

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board Meeting
MINUTES
Monday, February 28, 2022, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
Or on ZOOM**

Select Board Attendance: Steve Robbins (Here), Howard Hatch (Here), Mike Graham (online; late), Matthew Bjelobrk (Here), Fred Garofalo (Here). A quorum was met.

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager (TM): Brigitte Codling

Assistant Town Manager (ATM): Jennifer Boucher

Financial Administrator (FA): Karen Noyes

NONPUBLIC MEETING

MOTION #1: Bjelobrk made the motion and Robbins seconded the motion to enter into a Nonpublic Session at 5:18 PM according to RSA 91-A, 5:j, Consideration of confidential records that are exempt from disclosure under RSA 91-A;5,IV, but only when the consideration is taking place in the context of a proceeding under RSA 541 (appeals from state board decisions) or under RSA 541-A (the Administrative Procedure Act).

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

The Select Board came out of Nonpublic Session at 5:58 PM.

The PUBLIC MEETING opened at 6:00 PM.

MOTION #2: Bjelobrk made the motion and Robbins seconded the motion to seal the minutes of the Nonpublic Session.

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

Members of the Public Present:

In Person

Joe and Margo Longacre

Darwin Clogston

Kevin Knapp

Paul Kidder

Kevin Shelton

Steve Wheeler

Susan McQueeney

Sandy Fortier

Wendy Kelley

Tammy Fortier

Tin Hebert

Regis Roy

Kimberly Bienvenue
Thomas Mayo
Phil Blanchard
Shawn Bigelow

Preston Hatch
Kristin May
Josh Aldrich

Online

Mike Lavoie
Dorothy Long
Joanne Young
Mike Bonanno
Katie Williams
Gary Scruton
Meg Trogolo (*Journal Opinion*)
Carol Norcross

Bob Long
Tom Mangels
Gary Hebert
K. Fortier
Don Vaillancourt
Tammy Webb (CPA, Audit Manager,
Vachon Clukay & Company)

AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION #3: Bjelobrk made the motion and Garofalo seconded the motion to approve the Agenda as written.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes of the previous meetings:

MOTION #4: Bjelobrk made the motion and Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Minutes from **February 14, 2022**, as written.

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

SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

Fortier Family / Annual Report 2021 Dedication

Chair Garofalo noted that the Board is presenting the Fortier Family with a signed document and flowers. Robbins read the Annual Report 2021 Dedication to Wayne H. Fortier.

Susan McQueeney / Annual Report 2021 Cover

Chair Garofalo stated that the Annual Report 2021 cover shows Joe McQueeney photographing the fire service activities, and Chair Garofalo gifted Susan McQueeney flowers on behalf of the Board.

Ron Willoughby / Notice of Current Use Assessment

Willoughby stated that he sold about two-thirds of his land, and he is still being taxed for the entire property before the sale. ATM Boucher replied that [garbled]. Hatch discussed the property and asked if the Assessor was in agreement. ATM Boucher confirmed that he was.

MOTION #5: Hatch made the motion and Chair Garofalo seconded the motion to approve the

Assessor's statement relating to Willoughby's property.

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

TOWN EMPLOYEE APPEARANCES:

Christina Hebert, Town Clerk / Elections and Town Meeting Preparations

Chair Garofalo stated that six warrant articles should be on the ballot with three at the beginning and two after the meeting.

Regis Roy stated that warrants over \$100,000 have to be voted on first. TM Codling noted that there will be three ballot boxes, and perhaps more are needed. Discussion continued. The Board and Town Administration discussed the timing of the warrant voting.

Darwin Clogston asked about questions for the Moderator, and it was suggested that Clogston contact the Deputy Moderator Ed Ballam. Robbins offered to forward Clogston's questions to the Moderator.

PUBLIC WANTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

- [Unknown speaker] commented that the summary judgement was in favor of Woodsville and the Town has appealed twice. [Speaker] stated that the Town has not been forthcoming with the figures. Discussion continued about Workers' Compensation for the Highway Department staff, communication between attorneys, the partial summary judgement, notices to the public, and the lack of a monetary award. Bjelobrk noted that to discuss what is under litigation is "ill advised." Discussion resumed. Hatch spoke about how the Commissioners and the Select Board should work together.
- Discussion continued relating to the Woodsville vs. Town of Haverhill lawsuit with many offering opinions. TM Codling was asked by the Board to schedule a special meeting with the Town's attorney before elections.
- Regis Roy noted that the voting time for election day March 8 is 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

PENDING OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Public Statement Endorsement

TM Codling addressed the document titled "Public Statement: Woodsville vs. Town of Haverhill," which was coauthored and edited by four of the Town's attorneys, and was submitted to the Board for approval because the Town has received so many requests for information about the lawsuit.

MOTION #6: Bjelobrk made the motion and Chair Garofalo seconded the motion to endorse "Public Statement: Woodsville vs. Town of Haverhill."

Roll Call Vote: Steve Robbins (No), Howard Hatch (Aye), Matthew Bjelobrk (Aye), Mike Graham (No), Fred Garofalo (Aye). The motion passed with three Ayes and two Nays (3-2).

Graham asked that his typed name be removed from the document. TM Codling and Chair Garofalo noted that it is an endorsement by the Select Board by majority vote.

Select Board / School Board Collaboration Discussion

Chair Garofalo and Robbins recommended that this topic be tabled until after the Town vote. TM Codling noted that the School Board asked to have meetings on different nights and to collaborate more.

MOTION #7: Bjelobrk made the motion and Robbins seconded the motion to table the discussion about the School Board until after Town Meeting.

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

Review of 2019 Town Audit Report

Tammy Webb, Audit Manager, Vachon Clukay & Company, has been the lead auditor on the Town's 2019 audit, which is now complete. Webb stated that the report has been submitted for internal review. Webb addressed the following from an internal control letter:

- A material weakness related to the improper maintenance of the general ledger in a timely manner.

Webb stated that from the governance letter issued to the Board, she identified the following issues:

- Some of the Governmental Accounting Standard Board (GASB) 4 financial statements were different than previously presented, including the activity of the Capital Reserve Funds; the school, county, and precinct tax remittances; the motor vehicle collections and submissions, which are now included within the financial statements.

Webb identified the material entries that needed to be recorded in the audit process, as follows:

- The fund balance needed to be restored, the allowance for uncollected taxes was increased by \$100,000, revenue included from 2018 was reversed, a disbursement was not recorded, and a tax receipt was recorded twice. A payable was included in 2019, which needed to be reversed.

Webb stated that because of the delay in reconciling the 2019 cash balance and general ledger, there is a potential for unidentified missing monies. Webb stated that nothing was found, but the potential exists.

TM Codling noted that there were no violations of Municipal Finance law or any other significant problems found, which was confirmed by Webb. Webb stated that the general fund and the special revenue funds will have an "unmodified opinion" of compliance. Webb noted that with FA Noyes' assistance, the Town was able to complete the NH Department of Labor and the financial audits, and Webb continued that as soon as FA Noyes prepares 2020 and 2021 figures, those audits will be scheduled.

Graham and the rest of the Board and staff thanked Auditor Webb for her work.

Town Manager's Report/Comments:

- Available at: https://www.haverhill-nh.com/vertical/sites/%7B7B636F77-2058-47A7-A817-81AAD9EE8E62%7D/uploads/Town_Manager_Report_2-28-2022.pdf

Garofalo noted that the Town Manager's Report should come to the Select Board before publication. Highlights from the Town Manager's Report are as follows:

- **2019 Town Audit:** Auditing of the Town’s 2019 financial records was delayed for a variety of reasons; the delay was initially attributable to a lack of staff in the Town Administration office, changes in business processes, changes in the chart of accounts, and unsustainable workloads. However, the delay was further perpetuated by the hiring and training of new staff and the inevitable mistakes that people make when they are new. This all made reconciliation of 2019 more complicated and cumbersome, but the audit was then further delayed due to an unanticipated safety audit, an unanticipated payroll audit, COVID outages, office closures, COVID illnesses, and quarantines throughout 2020 and into early 2021. We acknowledge and understand the delay has caused concern, and rightfully so. The Town has always achieved its audit responsibilities, and we are happy to have this audit behind us. Information for the 2020 audit has already begun to be transmitted to the audit firm and we are assured that the 2020 and 2021 audits will go much quicker. We appreciate the concern and continue to appreciate the understanding and patience residents have offered during this unprecedented time. We are committed to making sure the Town’s audits are timely moving forward.
- **Tax Collector Audit:** The Town is involved at this time in a Tax Collection audit. This type of audit is required when a tax collector leaves the position and before a new tax collector can officially take on the role. The audit is performed on records dated between the date of the last tax warrant and the date the tax collector left the post. This audit must be performed before a new tax warrant can be prepared and signed, which allows the new tax collector to begin formally collecting taxes and entering them into the tax system. This type of unexpected work defers efforts by the Financial Administrator to achieve tasks necessary for the Town’s regular audits.
- **Town Meeting Day 2022:** With COVID subsiding in NH and the USA, Haverhill is able to hold Town Meeting Day in the traditional manner this year. Voting for elected officials will take place on **Tuesday, March 8 from 8 AM to 6 PM** at the James R, Morrill Building. The General / Deliberative Session will take place on **March 12 from 9 AM to 12:00 PM** at the Cooperative Middle School. There are thirty-three (33) Warrant Articles that will be discussed and voted upon at the deliberative session. It is important to note that Warrant Articles 27 to 32 will be voted upon by paper ballot during the deliberative session.
- **North Haverhill Cross Walks:** The Town has sent its formal request for approval to install five new pedestrian crossings along Route 10 in North Haverhill Village. The sidewalks will need to be ADA accessible, pedestrian signs, and cross walk markings would need to be installed, and possibly street lighting. The locations have tentatively been identified, along Route 10 in North Haverhill. The installation of one cross walk (depending upon elements needed at the location) will range from \$5,000 - \$15,000 each. We are working to get NH DOT approval and design requirements before spring.
- **Mailbox Relocation Requests:** After concerns were raised about the safety of residents due to the location of their mailboxes along Route 10 in North Haverhill, the Town submitted a request asking for permission from the USPS to work with twenty-four (24) homeowners to relocate their mailboxes to the side of the street their homes sit upon.

The Federal United States Postal Service has yet to act on this request. I am coordinating with Janeen Shaheen's office, and they have asked for the Town to poll residents along Route 10 to ensure they want their mailboxes moved prior to filing a formal request through Janeen Shaheen's office for assistance. We will be working on this again after Town Meeting.

- **Vertex Cell Tower Permit:** The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment have been working on a request by Vertex for approval of a building permit, and variances for the permit, to build a cellular tower on Teepee Lane. The effort by both boards is on-going. Interested parties should reach out to either Gary Hebert, Chair of the Planning Board, or Michael Bonanno, Chair of the ZBA, or Jennifer Boucher, Assistant Town Manager. The Planning and Zoning Boards will be working to update the Town's Personal Wireless Facilities Ordinance throughout 2022, as it is 20 years old and needs to be made current.
- **Transcription Assistance:** The Town has retained the occasional help of Zelda Brooks to aid in the transcription of meeting minutes whenever Joanna Bligh finds it difficult to get the minutes completed due to either the number of meetings a week or when she is consumed with Planning and Zoning Boards public hearing preparations.
- **Grafton County Broadband project:** Grafton County Broadband project: The Grafton County Broadband Committee (GCBC) is successfully moving forward with the county's "middle-mile" broadband project. The middle-mile project will bring highspeed broadband into every community within Grafton County. Once the new fiber lines have been established, local broadband committees will be responsible for ushering in local "last-mile" projects to connect homes to the middle-mile lines. The GCBC has been partnering with EX2, who has been retained by the County to design and install the middle-mile fiber but also to design and produce an estimate for every Town's last-mile project. This service by EX2 for local communities will be paid for as part of the County project, not the local municipalities. The GCBC is currently waiting a final decision by NTIA on the 26-million-dollar grant application submitted last fall. This grant would fully fund the middle-mile project; however, if that grant is not awarded, or not awarded in full, the County and GCBC have alternative funding plans in place.
- **Haverhill Broadband Committee:** The Haverhill Broadband Committee was organized to help the Town prepare for a local buildout of the last mile of fiber intended to provide high speed internet to households throughout Haverhill. They have started meeting and planning. The committee has agreed to follow two tracks, one to work in coordination with the GCBC on a local last-mile project and another to work on influencing Internet Service Providers to work on expansion and improvement of their services here in Haverhill.

Information related to both the Grafton County and the Haverhill Broadband Committees, and their work can be found on the Town's website at:

https://www.haverhill-nh.com/index.asp?SEC=5AC42E47-9D3F-45CF-9E6E7F3A313651A8&Type=B_BASIC

- **Haverhill Public WiFi Network:** In September of 2021, the Town of Haverhill deployed a public WiFi network along parts of Central Street in the Village of Woodsville. Currently there are three (3) hosts; Vickie Wyman of The Atlantic Real Estate Network; Robert Welsh of Welsh Reality Apartments; and Mike & Brie Choate of Mike's Garage in Woodsville Village. We are still seeking a few more hosts along Central Street to complete a contiguous network. With the network active we have been tracking usage and we are pleased to report that we are still seeing robust use of the network. Unique users per day: 45. The network is still looking for hosts.
- **Public Safety Facility:** Through 2022, the Town will be evaluating facilities that currently house the Fire and Police Departments to ensure they are meeting the operational needs of those departments. Included in this evaluation will be a review of spatial needs for things such as, equipment, vehicles, locker rooms, showers, gear extractors, storage, workstations, and meeting and training spaces. This project will also include a review of grant funding opportunities and planning for recommended changes. Lorie Aldrich and TM Codling will be attending a Public Safety Facilities Planning Seminar this week. Aldrich will be attending the Police Facilities track, and TM Codling will be attending the Fire Facility track during this seminar.
- **Wastewater Collection in North Haverhill and Treatment in Woodsville:** Through 2022, we will continue our evaluation of the Town's municipal wastewater system. This evaluation will include all associated processes, the written agreement the Town has with the Woodsville District, sewage being collected and pumped to the Woodsville treatment facility, sewer user fees, sewer hook-up agreements, actual sewer hook-ups, permitting, sewer discharge allocations, Woodsville's sewer plant capacity limits, developing a new Sewer Ordinance for the out-of-district portion of the system, and the probable need for expanding or the development of a new municipal sewage treatment facility within the Town of Haverhill. This work is necessary so that the Town can make sure it is following all rules, regulations, and laws pertaining to sewer systems; to ensure businesses and residents have a clear process to follow to hook up to the Town's sewer line; and to open the door to healthy economic development within the Town of Haverhill.
- **Central / Forest Intersection:** After Town Meeting, the Town will refocus its efforts to prepare for work at the Central Street / Forest Street Intersection. In 2021, the NHDOT verbally approved the Town's excavation permit for Phase One (1) of this project. Phase One (1) is to remove the wide turning lane in front of McDonalds in an effort to narrow the intersection and eliminate cross-traffic issues. Work will include the removal of pavement, installation of loam and seed. The Town will provide the NHDOT with an updated schedule and estimate for the project, post the necessary bond, and get final approval on the excavation permit. We intend to complete this work in the spring or summer of 2022. Temporary signs to warn motorists of a change in the traffic pattern will also be installed.
- **Blackmount Trail Upgrades:** Through 2022, the Town will be performing upgrades to the section of the Blackmount Trail that runs from North Haverhill to Woodsville. Upgrades will include widening the trail, leveling, and applying a stay mat surface,

installing benches, and if funding allows, installing solar lighting. The Parks & Recreation Department will be working with NCIC to identify, apply for, and hopefully obtain grant funding to offset the cost of this work.

- **Bath-Haverhill Covered Bridge:** In 2022, the Town will be removing the pavement on the approaches to the covered bridge and adding fines and gravel to the approaches to fill the voids that have developed at the abutments and under the approaches. These areas will not be repaved, but rather be covered in a stay mat surface to allow for proper even drainage at the approaches and through the stone abutments. TM Coding noted that walking on the bridge is safe.
- **Department Head Reports:**
 - ***Tax Collector*** – The Town is actively recruiting for a new Tax Collector, Christina Hebert, is serving as the Interim Tax Collector, and Brittany Grant is serving as the Assistant to the Tax Collector. Once a new Tax Collector is hired, Brittany will become the Deputy Tax Collector.
 - ***Dean Memorial Airport*** – The Town has been engaged in scope of work development and project kick-off meetings in preparation for work at the airport this spring and summer to relieve safety obstructions. All project work will be Airport Improvement Program grant funded. The airport has also been awarded \$110,000 in additional grant funding for construction. The Town is looking at the possibility of replacing the old Airport House with a small “arrivals” building at no cost to taxpayers.
 - ***Highway Dept*** – The highway crew has been busy with recent weather events, to include regular plowing, sanding, and salting. Also, due to the extreme temperature changes over the past few weeks, the highway crew has been struggling to keep culverts open, thawing a large number of culverts throughout Town. The crew also has been smoothing ruts and laying gravel to keep dirt roads passable. Please NOTE some roads have been posted already.
 - ***Maintenance Dept*** – The Town is actively working with the Head of Maintenance to recruit a Maintenance Assistant. Interviews are planned for this week. Maintenance has been working on the construction of shelving in the basement of the JRM building as the next step toward fully reviewing, sorting, disposing of, and organizing the extensive volume of records that has been collected and housed in the basement over the many decades.
 - ***Emergency Management*** – Monitoring updates to COVID guidelines and coordinating with the State and others on weather events.
 - ***Parks & Recreation Dept*** – Winterfest was well attended at the Mountain Lakes Lodge. Regular recreation programming is ongoing.
 - ***Welfare Dept*** – Finalizing updates to the Welfare Guidelines, these will be presented to the Select Board for review and approval soon. Also, the department is monitoring, tracking, and managing active cases.

- **Public Health** – Following up on issues reported at a property on Central Street, planning for hazard mitigation and disposal of 42 Railroad Street, and focusing on unlicensed junk yards in Haverhill.
- **Town Fire Department** – There have been a higher number of calls so far this season. The fire service team participated in an “escape system” demonstration. Also, Kaycee Reagan spearheaded an effort to provide free smoke detectors to Haverhill residents paid for through a grant she applied for on behalf of the Town Fire Department.
- **Police Department** – In 2022, the HPD will be focused on the following list of goals:
 1. Updated strategy for working with Haverhill schools.
 2. Numerous grant endeavors.
 3. Change of strategy on motor vehicle and criminal patrol.
 4. Addition of speed and DWI detail patrols.
 5. Addition of 2022 Thanksgiving food collection.
 6. Addition of part-time Animal Control officer.
 7. Addition of two new officers.

Assistant Town Manager’s Report/Comments:

- ATM Boucher reported on the Planning Board’s upcoming rehearing for the Vertex Towers’ site plan for camouflage, and Zoning Board’s March rehearing for the two denied variances.

COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Garofalo (Conservation Commission) – Garofalo stated that he has no new information.

Hatch (Planning Board) – Hatch stated that the Planning Board is in a deadlock and scheduled another meeting.

Robbins (Parks & Recreation Commission) – Robbins noted that the Commission’s meeting is upcoming.

Bjelobrk (Airport Zoning Commission) – Bjelobrk reported that the Commission will meet on March 9.

Bjelobrk (Zoning Board of Adjustment) – Bjelobrk noted that the Zoning Board will be meeting on March 24.

Graham (Fire Department Committee) – Graham noted there were no meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Chair Garofalo read a letter from the Precinct of Haverhill Corner Commissioners thanking the Select Board for the funding for \$5,100 from the Mildred Page Trust to replace the windows and doors at the Haverhill Corner fire department building.

