

**Town of Haverhill**  
**Select Board WORK SESSION minutes**  
**Monday, June 16, 2021, 6:00 PM**  
**R. E. Clifford Memorial Building**  
**65 South Court St. Woodsville, NH 03785**  
**and on ZOOM**

The meeting was **CALLED TO ORDER** at 6:00 PM by Fred Garofalo, Chair.

**Town Employees Present:**

**Town Manager:** Brigitte Codling

**Assistant Town Manager:** Jennifer Boucher

**ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE:** Matthew Bjelobrk (Present), Steve Robbins (Here), Howard Hatch (Here), Mike Graham (Here), Fred Garofalo (Here). A quorum was met.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

**Agenda Modifications**

**MOTION #1:** Bjelobrk made a motion approve the Agenda as amended, and Robbins seconded the motion.

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

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

**AGENDA for the Work Session**

Garofalo discussed the Work Session process stating that the Board will be reaffirming standard operating procedures, Board roles and responsibilities, and Town Manager roles and responsibilities. Garofalo turned over the discussion to Codling.

**Standard Operating Procedures of the Haverhill Select Board**

Codling noted that the Select Board had previously discussed roles and responsibilities of the Select Board, and with new members, it was a good time to go over them again. Codling stated that though the Select Board agreed to roles and responsibilities previously the Town did not have a document memorializing the roles and responsibilities and standard operating procedures of the Select Board, so Codling stated that she developed the documents to memorialize them. She also stated that she had looked at other NH municipalities' similar documents when developing them.

Codling discussed the document, *Standard Operating Procedures of the Haverhill Select Board* ([https://www.haverhill-nh.com/vertical/sites/%7B7B636F77-2058-47A7-A817-81AAD9EE8E62%7D/uploads/Select Board Standard Operating Procedures\(1\).pdf](https://www.haverhill-nh.com/vertical/sites/%7B7B636F77-2058-47A7-A817-81AAD9EE8E62%7D/uploads/Select_Board_Standard_Operating_Procedures(1).pdf)) stating that the document outlines, Obligations of Select Board Members and Meeting Procedures. She explained that the "obligations" focus on being a public servant. Codling continued by providing an overview of the rest of the document, which focuses on Select Board meeting procedures.

Garofalo and Bjelobrk discussed the procedure of voting and decision-making. It was agreed that the Select Board would continue to motion, second, discuss, and vote on any decisions.

Codling noted that Work Sessions allows the Board to coordinate on the development of work products without overwhelming a regular meeting. Boucher noted that in a Work Session the public are not allowed to provide comment. Robbins suggested that saying “no decision can be made” at Work Sessions, prohibits decisions that may be necessary. It was agreed that the Select Board would make decisions when necessary but would hold most decisions until a regular meeting to allow for more of the public to participate and witness the Select Board’s decisions.

Bjelobrk added “... and Vice Chair ...” under item 6 under Meetings of the Board. Bjelobrk noted that the Standard Operating Procedures do not address absences of members of the Board. Codling noted that it remains acceptable for members to attend via Zoom. Codling stated that the Town Manager or a designee will attend all Select Board meetings and arrange for the transcription of minutes. It was agreed that members could attend Select Board meetings via Zoom when needed.

### **Obligations of Select Board Members**

Codling reverted to the list of “obligations”, explaining that the list outlines what it means to be a good public servant. She followed with items on the list related to being supportive of the Town Manager, which the Board supervises. Bjelobrk suggested changes to item 8 under “Obligations of Board Members” relating to acting independently by adding the words “in town affairs”. Bjelobrk noted that members of the Board have no power independently; they must act as an entire Board. Discussion ensued. Bjelobrk suggested combining two items related to the Town Manager, because they were redundant. Robbins voiced concern over the words “Refrain from making statements or promises” and it was agreed to revise the verse to just “Refrain from making promises [to] ... vote on matters that are before the Select Board ...”. Discussion continued. Codling addressed the ex officio role of Board members in Town committees and the accountability of the Board to Town residents.

### **Meeting Procedures**

Graham asked about adding agenda items, and Codling noted that large items should be sent to Garofalo or Codling before the Agenda is set on the Tuesday before the meeting. Otherwise minor items can be added at the beginning of the meeting prior to agenda approval. Discussion continued. Codling discussed the removal of all cell phones from non-public sessions.

### **Select Board Roles, Responsibilities, and Legal Authorities (RSA 41:8)**

The members and Codling discussed the dissemination of documents to the Board. Graham and Garofalo expressed the importance of sharing all documents and emails to Board members. Discussion continued. Hatch discussed knowing more about what is going on in the Town administration and alleged errors in some administration documents. Discussion continued about the Police Chief hours.

Discussion led to the assessment for the Blackmount Trail. Codling stated that \$233,00 was the figure from the appraiser.

Bjelobrk suggested sending out emails to the Board members on some of the activities of the administration. Garofalo suggested that the Town Manager's report be sent to the members, but at the meeting, the Town Manager can just report on the highlights. He requested that a report be submitted for every meeting. Discussion continued. Garofalo offered a process for the Town Manager's report: Codling to send the report out early for the members to read before the meeting, and, at the meeting, Garofalo will ask if there are any questions. Bjelobrk asked to know about any personnel changes. Discussion continued regarding the historical aspects of road maintenance in Haverhill. Graham brought the discussion back to the topic of some Select Board members feeling they are not fully aware of the actions occurring in the Town and suggested more communication about significant events. Garofalo summarized the discussion, then stated that the Select Board did not need to know everything that is going on. Codling explained that she can't always know what different Board members might want to know about, so asked that Board members reach out to her if they have questions about specific things. Discussion continued.

Codling provided the Select Board an update on the financial aspects of the highway grader lease with CAT financial. She asked if the Select Board members had seen the email sent earlier, to which board members all agreed they had. Codling asked if they all agreed with moving forward with the restructured lease agreement with CAT financial, to which they unanimously agreed.

Codling then moved onto the Roles, Responsibilities, and Legal Authorities documents, noting that the Select Board's and Town Manger's RSAs are outlined in the Board's packet. Codling also provided job descriptions for both the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager. Codling stated that all the functions of Town government are directly managed by her or the Assistant Town Manager. Codling explained that she presented the reorganization of the administration offices at the Budget Committee meeting and noted that it was a net zero budgeting change. Codling noted that during the restructuring, a financial officer was hired to concentrate on finances, and it has been important to have that focus. She stated that the changes made to date have proved effective.

Codling invited the Select Board members to come into the office, expressing that the Town offices are open, and they can come to ask questions or ask for more information. Codling explained that due to the volume of emails she receives every day that she does at times miss emails sent to her during the day, so often spends hours at night catching up on emails. Codling stated she does not know how to best get in contact with Board members. Garofalo suggested that Codling have an email address created strictly for the Select Board to use. Robbins stated that his best contact is through texting to his cell phone. Bjelobrk stated that he checks his Town email once a day. Graham stated that he is available by email or phone. Garofalo stated that he is available by email. Hatch said that his office has radio contact with him.

Hatch reiterated his comments that it is the person at the top who has operational responsibility, to which Codling agreed.

Hatch discussed his sewer hook-up, and how he has waited for a response to his requests of the Woodsville Precinct, because he has nothing in writing. Discussion continued. Codling stated that all sewer hook-ups are overseen by the precinct.

Robbins expressed that these Working Session are healthy for the Board, and he is pleased with the accomplishments of the Board in the last few months. Garofalo encouraged the members to read the pre-meeting materials sent in preparation of the next regular Select Board meeting.

**MOTION #2:** Bjelobrck made a motion and Robbins seconded the motion to Adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM.

**Roll Call Vote:** Matthew Bjelobrck (Aye), Howard Hatch (Aye), Mike Graham (Aye), Fred Garofalo (Aye). The motion passed unanimously.

**The meeting ADJOURNED at 7:35 PM.**

*Transcribed by Joanna Bligh*