



**Town of Amherst, NH**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**Barbara Landry Meeting Room**  
**2 Main Street**  
**Monday, February 9, 2015 at 6:30 PM**

**I. Non- Public Session**

Chairman Brew called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Mr. Galinson moved to enter non-public session at 5:30pm pursuant to NH RSA 91-A: 3 II (b). Second by Mr. D'Angelo.

Roll Call: D'Angelo-yes, Brew-yes, Galinson-yes, Grella-yes, Akillian-yes. Vote was unanimous, 5-0.

The Board and Town Administrator Jim O'Mara discussed the hiring of a public employee.

Mr. D'Angelo moved to exit non-public session at 5:50pm. Second by Mr. Akillian. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

The Board exited nonpublic session at 5:51pm.

Chairman Brew stated that in nonpublic session no motions were made and no votes were taken.

**II. Public Session**

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Mike Akillian, Selectmen John D'Angelo, Brad Galinson, and Tom Grella. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance** – Joe Cummings led the pledge.

**IV. Citizen Forum** – No citizens came forward.

**V. Public Hearing – Stop Sign Ordinance**

Pursuant to RSA 41:14-b, Selectman D'Angelo moved to open a second public hearing on erecting a stop sign on Hillside Drive at Broadway that has disappeared. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0.

There was no public input. Selectman D'Angelo moved to close the public hearing. Seconded by Selectman Galinson. Vote 5-0

The Board agreed to adopt the ordinance; however, since not many citizens were in attendance due to inclement weather, the Board will accept public comments on the matter during the Citizen Forum at the Board's meeting of February 23, 2015.

52 **VI. MRI Report -- Fire & EMS**  
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54 Chairman Brew pointed out that one recommendation made by the MRI Report was to merge Fire and  
55 EMS. Selectman D'Angelo moved to merge Fire and EMS and work towards having the re-organization  
56 and a permanent leader in place at the beginning of the new fiscal year, July 1, 2015. Seconded by Vice  
57 Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0  
58

59 Selectman D'Angelo stated that while the internal candidate for the leadership position had strong support,  
60 it would be a disservice to the candidate and to the town to not go through a vetting process. Selectman  
61 D'Angelo also encouraged the internal candidate to apply for the position. Hence, Selectman D'Angelo  
62 moved to advertise the vacancy and make a selection, as soon as feasible, from a pool of the top three or  
63 four applicants. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0  
64

65 Town Administrator Jim O'Mara indicated that a job description will be drafted and presented to the Board  
66 at its next meeting. Vice Chairman Akillian suggested that criteria listed in the job description be weighted.  
67 Vice Chairman Akillian also suggested that decisions on other recommendations made by MRI be  
68 postponed until a department chief is selected. And, most important, that everyone recognize the merger is  
69 one of equals – two co-equal departments.  
70

71  
72 **VII. Town Administrator**  
73

74 **a. DPW – New Hire**  
75

76 Selectman D'Angelo moved to hire Aaron Rochette as a mechanic in the Department of Public  
77 Works. Seconded Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0  
78

79 **b. Use of Town Common Request**  
80

81 Selectman Grella moved to allow use of the Town Common for the Wilkins School Third Grade  
82 History Week to be held on May 22, 2015. Selectman Galinson seconded. Vote 5-0  
83

84 **c. NRPC Energy Facilities Subcommittee Assignment**  
85

86 Administrator O'Mara reported that the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) formed an  
87 Energy Facilities Subcommittee and was seeking someone to represent Amherst on the  
88 subcommittee. NRPC Commissioner, Mike Dell Orfano, has recommended the appointment of  
89 Eric Hahn, a member of Amherst's Planning Board.  
90

91 Selectman D'Angelo moved to appoint Eric Hahn as the Amherst representative on the NRPC  
92 Energy Facilities Subcommittee. Seconded by Selectman Grella. Vote 5-0  
93

94 Administrator O'Mara suggested that Mr. Hahn be reminded to report to and coordinate all public  
95 comments with the Pipeline Task Force so that efforts are well coordinated. Selectman D'Angelo  
96 will discuss expectations with Eric Hahn.  
97

98  
99 **VIII. Pipeline Update**  
100

101 Selectman D'Angelo reported that the Pipeline Task Force (PTF) has met. The Federal Energy Regulatory  
102 Commission (FERC) comment period deadline remains March 18<sup>th</sup> even though state representatives have

103 asked for an extension. The PTF is working up a response to advise that the current proposed route is not a  
104 good one. Chairman Brew asked about the activities of a group of Town Administrators. Administrator  
105 O'Mara stated that nine communities (out of 15) impacted by the proposed pipeline route have come  
106 together via their Administrators to pool resources, discuss the financial and environmental impact and seek  
107 legal counsel, which has proven to be difficult. It seems a number of experts are already under contract  
108 with Kinder-Morgan or otherwise conflicted out.  
109

110 Selectman D'Angelo reported that a Joint Meeting of the Amherst Conservation Commission and the  
111 Merrimack Conservation Commission is expected to be held on Wednesday (February 11<sup>th</sup>). Vice  
112 Chairman Akillian stated that the Governor has indicated that the proposal has to benefit NH. Federal  
113 representatives have signed a joint letter to FERC without taking a position pro or con but recommending  
114 no rushed decisions.  
115

#### 116 IX. **Right to Know Request – None to Report**

#### 117 X. **Old and New Business**

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120 Vice Chairman Akillian stated that the Village Strategic Planning Committee would be divided into four or  
121 five working groups to work with all of the information that has been gathered. The Committee expects to  
122 host a Public Forum in May with a goal to provide a final report of findings and recommendations to the  
123 Board at its meeting of June 8th.  
124  
125

126  
127 Selectman Grella expressed appreciation for the hard work of staff over the last two weeks in dealing with  
128 extreme snowfall which has been made more difficult because of inadequate equipment. DPW Director  
129 Bruce Berry asked that residents mark their fences that have been buried with snow. Selectman D'Angelo  
130 suggested placing the request on the town's website.  
131

132 Chairman Brew noted that the town did not receive the "sidewalk" grant supported by a Warrant Article  
133 that sought to raise \$60,000 for the project. It was too late to remove the Warrant Article prior to the  
134 Deliberative Session where an amendment was passed to raise the full amount of \$328,000 through taxes.  
135

136 After the Deliberative Session, the Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to **not** support the Warrant  
137 Article primarily because, throughout the budget process, many worthy projects were not fully funded, such  
138 as pay increases for EMS staff. Having to raise funds of over a quarter million dollars and adding 21 cents  
139 to an already increased tax rate for this purpose did not seem to be in the best interest of the community.  
140 The Board felt that the sidewalk issue could be studied more thoroughly and the town was not disqualified  
141 from again applying for the grant in the future. Vice Chairman Akillian mentioned that the Ways & Means  
142 Committee also voted against the amendment by a vote of 0-6 with one abstention.  
143

144 Chairman Brew stated that it was always the intent of the Board that if the grant was not forthcoming, the  
145 project would not go forward. At no point was there a suggestion to fund the entire project through  
146 taxation.  
147

148 Administrator O'Mara asked about Board members' overall impressions of the Deliberative Session.  
149 Chairman Brew stated that the booklet prepared by Assistant Torrey Demanche was "genius", and made it  
150 much easier to follow the proceedings. Consensus is that the preparation was excellent and very well done.  
151

#### 152 XI. **Approvals**

153

154                   **a. Accounts Payables**  
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156           Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of  
157           \$236,868.23 dated January 29, 2015, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian.  
158           Vote 5-0  
159  
160           Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of  
161           \$33,959.64 dated January 30, 2015, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian.  
162           Vote 5-0  
163  
164           Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of  
165           \$28,721.46 dated February 6, 2015, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk transfers to the State of NH).  
166           Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0  
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168           Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of  
169           \$83,249.86 dated February 9, 2015, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian.  
170           Vote 5-0  
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172                   **b. Payroll**  
173  
174           Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve one (1) FY15 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$185,909.43  
175           dated February 5, 2015, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0  
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177                   **c. Minutes**  
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179           Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of January 26, 2015.  
180           Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0  
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182           Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of February 4, 2015.  
183           Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0  
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185           **XII. Non-Public Session**  
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187           Selectman Galinson moved to enter non-public session at 7:10 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (a).  
188           Seconded by Selectman Grella. Roll Call: Akillian-yes, Brew-yes, D'Angelo-yes, Galinson-yes, Grella-  
189           yes. Vote was unanimous, 5-0  
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191           The Board and Town Administrator Jim O'Mara discussed the compensation of a public employee.  
192  
193           Mr. D'Angelo moved to exit non-public session at 7:35pm. Second by Mr. Akillian. The vote was  
194           unanimous, 5-0.  
195  
196           The Board exited nonpublic session at 7:35pm.  
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198           Chairman Brew stated that in nonpublic session no motions were made and no votes were taken.  
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200           Mr. D'Angelo moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36pm. Second by Mr. Galinson.  
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202           The meeting ended at 7:36pm  
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204                   **XIII. Adjourn**