



Town of Amherst, NH

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, February 8, 2021 6:30PM

1 **1. Call to Order**

2 Chairman Peter Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

3
4 Attendees by Zoom conference call: Chairman Peter Lyon, Selectman Dwight Brew,
5 Selectman Reed Panasiti, Selectman John D'Angelo [6:41pm], and Selectman Tom
6 Grella.

7 Also present: Town Administrator Dean Shankle and Kristan Patenaude, minute taker

8
9 Other attendees and the public accessed the meeting via Zoom.

10
11 Chairman Lyon explained that, pursuant to the State of Emergency declared by the
12 Governor as a result of the COVID19 pandemic and in accordance with his Emergency
13 Order #12, this meeting is authorized to take place electronically. There is no physical
14 location to observe and listen to this meeting. However, in accordance with the
15 Emergency Order, we are:

16
17 Utilizing Zoom teleconferencing for this meeting. All members of the Board have the
18 ability to communicate during the meeting through this platform and the public has access
19 to contemporaneously listen and if necessary, participate in the meeting by dialing +1 301
20 715 8592 and using a webinar ID of 815-6165-3847 or by using the link contained in the
21 agenda posted at amherstnh.gov.

22
23 Notice of the meeting and means to access it were previously posted in accordance with
24 law. Members of the public that have phoned into the meeting can raise their hand by
25 pressing the *9 on their phone, in order to make it known that they would like to speak to
26 the Board. If anyone has a problem accessing the meeting, please call 603-440-8248 for
27 assistance. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be
28 adjourned and rescheduled.

29
30 All votes will be taken by roll call and for ease, in alphabetical order.
31 Lastly, the meeting is being recorded and will be replayed on ACATV.

32
33 The Board started by taking a roll call vote and stating if they were alone.

34
35 *Roll call vote: Selectman Brew – present; Selectman Grella – present; Selectman Panasiti*
36 *– present; Chairman Lyon – present. All noted themselves as being alone.*

37
38

39 **2. Citizen's Forum - none**

40
41 **3. Scheduled Appointments**

42 **3.1 Vision Revaluation Presentation**

43 Mike Tarello, Vice-President of Appraisals, and Steve Whalen, Project Manager, joined the
44 meeting.

45
46 *Selectman D'Angelo joined the meeting at 6:41pm and announced that he was alone.*

47
48 Mike Tarello stated that the benefits of a revaluation are to correct disproportionate taxation,
49 adjust values for market shifts, capture all new construction, and provide access to all
50 information with computerized property files. He explained that there will be ongoing updates
51 of the revaluation process on the Town website, community TV, and local newspapers.
52 During the informal hearings, notification will be given to taxpayers of new proposed
53 assessments.

54
55 Mike Tarello explained that the company plans to be done with the Town's revaluation in
56 September 2021. Notices will be sent out in mid-July for hearings which will be held in
57 July/August.

58
59 In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Mike Tarello explained that this is a
60 revaluation update, and thus data will be collected from sales and permits. Foundations will be
61 measured for new construction only.

62
63 In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Mike Tarello stated that that one identifier
64 used is the condition of the property (average, good, etc.). The data used in the equation to
65 determine this how the condition of will impact the value of the property is will be available
66 to the public.

67
68 In response to a question from Selectman D'Angelo, Mike Tarello explained that if a property
69 owner wants the assessor to leave, the assessor will leave. The owner has a right to request
70 that. The assessor will perform an exterior review to identify the style and condition of the
71 building. There will also be field reviews done for accuracy; the assessor will stay in the
72 vehicle at that time.

73
74 In response to a question from Selectman Grella, Mike Tarello stated that this project will take
75 about 9 months to complete.

76
77 In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Mike Tarello explained that is company's
78 goal is looking at the equity within the market values. The company tries to keep values
79 similar within neighborhoods. There are certain limitations to this process during COVID-19,
80 as no properties will be entered at this time. There will be public relations items explaining to
81 the public the process and that all assessors will have proper identification.

82
83 Selectman Panasiti suggested that Vision let the public know that no phone calls will be made
84 to schedule appointments, for clarity and safety.

86 In response to a question from Chairman Lyon, Mike Tarello stated that all assessor vehicles
87 are registered with the Amherst Police Department.

88
89 In response to a question from Chairman Lyon, Mike Tarello stated that there is no penalty to
90 a homeowner who turns an assessor away. The assessor will still verify whatever information
91 s/he can from the street.

92
93 Chairman Lyon explained that the whole purpose of this process is to collect accurate
94 information and to correct disproportionate taxation from occurring. The results of this
95 revaluation do not lead to the Town collecting more taxes from residents overall. Per RSA 75,
96 every town in the state must do a revaluation every five years.

97
98 Town Administrator Shankle explained that a video detailing the process for this revaluation
99 will be presented on the Amherst Vimeo channel.

100 101 **3.2 Bike/Ped Committee: TAP Grant**

102 Chris Buchanan, Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Committee
103 members, George Bower, and Rick Katzenberg, joined the meeting.

104
105 Chris Buchanan explained that the proposed Boston Post Road sidepath project has an
106 estimated cost of \$225,000. The Multimodal Facility Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) Warrant
107 Article seeks to raise 1/3 of the cost for this project. The pursuit of a federal grant could offer
108 the opportunity for an 80% cost savings but, as it currently stands, this project budget is too
109 small to be eligible for 2021 grant opportunities.

110
111 Chris Buchanan explained that the TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Grant for
112 multimodal infrastructure is administered by NH DOT usually every other year. This year the
113 minimum for projects applied for under the grant is \$400,000, and the maximum is \$1.25M.
114 This grant is an 80/20 match. The grant must be for a single project, but this project can be
115 broken into separate segments.

116
117 Chris Buchanan stated that he believes the Town has a unique opportunity to achieve the TAP
118 minimum project cost by including multimodal enhancements for ~~opportunity through this~~
119 ~~grant to redefine~~ certain roads that are already budgeted for construction ~~as full multimodal~~
120 ~~facilities~~. This will create the opportunity to expand the multimodal facilities in Town while
121 incorporating the already scheduled road construction into the scope of the TAP application.
122 This is only possible as certain roads which are scheduled for construction are eligible for
123 shared street designs, thus creating the opportunity to create significant multimodal upgrades
124 and supplement scheduled road construction with TAP funds.

125
126 Chris Buchanan noted that some elements of the 2001-proposed the idea for an “Amherst
127 Pedestrian/Bikeway” ~~was were~~ originally presented back in 1976. ~~Amherst hired CLD~~
128 ~~Engineering to complete an engineering design of this idea in 2001.~~ The idea proposes to
129 create two multimodal districts in Town: the Village district and the Souhegan High
130 School/Amherst Middle School campus district, and to connect these two districts via a
131 multimodal path. The proposed Boston Post Road sidepath project is located entirely within
132 this project and many of the included roads are already scheduled for road construction.

Chris Buchanan explained that, using data from 2019, the Boston Post Road sidepath is estimated to cost \$224,979, too little for the TAP minimum cost. By including sections from the The ~~entire~~ Amherst Pedestrian/Bikeway project, the is estimated ~~to~~ cost would be \$961,700. As this would then be eligible for grant funding, federal funds from the TAP grant would allot an estimated \$769,360 (80%) towards the Pedestrian/Bikeway project, leaving the Town match of \$192,340.

He noted that the Boston Post Road sidepath project is approximately 5,600 linear feet, for a cost of \$54.00/linear foot. The Pedestrian Bikeway project, on the other hand, is approximately 13,000 linear feet, for a cost of \$65.15/linear foot. This would actually be reduced to -\$0.83/linear foot, due to the federal grant offset.

Chris Buchanan explained that the next step for the TAP grant is for the Town to submit a letter of interest, which does not commit it to anything further. The Board of Selectmen would then decide if it is interested in moving forward with submitting an application, probably sometime between April and September.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Chris Buchanan stated that the roads between the Village and Jones Road are not connected contiguously, but, if existing facilities are incorporated into the plan, there is the option to complete some on-street multimodal solutions.

Chris Buchanan explained that this presentation shows the maximum scope that this project could possibly be. The Committee is in the data gathering process, and a more accurate picture of this scope will be formed through the TAP grant process.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Chris Buchanan stated that the TAP grant is quite competitive. Amherst is actually part of the Nashua Planning Region, for purposes of this grant. Chris Buchanan explained that he knows of three or four other projects in this region that will be submitted; though he believes that Amherst's proposal is quite competitive. It is likely that a TAP grant will be awarded to one or two of the proposed projects from this region.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that he likes the idea of bundling these projects.

In response to a question from Selectman Grella, Chris Buchanan explained that the section of road from Birch Park to Joshua's Park is controlled by the state. Some funds from the already approved Amherst Street project could be used to restripe this area, or it could be incorporated into this larger Pedestrian/Bikeway project offering additional municipal savings. The proposed sidepath along the length of Route 122, per SB707, has been referred for interim study and there is no update on it at this time.

In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Chris Buchanan explained the grant process. The Town would apply and, if awarded the grant (probably about a year and a half- year later), would then know the exact 20% commitment amount. Chris Buchanan stated that

he hopes by then the Town would have the lion's share of this amount already set aside. If not, money can be shuffled from already scheduled road construction projects.

Rick Katzenberg noted that, if the proposed Multimodal Facility CRF is approved, funds from that would also be available for this grant match.

3.3 Rick Katzenberg – Senior Citizen Survey, Final Results

Rick Katzenberg and Eliza Cullen joined the meeting.

Rick Katzenberg stated that a survey was submitted to seniors in Amherst. The population of Amherst is about 13,013; the senior population within that is about 2,517.

Eliza Cullen explained that the data from the survey was analyzed and there are six suggestions being made for the Town to help better the lives of its seniors. These suggestions are: 1) an improved communications network that seniors can easily access, 2) a constantly updated calendar of events, 3) a Senior Coordinator position (currently being funded through Rick Katzenberg), 4) more socialization options and groups for seniors, 5) a senior citizens center, 6) a tracking method to ensure there is progress towards this goal.

Rick Katzenberg explained that the first year of this program will be funded through a grant from the NH Wellpoint Foundation.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Rick Katzenberg stated that the Senior Coordinator position will be held by a Junior at Souhegan High School, at least for the first 50 weeks. If this position goes well, it could possibly be incorporated into the Town's Health & Human Services budget line.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that he agrees with trying this out on a small scale, and that if there is value to it, it will be apparent.

Selectman Panasiti suggested something similar to an information board on the Green so that information for seniors can be posted there.

4. Administration

4.1 Administrative Updates

Town Administrator Shankle explained that the Amherst Conservation Commission continues to gather information about discretionary easements. He will update the Board more about this at its next meeting.

Town Administrator Shankle stated that the NH Department of Labor is currently auditing some of the Town's items. The Town is also in the midst of an audit by the NH Retirement System.

Town Administrator Shankle explained that the emergency rental relief program through the state appears to be proceeding. He also noted that he and Chairman Lyon will be presenting to the Amherst PTA tomorrow evening regarding the proposed Town budget and warrant articles.

226
227 **4.2 Computer Capital Reserve Fund Withdrawal**

228 Town Administrator Shankle explained that the current Town servers couldn't handle some of
229 the new updates to the Vision assessing software. Microtime has noted that six of the Town's
230 servers are out of compliance and at their end of life. This could lead to security issues. There
231 is a quote for \$17,549.06 that can come from the Computer Systems CRF.

232
233 Selectman D'Angelo stated that he is distressed that server issues seem to keep coming up for
234 the Town. He suggested that the Town's servers be inventoried, and a plan put in place to
235 replace them periodically.

236
237 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
238 *approve the withdrawal of funds in the amount of \$17,549.06 from the Computer System*
239 *Capital Reserve Fund to upgrade town servers as outlined in the Microtime proposal.*
240 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
241 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

242
243 **5. Staff Reports**

244 **5.1 Revaluation Capital Reserve Withdrawal Request**

245 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman Brew to approve*
246 *and sign for the withdrawal of \$82,500. from the Assessing Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund*
247 *for the 2021 revaluation of residential, commercial, and industrial properties.*

248 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
249 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

250
251 **5.2 DPW Stewart Long promotion from D/L to Light Equipment Operator**

252 DPW Director, Eric Hahn, explained that the Light Equipment position has been vacant since
253 Jeff Caswell was moved to the Road Foreman position. He stated that Stewart Long has met
254 the qualifications for the Light Equipment position. Eric Hahn is recommending that Stewart
255 Long be promoted/appointed to this new position.

256
257 Selectman Brew commended Eric Hahn on his hiring process.

258
259 In response to a question from Selectman Grella, Eric Hahn stated that Stewart Long has
260 worked for the Town since 2004. Stewart Long joined the DPW in 2014.

261
262 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti that*
263 *Stewart Long be promoted from Driver Laborer (Grade 4, Step 11) to Light Equipment*
264 *Operator (Grade 7, Step 8) effective February 8th, 2021.*

265 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
266 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

267
268 **6. Approvals**

269 **6.1 Assessing**

270 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to approve*
271 *the All Service Veterans' Tax Credit for tax year 2021 on the following map and lot number:*

272

| MAP/LOT | LOCATION | AMOUNT |
|---------|----------|--------|
|---------|----------|--------|

273 004-110-000 342 Boston Post Rd \$500.00
 274 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 275 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 276
 277 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to approve*
 278 *the Land Use Change Tax in the amount of \$24,500 for Tax Map 005 Lot 059-037, 10*
 279 *Founder’s Way.*
 280 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 281 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 282
 283 **6.2 Payroll, AP and Minutes Approvals**
 284 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 285 *approve one (1) FY21 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$238,209.46 dated January 14, 2021,*
 286 *subject to review and audit.*
 287 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 288 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 289
 290 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 291 *approve one (1) FY21 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$510.34 dated January 22, 2021,*
 292 *subject to review and audit.*
 293 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 294 *Selectman Panasiti – yes; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 295
 296 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 297 *approve one (1) FY21 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$227,740.14 dated January 28, 2021,*
 298 *subject to review and audit.*
 299 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 300 *Selectman Panasiti – yes; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 301
 302 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 303 *approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$39,003.84 dated January*
 304 *19, 2021, subject to review and audit (NH DMV).*
 305 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 306 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 307
 308 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 309 *approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$22,604.24 dated January*
 310 *19, 2021, subject to review and audit (NH DMV).*
 311 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 312 *Selectman Panasiti – yes; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 313
 314 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*
 315 *approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$34,529.97 dated January*
 316 *19, 2021, subject to review and audit (NH DMV).*
 317 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye;*
 318 *Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*
 319

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$307,179.97 dated January 19, 2021, subject to review and audit.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – yes; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the meeting minutes of January 4, 2021, as presented.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the meeting minutes of January 11, 2021, 6:00pm Non-Public, as presented.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the meeting minutes of January 11, 2021, 6:30pm, as amended.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the meeting minutes of January 19, 2021, as amended.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the meeting minutes of January 26, 2021, as presented.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

7. Action Items

The Board reviewed its action items.

8. Old/New Business

Selectman D'Angelo explained that the Amherst School Board is meeting tonight at the same time as this Board meeting. The Joint Facilities Advisory Committee will meet next Thursday at 5pm.

Chairman Lyon acknowledged the passing of Town Clerk, Nancy Demer's husband, Gene, earlier today. He stated that the Board's thoughts are with Nancy's family.

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

367 **NEXT MEETING: Monday, March 8, 2021**

368

369

370

371

372 _____
 Selectman Reed Panasiti

Date