



**Town of Amherst, NH**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**Barbara Landry Meeting Room**  
**2 Main Street**  
**Monday, August 8, 2016**

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Non-Public Session, RSA 91-A:3, II (b)**

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Selectmen Tom Grella, Nate Jensen and Peter Lyon. Absent: Vice Chairman Reed Panasiti. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance** – Kevin Dadoly, Amherst resident, led the pledge.

Prior to opening the Citizens' Forum, Chairman Brew asked Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, to update the Board on the Merrimack Road issue (Agenda Item 5.5). Administrator O'Mara said that at the Board's request, he and Public Works Director, Bruce Berry, asked the current contractor to change the work order for Merrimack Road. The current contractor stated that they do not modify work in established engineering plans for liability reasons. Administrator O'Mara has been in touch with another engineering firm who is working up a proposal that will help address concerns raised by residents of Merrimack Road.

**4. Citizens' Forum**

Kevin Dadoly came forward and thanked the Board for re-considering work to be done on Merrimack Road. He said he and his neighbors are anxious to see the new plan and are happy to get the work done this year.

**5. Town Administrator**

**5.1 Quarterly Reports, AFR & Library**

**Fire Rescue:** A copy of Fire Chief Matt Conley's quarterly report is included at the end of these minutes. Highlights include:

- Calls for service total 375: 240 EMS and 135 Fire
- The report included a breakdown of various education and training programs completed or nearly completed by staff

- Fire Prevention breakouts: 86 inspections and plan reviews; 35 permits issued; 8 fire drills; 37 information/consults provided; 4 car seats

Chief Conley also listed a number of projects and events undertaken by his department. Chief Conley said that his department participated in training with 13 other regions this past Saturday. The Chief responded to a number of questions from the Board about the new ambulance, which should be available in late February or early March, A1 and A2 calls, recruiting and staffing. Chief Conley said they have not had to depend on mutual aid as much as in the past. The Board asked that Chief Conley include an update on A2 calls at his next quarterly report.

**Library:** Amy Lapointe, Library Director, provided the following information in her quarterly report [a copy of the full report is included at the end of these minutes].

- The library is now in the tail end of the Summer Reading Program. Over 500 kids enrolled in the program and they have read over 7000 hours.
- The library is looking forward to fall programming. They are partnering with Fireseed Alliance and the libraries in Bedford, Merrimack, Milford, Wilton, New Boston, Lyndeborough, Brookline, Greenfield, Goffstown, Dunbarton, Mason, and Hollis to present a “Big Read” with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- This fall, the library will invite the whole community to read John Steinbeck’s classic, “The Grapes of Wrath”, and then participate in book discussion groups and cultural programming, including a keynote address with Steinbeck’s biographer, Jay Parini. A kick off event is planned for September 18<sup>th</sup> at LaBelle Winery.
- Improvements have been made to the library, both inside and out.
- The library is bidding farewell to pages Sam Bannon, Sara Birse, Allison Bowman, and Abby Shulte, and welcoming new pages Helen St. Cyr, Brian Heaney, Emmeline Jasnowski, and Harrison Mazur.
- Annual staff performance appraisals led to the Board of Trustees voting in July to promote Head of Circulation, Sarah Leonardi to the reclassified position of Assistant Director.
- This Wednesday, the library is launching a new platform to enable patrons to access digital content. Hoopla provides ebooks, downloadable audiobooks, movies, TV shows, music and comics, all through one simple to use app.

Director Lapointe asked the Board to visit the library, participate in the “Big Read” and plan to attend the kick-off party on September 18<sup>th</sup> at LaBelle Winery.

## **5.2 Storm Update**

Town Administrator, Jim O’Mara, reported that as a result of a severe weather front that came through town, Lead Foreman Herlihy was called by dispatch at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. He, in turn, called out Foreman Day. They both worked until midnight with Eversource and the Amherst Police Department to open roads. Eversource flooded the area with crews under their two-pronged approach: 1) cut and run and 2) repair and reconnect wires. By Eversource policy, the town can only step in after wires are reconnected. By Eversource policy, the town can only step in after the wires are reconnected. The following roads were closed from fallen trees: areas of 8 Christian Hill, Williamsburg at Old Manchester Road, 38 Mont Vernon Road, Stearns Road at the powerlines, 18 Storybrook, 90 Chestnut Hill Road, 48 New Boston Road, Walnut Hill, area of 63 and near Embankment Road, Jones Road near the ball field, Georgetown at Old Manchester, Broadway at Hillside, and across from #109 Mack Hill Road. Staff was twice called out by

dispatch on Sunday. In all cases, tree debris was pushed to the roadside and chipping and/or bulk loading should be completed by the end of the day tomorrow (Tuesday).

### **5.3 Emergency Tree Removal, Mack Hill Road**

In the Director of Public Works, Bruce Berry's absence, Town Administrator O'Mara requested under RSA 231:158 "Effects of Designation as Scenic Road", Section II, the Board's permission to remove two Poplar trees on upper Mack Hill Road. Both trees were damaged by a recent wind storm, lean significantly into the road and present "an imminent threat to area safety". Photos of the damaged trees were provided in the Board packet. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella to authorize the removal of two Poplar trees on upper Mack Hill Road diagonally across the street from #119. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

### **Chairman Brew adjusted the agenda to take up a report by Lisa Ambrosio, Finance Director.**

Finance Director, Lisa Ambrosio, distributed unaudited FY16 revenue and expense reports. She highlighted a number of areas reflecting higher than anticipated revenues; such as Licenses, Permits & Fees and Interest on Investments. The FY16 budgeted revenue was \$4,535,988 and the year-to-date actual revenue totaled \$4,919,218, indicating a surplus of \$383,230. Chairman Brew asked if a grant is received, does the amount of the grant get adjusted up in revenue. Director Ambrosio said grant funds are reflected in the general fund (01). Grants received from the state, shows up in a different fund (06). Administrator O'Mara said that the budget is established by community vote; acceptance of grants is tracked differently. Selectman Grella thanked Town Treasurer, Liz Overholt, for a great job in tracking investments to gain the best possible return.

Director Ambrosio went through the unaudited FY16 expenses broken down by fund and by department. A list of encumbrances was also included. Expenditures equaled 95.66 percent expended by fiscal year end. Lesser expenses were gained from wages and benefits, outside hiring, and from enjoying a mild winter. Director Ambrosio said she will have the MS5 report that is due to the state prepared for the Board's review and signature at its next meeting.

Administrator O'Mara stated that the "annual race to spend down budgets to zero" has been discontinued and year end results reflect that. Selectman Lyon asked how the set-aside is handled in the fall and whether auditors look for a certain percentage set aside. Director Ambrosio said she will submit an estimated revenue for tax billing and will come back in October seeking the Board's direction on how much of the fund balance the Board wishes to set aside. She was not concerned with under-running the budget. Both Director Ambrosio and Administrator O'Mara were unsure whether there was an acceptable margin of the fund balance that should be set aside.

Selectman Jensen asked about the finance software. Ms. Ambrosio said training is ongoing on reporting. She is getting appropriate and improved support and is now working on converting balance sheets. She is no longer running two payrolls.

### **5.4 DPW Bid – Catch Basin Cleaning**

Town Administrator O'Mara indicated that in 2014 Bellemore Property Services entered into an agreement with the NH Department of Transportation to rent/lease equipment for catch basin cleaning and pipe jetting services. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to waive

competitive bidding and authorize/award to Bellemore Property Services the contract for rental of a Vactor truck and operator for seasonal catch basin cleaning for a three year contract at a cost of \$120 (2016 season), \$130 (2017 season), and \$140 (2018 season). Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### **5.5 Merrimack Road Update – Taken Up Earlier**

#### **5.6 FY18 Budget Timeline**

The Board reviewed the FY18 Budget Timeline prepared by Executive Assistant Mary Guild. A sign-up sheet for Selectmen and Ways and Means members to meet with Department Heads was included in the Board packet. Town Administrator O'Mara will have the timeline posted on the web and distributed to Ways and Means Committee members. The sign-up sheet will be completed at the Board's next meeting.

### **6. Approvals**

#### **6.1 Yield Tax Levy/Certification of Yield Tax**

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve and sign yield tax levy for Map 4, Lot 34-15 located at 35 Fairway Drive in the amount of \$381.27. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### **6.2 Land Use Change Tax**

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Map 5, Lot 160 located at 50 Boston Post Road in the amount of \$0. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Map 3, Lot 27 located at Smith Lane in the amount of \$5,280. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### **6.3 Pro-rated Assessment Recommendation**

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve a pro-rated assessment recommendation for Map 6, Lot 68-22 located at 5 Blueberry Hill Road in the amount of \$184,100. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### **6.4 Payroll**

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$215,471.53 dated August 4, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### **6.5 Accounts Payable**

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$28,220.94 dated August 1, 2016, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

183  
184 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY16 Accounts Payable  
185 Manifest in the amount of \$211,764.17 dated July 28, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion  
186 passed unanimously, 4-0.

187  
188 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable  
189 Manifest in the amount of \$789,958.93 dated July 28, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion  
190 passed unanimously, 4-0.

191  
192 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable  
193 Manifest in the amount of \$3,936.00 dated July 29, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion  
194 passed unanimously, 4-0.

195  
196 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY16 Accounts Payable  
197 Manifest in the amount of \$2,626,573.00 dated August 1, 2016, subject to review and audit.  
198 (School Disbursements). Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### 200 **6.6 Previous Meeting Minutes: July 25, 2016 and August 1, 2016 Non-Public**

201  
202 Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting  
203 minutes of July 25, 2016, as presented. Motion passed, 3-0-1 [Selectman Jensen abstained].

204  
205 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve the non public Board of  
206 Selectmen meeting minutes of August 1, 2016, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

#### 207 **7. New/Old Business**

208  
209  
210 Selectman Lyon attended the Planning Board meeting of last Wednesday who approved the  
211 Department of Public Works taking trees down on a scenic road.

212  
213 Selectman Jensen went over some pending items. Regarding the IT Committee Charter, Chairman  
214 Brew has been working with Administrator O'Mara on addressing a list of issues that were raised  
215 by departments. The matter can be removed from the pending list. Other items raised include:

- 216
- 217 • 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Fire Station Renovation are moving forward in identifying and contracting with a
- 218 Build/Design firm
- 219 • Second plan for Merrimack Road – Ongoing
- 220 • Update on A2 calls – Chief Conley's next quarterly report
- 221

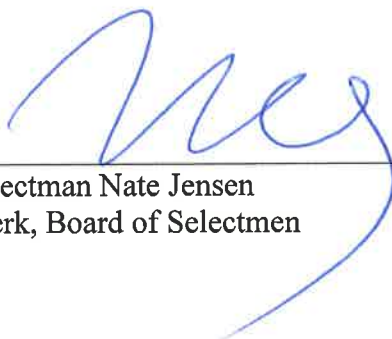
222 Administrator O'Mara said he was in touch with John Robichaud regarding costs of heating oil.  
223 The School District is getting a better price than the town gets. Mr. Robichaud will include the  
224 town in their competitive bid.

225  
226 Administrator O'Mara said he will be attending a Conservation Commission meeting on  
227 Wednesday where they will discuss a Bedford, 9 cluster, development that abuts Amherst  
228 conservation land.

232 8. Adjournment

233  
234 Selectman Grella moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion  
235 passed unanimously, 4-0.

236  
237 **NEXT MEETING: August 22, 2016**

238  
239  
240  
241  
242  
243  
244  
245  
246  
247  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Selectman Nate Jensen  
Clerk, Board of Selectmen

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date