



Town of Amherst, NH

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, March 30, 2020 6:30PM

1 **1. Call to Order**

2
3 Chairman Peter Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

4
5 Attendees by Zoom conference call: Chairman Peter Lyon, Selectman Dwight Brew,
6 Selectman Reed Panasiti, Selectman John D'Angelo, and Selectman Tom Grella.
7 Also present: Town Administrator Dean Shankle, Executive Assistant Mary Guild.

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

10
11 Chairman Lyon explained that this meeting was being held completely virtually and that
12 the public was able to attend via phone or the Zoom meeting link. The phone number in
13 order to call into the meeting was stated, as was the Zoom webinar ID number, both
14 during the meeting, on the agenda, and on the town website. Town Administrator Shankle
15 hosted the meeting. The meeting was recorded and will be made available for playback
16 through the ACATV (Amherst Community Access Television) website. He explained that
17 the Board will discuss any matters and vote on them by roll call in alphabetical order.

18
19 **2. Pledge of Allegiance** – Chairman Lyon explained that the group would skip the
20 Pledge of Allegiance tonight, and instead have a moment of silence to focus on what the
21 Selectmen and the rest of Amherst can commit to do to help the residents during this time
22 of emergency.

23
24 **3. Citizen Forum** – none.

25
26 **4. Board Discussion – Buckmeadow Purchase**

27 Chairman Lyon stated that there have been two previous public hearing regarding the
28 Buckmeadow acquisition. At the last meeting, the Amherst Conservation Commission
29 (ACC) voted to support the acquisition and request that the Board release the funds in
30 order to complete the purchase.

31
32 Selectman Brew stated that he is extremely in favor of this acquisition.

33
34 Selectman Grella stated that he had previously shared a concern regarding having the sole
35 access to this site be via 101a. He suggested adding a second entrance off from 101A to
36 Stearns Road. He asked a contractor to look into this possibility, and that person gave an
37 estimate of approximately \$100,000 in order to create this alternate access point. There
38 could be some cost recouped during the process. He strongly feels that there is a potential
39 danger to people trying to access this area from Route 101A. He suggested that this issue
40 be brought before the Highway Safety Committee and possibly the Planning Board.

Chairman Lyon stated that, at the last ACC meeting, the ACC recognized this concern and committed themselves to bring this before the Highway Safety Committee. The group also discussed providing adequate signage at the access point on Route 101A. This access point will be monitored for a period of time and responded to, if necessary.

Rob Clemens, Chair of the ACC, stated that the group is sensitive to these concerns. They asked Meridian Land Services to look at both access points and it was determined that each could physically work. The ACC agreed to send this item to the Highway Safety Committee for review. It is believed that the current access point off Route 101A seemed to have been working fine when the area operated as a golf course. The increased audience to this area and increased parking capacity will need to be addressed by enhancing the access point off Route 101A. The ACC will continue to monitor and work through any concerns with accessing the property.

Jared Hardner, ACC Vice-Chair, stated that putting a road from Stearns Road through the property is suboptimal for both the ACC and Recreation Department for their uses of the land. This would have to be routed around wetland areas. It is possible to put a second parking area near the Stearns Road access point. This would increase parking for the property and give another emergency vehicle access point.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that the current plan should be allowed to run for a bit to see if there are any problems with it. He agrees that the Highway Safety Committee can review this, but also that the area ran as a golf course for quite a while with the access point off Route 101A with no problems.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman Brew to, in accordance with NH RSA 41:14-A, move that we approve the purchase of the property known as Buckmeadow Golf Course located at Tax Map 2, Lot 98-33, 30 NH Route 101-A, Amherst NH for \$575,000, as outlined in the purchase and sale agreement of January 27, 2020 and the operating agreement between the Amherst Conservation Commission and the Amherst Parks and Recreation Department dated March 30, 2020.

Chairman Lyon stated that the Planning Board was asked to review this acquisition and supported it. At a prior meeting, Planning Board member Cliff Harris moved to support this acquisition and the motion was seconded by Marilyn Peterman. The Planning Board members voted unanimously to support this purchase.

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

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to approve the operating agreement negotiated between the Amherst Conservation Commission and the Amherst Parks and Recreation Department and authorize the Chair to sign the same on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.

87 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella –*
88 *aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.*
89

90 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D’Angelo*
91 *that Dean Shankle, Administrator for the Town of Amherst, is hereby appointed as agent*
92 *of the Board for the purpose of taking all actions appropriate, convenient or necessary*
93 *for closing and purchase of Tax Map 2, Lot 98-33, 30 NH Route 101-A, said property is*
94 *situated in the Town of Amherst, in the County of Hillsborough, and State of New*
95 *Hampshire, by virtue of warranty deed from M.E. Young, Inc. to The Town of Amherst, to*
96 *be managed by and through the Amherst Conservation Commission and the Amherst*
97 *Parks and Recreation Dept. including the power to accept the deeds of conveyance on*
98 *behalf of the Board and the Town of Amherst, and to execute, deliver, and accept,*
99 *agreements, deeds, certifications, affidavits, or such other forms, disclosures, or*
100 *documents he deems appropriate, convenient or necessary to accomplish any of the*
101 *foregoing, and to expend, pay and deliver funds, sales proceeds, or other credits in*
102 *furtherance of the foregoing.*
103

104 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella –*
105 *aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.*
106

107 Rob Clemens, on behalf of the ACC, thanked Chairman Lyon and the Selectmen for their
108 support. He stated that the ACC and Recreation Department are excited to make the
109 necessary improvements to this property for the benefit of the town.
110

111 Chairman Lyon thanked the ACC and Recreation Department for all of their hard work.
112

113 **5. Administration**

114 **5.1 Administrator’s Report**

115 Town Administrator Shankle discussed with the Board the preparation for the upcoming
116 Planning Board appointment interview process.
117

118 Chairman Lyon suggested that a short list of questions be developed ahead of time to
119 allow for a better flow for the interview process.
120

121 Town Administrator Shankle stated that the deadline for application submissions is
122 tomorrow. There are currently nine people interested, including the three current
123 Planning Board alternates.
124

125 Selectman Brew clarified that the Board will discuss the interview process at their next
126 meeting, with the actual interviews not being held until the following meeting.
127

128 In response to a question from Selectman Grella, Chairman Lyon stated that the ACC has
129 submitted to the Board one of their members as a recommendation for a seat on the
130 Planning Board. That person will be interviewed as part of the process.
131

Town Administrator Shankle stated that there were some long lines at the Transfer Station last Saturday. The DPW Director, Eric Hahn, is currently looking into opening up a trash-only time on Wednesdays.

Eric Hahn explained that there is one full-time employee available on Wednesdays at the Transfer Station. He is leaning towards making an afternoon trash-only time on that day. The single employee will not be able to support any other Transfer Station functions during this time.

In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Eric Hahn stated that his original thought was to have a recycle-only day during the week, but the volume of people that went to the Transfer Station last Saturday has him rethinking it as a trash-only day.

In response to a question from Chairman Lyon, Eric Hahn stated that he could consider opening up another half day during the week, but he risks running overtime for his part-time employees.

Selectman Brew stated that it will take a while for the community to get used to having additional open hours, so any shifts should be done thoughtfully.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that he doesn't believe it's best to choke down the Transfer Station to only allowing four vehicles at a time because there is a safety hazard when vehicles spill out onto Route 101; he understands the social distancing challenge. His preference would be to allow a half dozen cars to have access at once.

Eric Hahn stated that the DPW is doing its best to accommodate the published guidelines. He has been observing the interactions that happen at the Transfer Station and has gotten complaints about what's being done to help with social distancing. The DPW has to work around where the dumpsters are currently located while trying to do the right thing.

Selectman Panasiti suggested flipping the entrance/exit points for the Transfer Station and allowing the cars to go around the back in an effort to get them off the road.

Eric Hahn stated that one employee has been helping to direct traffic into three lanes at the entrance, but there has been some resistance to this. He believes changing more than one thing at once will add to the confusion.

In response to a question from Selectman D'Angelo, Eric Hahn stated that the plants taking the trash from the Transfer Station are still up and running, but he's not sure if their through-points are being affected.

a. Expenditure Discussion

Town Administrator Shankle stated that the quarterly Finance report will be given at the Board's next meeting. He has spoken to the Department Heads regarding their expenditures at this time. Finance Director, Cheryl Eastman, has stated that, at about 75% of the way through the fiscal year, the town has spent about 70% of its budget. While he was originally thinking about recommending a spending freeze for April, he is now

recommending that the Department Heads talk to him before spending any money not considered to be an emergency.

5.2 COVID-19 Update

Town Administrator Shankle stated that the DPW is in the middle of installing the steps outside of the Town Clerk's window.

Selectman Panasiti stated that, in his meetings with the Governor, the Governor laid out five different scenarios that the state is looking at at this time. The state currently has about 4,200 hospital beds. The Governor stated that NH's peak is probably about 1-2, maybe 3 weeks away. With more test results there will probably be an uptick in the number of cases being reported. There are currently approximately 242 reported cases in NH, with about 39 people hospitalized. Many of the people previously tested have come back as negative. It is hoped that there will be an antibody test available in the state within the next couple of days. This will allow thousands or millions of people tested to know if they have carried the virus previously, thus possibly allowing them to get back to work due to being resistant to the virus. The results of this type of test are ready within minutes.

Town Administrator Shankle stated that there is a link at the top of the nh.gov page with up-to-date information on COVID-19. He also explained that the state is going to make a list of the number of people infected in each town available to the public. First responders may get an even more detailed list, such as the street addresses of those infected.

5.3 Amherst Garden Club Signage

Town Administrator Shankle explained that he received an email from Marty Warren of the Garden Club, requesting approval to put the Garden Club's logo on the front of the garden shed at the Stearns Road Fire Station. This was part of the Club's plan all along in purchasing the shed and donating it to the town. The sign is 20"x20".

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to allow the Amherst Garden Club to adhere a sign, as described, to the town's shed located on the property of the South Fire Station, at 62 Stearns Road, Amherst.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that signage approvals are typically handled by the Planning Board. Selectman Brew explained that, because the shed is located on town property, he believes it is okay for the Board of Selectmen to approve this request.

Selectman Brew stated that he is not in opposition of the Planning Board reviewing this signage request and agreed that it could be brought to that group after approval by the Board of Selectmen.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Selectman D'Angelo abstained. Motion carried.

226 **6. Staff Reports**

227 **6.1 Crack Sealing Bid – DPW** – *this item was moved to later in the meeting.*

228
229 **6.2 Line Striping Bid – DPW** – *this item was moved to later in the meeting.*

230
231 **6.3 Scarifying Lines/Crosswalks/Stop Bars Bid – DPW**

232 Town Administrator Shankle recommended that the Board move forward with this item as
233 it will address certain safety items and will get Amherst Street ready for the side path
234 construction later this summer. He explained that the SB38 funds from the state, totaling
235 about \$22,000, need to specifically be used for projects dealing with roads. The bids for
236 this project come out to about \$20,000, and thus the SB38 money could be used to cover
237 that amount.

238
239 Eric Hahn explained that the SB38 funds could be used to erase the lines from Amherst
240 Street to prep it for later side path construction. This money can also be used on the 23
241 crosswalks in town. Currently the town's crosswalks have about 8-9 different styles. This
242 is confusing and makes them hard to maintain as they don't meet the current standards.
243 Crosswalks should run parallel to the direction of travel on the road. This project would
244 remove these lines and allow them to be repainted correctly and uniformly.

245
246 In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Eric Hahn stated that this project has unit
247 pricing, \$x/ft². He will have complete control over the project and how much is spent on
248 it.

249
250 Selectman Brew stated that he would like to know the exact amount being awarded for the
251 project and to see the profile of the potential vendors.

252
253 Eric Hahn stated that the money being requested for this project will allow him to take
254 care of all 23 crosswalks in town and also 18 stop bars that need to be redone. This
255 amount of money will also be sufficient to erase the lines on Amherst Street to get ready
256 for the side path construction.

257
258 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to award*
259 *the line striping bid to Highway Safety in an amount not to exceed \$22,238.80, or the*
260 *remainder of the SB38 grant.*

261 *By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D'Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella –*
262 *aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.*

263
264 **6.2 Line Striping Bid – DPW** – *this item was taken up at this time.*

265 Town Administrator Shankle suggested that this project be held off on at this time.

266
267 In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Eric Hahn stated that, per the Manual
268 on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTDC), there are
269 actually very few roads in town that require double yellow lines. While he would not
270 proceed without running this by the Highway Safety Committee, he believes that this
271 could be a time to pick and choose which of the roads in town need this type of striping.

The crosswalks and stop bars are more important, safety-wise, to complete first. He expects to be back before the Board with more information on this in May.

6.4 Tree Care Bid – DPW – this item was taken up at this time.

Town Administrator Shankle explained that this unit price bid includes routine emergency work to be done. He recommended that the Board approve this bid, with the understanding that, at this point, only the emergency work will be undertaken for now.

In response to a question from Selectman Brew, Eric Hahn stated that this money comes from the Tree Care Line and the Road Maintenance Hot Top line (which should be relabeled Green Roads Green). The total request is for \$30,000 towards the unit pricing bid. If there is no emergency work to be done, then this amount will remain unspent. This retains their services for future work.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Brew and SECONDED by Selectman Grella that Souhegan Valley Tree Service be awarded the tree care contract on a unit price award criteria, in an amount up to \$30,000.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

6.1 Crack Sealing Bid – DPW – this item was taken up at this time.

Town Administrator Shankle recommended that the Board move forward with this item.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D’Angelo to award the crack seal bid to HDOW for \$19,000.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

6.5 Transfer Station Walking Deck – DPW

Eric Hahn stated that he was not sure where the money for this would come from. He’s trying to find about \$18,000 to replace the deck and make it ADA compliant. The new deck will allow for self-drainage and provide better traction. There is no action to take on this at this time. There is some additional money in the DPW budget that could be used for this.

7. Approvals

7.1 Payroll

A MOTION was made by Selectman D’Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to approve one (1) FY20 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$208,400.81 dated March 26, 2020, subject to review and audit.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Action Items - the Board reviewed its action items.

9. Old/New Business

Selectman Panasiti stated that there should be some executive orders coming soon regarding municipal issues with Planning Board application restrictions.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm.

By roll call vote: Selectman Brew – aye; Selectman D’Angelo – aye; Selectman Grella – aye; Selectman Panasiti – aye; Chairman Lyon – aye. Motion carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: April 06, 2020

SIGNATURE ON FILE

04.06.2020

Selectman Reed Panasiti

Date