

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board Meeting
MINUTES
Monday, November 21, 2022, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
Or on ZOOM**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fred Garofalo called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

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

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager (TM): Brigitte Codling (excused)
Assistant Town Manager (ATM): Jennifer Boucher

Members of the Public Present

In Person:

Vickie Wyman
Howard Hatch
Darwin Clogston
Don Kimball

Ed Ballam
Regis Roy
Gary Hebert
Christina Hebert

Online:

Joanne Young
Mike Lavoie
Guy Mitchell
Mary Brooks
Delcia Vinnacombe
Robert Maccini
Lorraine Prescott

Ron DeRosia
Jake Cochran
Tom Mangels
Joe Longacre
Janice Dube
Tim Robie

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION #1: Williams made the motion and Chair Garofalo seconded the motion to approve the Agenda as amended.

- Chair Garofalo added a facility waiver request under New Business.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the previous meetings

MOTION #2: Williams made the motion to approve the Minutes from the **November 7, 2022**, meeting as written. Chair Garofalo seconded the motion.

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

SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

Gary Hebert to discuss the election, ballot counting, the advisory budget committee volunteers, and voting machines

- Hebert reported on the primary and general election processes in Haverhill and thanked the Select Board, the pro tem officials, the Town Clerk, and especially the 41 election volunteers who were the counters. Hebert noted that the primary had 19 counters, and the general election had 18, and Hebert offered the stated reasons why more volunteers could not attend – some are on many boards in the Town and cannot volunteer any more of their time, but most important was that some volunteers at the last election were reported to the NH Secretary of State for investigation. Hebert noted that some counters were verbally abused and physically touched by the election observers during their vote count process. Hebert continued that the few remaining volunteer counters had to stay longer to complete the vote count – the primary 650-ballot count was completed at 1:00 AM, and the general election with a 1650-ballot count was completed at 3:15 AM. Hebert recommended that for speed, accuracy, and efficiency that the Town purchase voting machines. Discussion continued about costs and the use and maintenance of the voting machines.
- ATM Boucher noted that the 2023 Budget has a voting machine as a line item, which will go to the Select Board and the Budget Committee.
- Graham noted that Hebert had the Board's support.
- Hebert spoke about the Budget Advisory Committee of which he is chair.

TOWN EMPLOYEE APPEARANCES: None.

PUBLIC WANTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD: None.

PENDING (OLD) BUSINESS:

Discuss Mike Graham's Request to Reconsider Sending a Letter to the NH Department of Revenue Administration (DRA)

Graham asked the Board if another letter with different wording would be agreeable to most of the Board. Chair Garofalo noted that there are reasons, such as representing all of Haverhill and having the lawsuit in Superior Court, not to send a letter to the DRA. Vice Chair Robbins noted

that the letter shows the Board supports the Town Meeting process and the voters. Knapp asked about the time frame for setting the tax rate, and ATM Boucher stated that the tax rate will be set in the next few weeks. Discussion continued.

ATM Boucher stated that the Administration will go through the process of setting the tax rate, then the Select Board can determine when the tax bills are sent out. Chair Garofalo discussed that if the tax bills are not sent out, the Town will have to take out loans for operating expenses.

Status Update of the Town's Tax Rate

Chair Garofalo opened the discussion of the tax rate and asked why setting the tax rate is so late. ATM Boucher discussed the completion of the 2021 audit, part of which is used to set the tax rate, and she noted that the forms will be uploaded to the DRA portal by the end of this week, and the tax rate will be set.

ATM Boucher discussed the setting of the tax rate versus the due date of tax bills, and how those dates varied in past years. ATM Boucher explained to the Board the use of the DRA's MS-535 form, which reports the financial position of the Town at year end.

The Board members discussed the lateness of the Towns audits, the lack of staffing, and the monthly reconciling of accounts. ATM Boucher discussed the amount of time it takes to reconcile the Town's accounts, and it is done by Karen Noyes who works part time and has other duties, including the recent NH Department of Labor Safety audit.

Comments From Voters on Election Day

Chair Garofalo discussed the comments that were made by voters directly to him on Election Day, as follows:

- *Inability to hear the members and, especially, the audience during Select Board meetings.* Chair Garofalo noted that the audience members will have to have a microphone at a podium. Hebert noted that he often listens to the meeting on Zoom and cannot hear Administration and suggested that there be two additional microphones – for the audience and for Administration.
- *Accountability of extra pay.* Chair Garofalo noted that the Town Manager's extra pay was a vacation payoff. Williams noted that part of the personnel file is confidential, but how the vacation time was accrued was requested.
- *The public should not speak during the entire meeting unless under the Agenda item of Public Wanting to Address the Board.* Chair Garofalo noted that he researched the Select Board meeting procedures, and discovered the Board can run their meetings as they wish.
- Chair Garofalo noted that any correspondence not delivered in a timely fashion, such as on the afternoon before the Select Board meeting, will not be read by the Board until adequate time is allowed for review.

Facility Waiver Request / Life Transitions Services

Chair Garofalo reported that Life Transitions Services requested usage of 1-hour per day for Tuesdays and Thursdays, December 1 to February 17, for the James R. Morrill Building with full waiver of costs. ATM Boucher noted that the cost would be \$50.00/day for the gymnasium. Knapp stated that the group is a for-profit organization. The Board suggested that more information from the group is needed. ATM Boucher suggested that a representative of the organization be present. The waiver is tabled until the next meeting.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: None.

ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

ATM Boucher addressed the following in her Report:

- Finance Department.

Setting the tax rate and the audit has been discussed.

- HB1221

A one-time payment from the State equal to 7.5% of the NH Retirement System employer contributions for teachers (Group 1) and police and firefighters for FY 2023 of \$7,299.00 will be received.

- CRSSA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations) Grant

This grant has been approved by the Governor and the Governor's Council, and the Town received the \$9,000.00 award last week.

- ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) Airport Grant

This grant is in process, which totals \$22,000.00.

- Airport Pavement Maintenance Grant

This grant is in process.

- Northern Borders Grant

This grant was approved for \$1M for broadband implementation in Haverhill. The grant agreement will come before the Board for review.

Chair Garofalo asked about the companies who responded to the Town's RFP, and ATM Boucher replied that two companies have responded, and the Broadband Committee will make recommendations to the Select Board for their approval.

- Assessing Department

The Town has awarded the assessing contract to KRT Appraisal (Haverhill, MA), and meetings will begin soon.

- 2022 Auction of Deeded Properties

Four tax deeded properties will be auctioned on Saturday, December 10, 2022, by JSJ Auctions (<https://jsjauctions.com/>).

- 2023 Auction of Deeded Properties

Thirty-four parcels are identified for auction in early 2023.

- Former Horne Property

The Town's Maintenance Director has contracted the removal of the partially downed tree.

- Planning Board

Upcoming on Tuesday, November 22, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on an application for a lot line adjustment and subdivisions. Preliminary reviews of two additional land-use applications are on the Agenda. Haverhill's Flood Plain Ordinance will be discussed, which goes to a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 6:00 PM.

- Zoning Board of Adjustment

There are no active applications for the Zoning Board.

- Tax Department

Nine properties have been approved for tax payments of \$43,661.82 through the NH Housing Assistance Fund. Reminder notices were sent to those property owners who had first issue tax bills outstanding, and \$60,679.11 was brought in.

Vice Chair Robbins asked about the tax deeding for properties who have paid installments. ATM Boucher noted that the Administration will look at all past and current payment arrangements.

- Apparel Impact

Apparel bins for used clothing have been ordered and will be placed outside of the Morrill Building the week after Thanksgiving.

- NH Municipal Association Conference

TM Codling and ATM Boucher attended the conference in Manchester last week.

COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chair Garofalo (Conservation Commission): Chair Garofalo had no report on the Conservation Commission.

Kevin Knapp (Planning Board): Knapp noted that the Planning Board meeting will be held tomorrow night.

Steve Robbins (Parks & Recreation Commission): Vice Chair Robbins stated that the Parks & Recreation Commission will be meeting in the first week of December.

Mike Graham (Airport Zoning Commission): Graham stated that he received the AZC DRAFT Ordinance for review.

Katie Williams (Zoning Board; Woodsville Advisory Committee): Williams noted that the Zoning Board and the Woodsville Ambulance Advisory Committee have not met.

CORRESPONDENCE:

2020 Town Financial Audits

ATM Boucher noted that the Board cannot discuss the audit letters publicly.

MOTION #3: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion to add to the Agenda a Non-Public Session and [no second].

The Motion died.

