



Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, February 7, 2022, 6:30PM

1. Call to Order

Chairman Peter Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Peter Lyon, Selectman Dwight Brew, Selectman John D'Angelo, Selectman Tom Grella, and Selectman Danielle Pray

Also present: Town Administrator Dean Shankle, Executive Assistant Jennifer Stover, and Recording Secretary Kristan Patenaude (remote)

2. Pledge of Allegiance – led by Deb Bender.

3. Citizen's Forum – None at this time.

4. Public Hearings

4.1 Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b: III (a), the Amherst Board of Selectmen shall hold a public hearing in conjunction with its scheduled meeting for the purpose of accepting unanticipated funds received from the State of New Hampshire under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in the amount \$1,192,729.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to enter into a public hearing, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b: III (a).

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Lyon explained that this public hearing is needed due to the amount of unanticipated funds (ARPA funds) received by the Town. He asked for public comment.

Peter Hansen requested that the Board use these funds to reduce taxes in some way, either through lowering debt amounts or through a preventative maintenance item. He would not like to see these funds used to create projects that will bring a future impact to taxpayers.

Chairman Lyon noted that he does not believe ARPA funds can be used to pay down a debt.

Sue McCarthy, 50 Broadway, explained that there has been \$1.4M previously spent on the Baboosic Lake septic system. She does not believe anyone on the Board is aware of how the system is run or owned. She explained that she was previously promised a meeting with Town staff to discuss this issue and that she has not yet heard back on this meeting. She stated that she believes these ARPA funds could be used for projects regarding the Baboosic Lake septic

39 system. Potential items include a generator, solar panels to offset electricity costs, improved
40 drainage, or paving sections of the surrounding roads. She noted that people living in this area
41 need relief and that there has been no continuity to this system from the outset.

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43 In response to a question from Chairman Lyon, Ms. McCarthy stated the committee,
44 consisting of Baboosic Lake Residents and the Amherst DPW, which was supposed to be
45 formed to discuss this system was never initialized.

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47 Chairman Lyon explained that the DPW was still gathering information on the system and
48 would set up a meeting with Ms. McCarthy shortly.

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50 There was no additional public comment at this time.

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52 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to close*
53 *the public hearing.*

54 *Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

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56 Chairman Lyon noted that how these funds are utilized will be discussed further in the future.
57 He asked anyone with information or suggestions to send these to the Board.

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59 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Grella that the*
60 *Board accept unanticipated funds received from the State of New Hampshire under the*
61 *American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in the amount \$1,192,729.*

62 *Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

63 64 **4.2 Impact Fees**

65 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to enter*
66 *into a public hearing, to discuss potentially updating the impact fee schedule.*

67 *Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

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69 It was noted that the proposed schedule update has been reviewed by and is recommended by
70 the Planning Board.

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72 There was no public comment at this time.

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74 Selectman Brew explained that the Board previously agreed that it would not make sense to
75 update the fee schedule for items that will be on the warrant this March, but it would make
76 sense to update the schedule with new construction and capital costs for work that is ongoing
77 currently. This recommendation was then sent to the Planning Board. The Planning Board
78 reviewed this recommendation and recommended Model B and was thankful that the Board of
79 Selectmen is staying on top of this.

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81 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Brew to exit*
82 *the public hearing.*

83 *Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

A *MOTION* was made by Selectman Brew and *SECONDED* by Selectman Grella, in accordance with Section 4.19H of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance and after review by the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and after the completed public hearing, to update the impact fee schedule using the attached proposed updated schedule.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

5. Scheduled Appointments

5.1 Tim Greene – Presentation of 2021 Town Audit

Mr. Greene presented the report, issued February 3, 2022, by Roberts & Greene. He explained that the audit process began a bit late this year, in October. He noted that the Town adopted new accounting guidance regarding the accounting and reporting for Fiduciary Funds. The unassigned fund balance was approximately \$6.3M, as of June 30, 2021. He explained that one of the findings of the audit was that significant time was spent by the Town to reconcile its cash accounts, and additional audit time was necessary to further audit those balances. This was likely the result of turnover of Finance staff, with a gap of many months where no reconciliations were performed. Certain deficiencies were noted during the audit, including that budget amounts in the Town's accounting system were not updated to reflect changes that were made by the NH Department of Revenue through its normal approval process. This results in an increased chance of management making decisions based on incorrect financial data. There were also small deficiencies in checks not reconciled, escrow account reimbursements, and a discrepancy between the Town's Personnel Policy and its active practices regarding compensated absences.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Mr. Greene noted that the Town can submit a response letter addressing items in the audit, which will not be audited by Roberts & Greene, and which may be included as an addendum to this report.

In response to a question from Chairman Lyon regarding differences in the reported unassigned fund balance numbers within the report, Mr. Greene explained that this is due to approximately \$600,000 in deferred tax revenue amounts.

A *MOTION* was made by Selectman Brew and *SECONDED* by Selectman Pray to accept the audit report submitted by Roberts & Greene.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

6. Administration

6.1 New Hire – Finance Director

Town Administrator Shankle explained that Debbie Bender has agreed to accept the position as the Town of Amherst Finance Director, at grade 19 step 7. She is able to start officially in mid-March but will be helping out in the office until then.

A *MOTION* was made by Selectman Brew and *SECONDED* by Selectman D'Angelo to hire Debra Bender as the Finance Director per the terms outlined in the packet.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

6.2 Administrative Updates

Town Administrator Shankle noted that the Town's Deliberative Session will be held on Wednesday at 7pm at Souhegan High School.

He also noted that Tyler Caswell, of the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, stated in a recent meeting that there will be approximately \$2M in the state for outdoor recreation and infrastructure available. There is a request for regional ideas for these funds.

6.3 Updating the Impact Fee Schedule

This was previously addressed.

7. Staff Reports

7.1 Traffic Data Collection Findings - Manchester Road and Boston Post Road

Police Chief Reams explained that traffic data was collected on sections of Manchester Road and Boston Post Road following complaints from three residents regarding increased volume of speeders in those locations. Over a 12-day period, it was found that this section of Manchester Road sees an average of 1,300 vehicles/day, at a 98% compliance with the reasonable speed outlined under the State speed limit guidelines. Additional enforcement was added to this area. The Boston Post Road section of Amherst Street to Sunset Road was also examined and found an average of 4,500 vehicles/day, at a 92% compliance with the reasonable speed outlined by the State. This area was highlighted by the Highway Safety Committee as a problematic area and was recommended as a place to locate a permanent digital speed sign. The Committee is recommending that the Board agree to the proposed placement.

Selectman D'Angelo agreed with the recommendation and suggested that a temporary sign be erected for now. The current data is similar to that from the 2015 report and hopefully this recommendation will make it better.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Chief Reams explained that the cost for a temporary or permanent speed sign are in the same ballpark for cost. Chief Reams stated that he will look into receiving bids from three vendors for the permanent digital signs to then be reviewed by the Board at a future meeting.

The Board agreed with placing a temporary sign and allowing Chief Reams to pursue permanent signs and the necessary budget for them.

7.2 Body Worn Camera Grant Application

Chief Reams explained that a grant application process for body worn cameras was announced on February 2nd, which draws from a Body Worn Camera Fund established by NH Legislature in 2021. This grant allows for 50% funding reimbursement (up to \$50,000) from NH Department of Homeland Security. This is a non-lapsing, open-ended commitment from the State to reimburse Towns. He explained that during the next Strategic Plan cycle he will be reintroducing this plan and a reimbursement plan for it.

In response to a question from Selectman Pray, Chief Reams explained that the span of the grant is a five-year lease program for the systems, until it reaches \$50,000.

In response to a question from Chairman Lyon, Chief Reams stated that, if awarded the grant, he will have sufficient time to determine how to further fund this program.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to allow Chief Reams to proceed with the grant application for body worn cameras and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign any associated documents on behalf of the Town.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

8. Approvals

8.1 Assessing

A. The attached application has been reviewed by our Assessor and our Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for tax year 2022 in the amount of \$500 for Map 002, Lot 163-046.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

B. The attached application has been reviewed by our Assessor and our Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for tax year 2022 in the amount of \$500 for Map 004, Lot 100-006, 8 Cricket Corner Rd.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

C. The Land Use Change Tax in the amount of \$23,000.00 represents 10% of the full and true market value of \$230,000. The attached Land Use Change Tax has been reviewed by our Assessor and our Assessor recommends to approve.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Land Use Change Tax in the amount of \$23,000.00 for Tax Map 005 Lot 059-018, 3 Gatchel Way.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

D. The Land Use Change Tax in the amount of \$30,000 represents 10% of the full and true market value of \$300,000. The attached Land Use Change Tax has been reviewed by our Assessor and our Assessor recommends to approve.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Land Use Change Tax in the amount of \$30,000 for Tax Map 005 Lot 059-028, 29 Founder's Way. Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

E. On January 10, 2022, an abatement was approved for 11 Thistle Drive, however the property tax map was listed as Map 010 Lot 067-032, when it should have been listed as Map 010 Lot 067-031.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to reconsider the vote taken on January 10, 2022, for the abatement on Map 010 Lot 067-032.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to deny the 2021 abatement for Map 010 Lot 067-032.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

The attached abatement for overpayment has been reviewed by our Assessor and the Assessor recommends to approve.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the 2021 abatement in the amount of \$532.00 for Map 010 Lot 067-031.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

F. The attached application has been reviewed by our Assessor and our Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Service-Connected Total and Disabled Tax Credit for tax year 2023 in the amount of \$4,000.00 for Map 017, Lot 021-000.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

8.2 Tax Warrant

This Tax Warrant initiates the process outlined in RSA 72:38-a.IV which is in place to insure the collection of elderly tax deferrals granted by the Board of Selectmen in prior years.

The motion for this item was tabled to later in the meeting.

8.3 AP, Payroll, Minutes

Payroll

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to approve one (1) FY21 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$223,135.69 dated January 27, 2022, subject to review and audit.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

Accounts Payable

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$28,360.77 dated January 16, 2022, subject to review and audit. (NH DMV)

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$3,037,685.00 dated February 1, 2022, subject to review and audit. (Schools)

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$10,239.35 dated January 20, 2022, subject to review and audit. (Vendors)

Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to approve one (1) FY21 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$216,697.71 dated February 1, 2022, subject to review and audit. (Vendors)
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Pray and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of January 24, 2022, as written.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

8.2 Tax Warrant

The Board retook this item at this time.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve and sign the Tax Warrant for the Collection of Elderly Tax Deferrals in the amount of \$28,331.25 for 18 Dream Lake Drive.
Voting: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

9. Action Items

The Board reviewed its action items.

10. Old/New Business

Selectman D'Angelo noted that the Souhegan School District Deliberative session is being held this evening, concurrent with this meeting. The Amherst School District Deliberative session will be held tomorrow evening, and the Town's Deliberative Session will be held Wednesday evening.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, February 22, 2022

Selectman Danielle Pray

Date