board came out of non-public session at 9:03 PM

## **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

**MOTION #9:** Matt made a motion to seal the minutes because it would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of the Select Board, Fred seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Steve Robbins (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Ney), Howard Hatch (Aye), and Darwin Clogston (Aye). The Motion passed by majority vote.

**MOTION #10:** Matt made a motion to continue discussions about the Town Manager's contract. Darwin seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Steve Robbins (Ney), Fred Garofalo (Ney), Howard Hatch (Aye), and Darwin Clogston (Aye). The Motion passed by majority vote.

**Motion #11:** Fred made a motion to ADJOURN the Public Meeting. Matt Seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:**

*Transcribed by Joanna Bligh*