



Town of Amherst, NH

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, September 19, 2016

1. Call to Order

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance – John D'Angelo, Chair of the Ways & Means Committee led the pledge.

3. Citizens' Forum

Members of the Ways and Means Committee in attendance introduced themselves: John D'Angelo, Chair, Maggie Paul, Peter Moustakis, Jason Lozzi, Sarah Bonnoit, Dan Ferris.

Chairman Brew welcomed Gordon Leedy who today began his new duties as Amherst's new Community Development Director.

John Harvey, former Chair and current member of the Conservation Commission, came forward seeking the Board's approval of a Trail Agreement between Lis and Brent Forman and the Town of Amherst, and more particularly described as Map 4 Block 34 Lot 15. The town desires to have a trail on the property, and the trail provides a connection over the property to link existing town conservation land. Mr. Harvey said the document was reviewed by Town Attorney Drescher. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve the Trail Agreement and authorize the Town Administrator to execute the document. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

4. Strategic Planning Presentations

4.1 Police Department

Police Chief, Mark Ream's Strategic Planning Update included a review of the attached PowerPoint presentation. The Chief said the department's previous mission and vision statements were in need of revision. The new vision statement is "promote safety, foster justice, and inspire

trust”. He went over goals and accomplishments, achieving targeted outcomes, and inputs needed to reach the goals. The goals included:

- 1) Reduce Crime by 15 Percent – Chief Reams said visibility is the best deterrent and people want officers around their properties, not on 101A, even though 57% of crime occurs on Route 101A.
- 2) Increase Traffic Safety – Chief Reams said 66 percent of traffic accidents and 60 percent of DWI arrests occur on Route 101A and Route 101.
- 3) Reduce Use & Availability of Illicit Drugs – Chief Reams said his department is working on increasing arrests by 10-15 percent.
- 4) Maintain Level of Service – Chief Reams said a recent survey indicated that 79.3 percent of respondents had contact with the Police Department.

The Chief’s report included a budget summary and an update on the Communications Center. Selectman Grella asked if there had been a decrease of state police visibility on state roads versus that of ten years ago. Chief Reams said they haven’t noticed a decrease. The Board expressed thanks for an excellent presentation and the department’s work efforts. Maggie Paul of Ways and Means asked when most crimes occur; more in summer, etc. Mr. D’Angelo stated that the Chief’s presentation was the best and most persuasive he had heard. He urged the Chief to budget \$5,000 for succession planning. Chief Reams said he hopes to conduct another survey next year.

4.2 Tax & Assessing

Tax Collector, Gail Stout, provided a Strategic Planning Update [attached] of the Tax and Assessing Department which is staffed by two full-time employees and by contract with KRT Appraisal. The update included current valuation data with a net valuation of \$1,693,564,637 (valuation used to calculate the 2016 tax rate set by DRA in late October). Ms. Stout said that collection rates in Amherst historically range from 94 to 96 percent each year. The report also included the history of property liens which continues to decline each year as collections increase, achieving target outcomes, and needs to reach desired goals that include expanded services through technology and software upgrades as well as staff training. Ms. Stout’s final slide included a budget impact summary.

Board members complimented Ms. Stout on her record of accomplishments. Chairman Brew said that the collection rates ranging from 94 to 96 percent each year is a function of the economy but it also has a lot to do with Ms. Stout’s office.

In response to Sarah Bonnoit who asked whether a wide enough net is cast in seeking an appraisal contractor, Ms. Stout said they awarded the bid to the lowest bidder out of three or four and she felt the pool was adequate. John D’Angelo said there were a few stumbling blocks in integrating the new financial system. Finance Director, Lisa Ambrosio, said she does not yet have a timeline on implementation with the general ledger.

5. Town Administrator

5.1 MS-61, Tax Collector’s Report

Tax Collector Stout provided a copy of the MS-61 report for fiscal year 2016 as submitted to the Department of Revenue Administration for information only.

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85 **5.2 MS-434, Revised Estimated Revenues**
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87 Finance Director Ambrosio provided a copy of the MS-434, Revised Estimated Revenues,
88 reflecting a \$150,000 requested overlay. Chairman Brew said the town tries to project what the tax
89 bill will look like and make some assumptions in January and February. Director Ambrosio said
90 the DRA allows adjusting revenue based on last year's closing. Chairman Brew said every year
91 we exceed revenue projections and adjust up to reduce taxes. Adjusting too high creates a risk as
92 well.
93

94 Ways and Means Chairman, John D'Angelo, asked that copies of the presentations be provided to
95 committee members. Town Administrator O'Mara will arrange to get them copies.
96

97 Town Administrator O'Mara read through a memorandum from Richard Dorsett, KRT Appraisal,
98 dated September 7, 2016 [attached]. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to
99 review and sign the MS-1, Summary Inventory of Valuation, and send it to the DRA. Motion
100 passed unanimously, 5-0.
101

102 **5.3 Town Clerk Assistance Request**
103

104 Town Administrator O'Mara reported that Town Clerk, Nancy Demers, has asked for additional
105 assistance during the period from October 8th through October 22nd while Assistant Town Clerk,
106 Lavern Fucci, will be on vacation, and beyond until the election on November 8th. During this
107 time, the Town Clerk's office is busiest with absentee ballots, possibly exceeding 1300, along with
108 a busy month of motor vehicle registrations. Peggy Langell, retired Town Clerk in Milford, is
109 willing to assist and would come fully trained and familiar with software programs used by the
110 Town Clerk's office. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to authorize
111 temporarily hiring Peggy Langell, retired Town Clerk in Milford, to assist during the period from
112 October 8th through November 8th. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.
113

114 **5.4 DPW – Bridge Aid Application**
115

116 Administrator O'Mara indicated that the Board needed to sign an "application for preliminary
117 estimate" form in order to remain in the queue if the state still maintains the Bridge Aid program
118 come 2024-2025. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to sign and submit the
119 application for a Preliminary Estimate for the cost of replacing or rehabilitating Bridge No.
120 063/118 on Brook Road, and for the municipality's share of the costs of such replacement or
121 rehabilitation under Bridge Aid Law, RSA Chapter 234. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.
122

123 **5.5 DPW Bid- Crack Seal**
124

125 Administrator O'Mara presented Bid # 02-17 for crack sealing work submitted by the Department
126 of Public Works. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to award Bid # 02-17 to
127 the lowest bidder, Henry Dow, to perform crack sealing work at a cost of \$8,000 and to provide all
128 necessary equipment, labor, materials and other items or service needed. Motion passed
129 unanimously, 5-0.
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134 **DPW Bid – Building Repair & Maintenance**
135

136 Town Administrator O'Mara presented bid proposals received for the replacement of tempered
137 insulated glass at the library. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to award the
138 bid to the lowest bidder, Portland Glass of Nashua, NH at a cost of \$5,294.85. Motion passed
139 unanimously, 5-0.
140

141 **5.6 Hawker's & Vendor's Application**
142

143 The Board considered the application of Timothy McGibbon who is seeking a permit to sell food
144 cart products from August 22, 2016 through August 21, 2017. Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara,
145 said that Health Officer, Scott Tenney did research and found that Mr. McGibbon is fully insured
146 and will be selling local produce, pizza, hot dogs, etc. and he encouraged the Board to approve the
147 request. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to grant Timothy McGibbon a
148 permit to sell food cart products from August 22, 2016 through August 21, 2017 and have the
149 Chairman of the Board of Selectmen sign the permit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.
150

151 **5.7 ACC Resignation**
152

153 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to accept, with regret, the resignation of
154 Anne Krantz from the Amherst Conservation Commission. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.
155

156 **5.8 Cider Festival**
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158 Vice Chairman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support the annual Cider Festival
159 with coverage under the town's insurance, DPW supplying five trash barrels, and support from the
160 police and fire departments. The festival will be held on Sunday, October 2, 2016. Motion passed
161 unanimously, 5-0.
162

163 **5.9 Town Common Use Request – Historical Society**
164

165 The Historical Society requested the use of the Town Common for the All Hallows Walk
166 scheduled for Sunday, October 30th from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. The event will include guided tours of
167 the cemetery behind the Town Hall with volunteers portraying several of the men and women
168 buried there. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectmen Grella, to approve the use of the
169 Town Common for the All Hallows Walk on October 30th from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Motion passed
170 unanimously, 5-0.
171

172 **5.10 FY18 Departmental Meeting Participants**
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174 An updated list was provided in the Board packet
175

176 **6. Approvals**
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178 **6.1 Payroll**
179

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$205,089.47 dated September 1, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$427.71 dated September 7, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$202,840.00 dated September 15, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0

6.2 Accounts Payable

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$31,623.14 dated August 31, 2016, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$267,027.51 dated August 24, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$798,138.22 dated September 8, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$2,626,573.00 dated October 3, 2016, subject to review and audit. (School Disbursements). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

6.3 Previous Meeting Minutes: August 22, 2016

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of August 22, 2016, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7. New/Old Business

Town Administrator O'Mara stated that a request from the Amherst BSA Troop #613 to use the town green was submitted over the weekend. They plan to set up around 4:00 p.m. and will dismantle soon after the trick-a-treat is over around 8:15 p.m. Selectman Grella moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to allow the use of the town green to the Amherst BSA Troop #613 on Halloween to hold their annual hot dog/chili fundraiser for the troop. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Town Administrator O'Mara stated that Textiles Coated International (TCI) has requested to meet with DPW Director, Bruce Berry, which will take place on Thursday of this week.

Selectman Grella said he will be providing trees for Joshua's Park. Selectman Lyon said there is a Seniors' lunch on Thursday. Selectman Jensen said the Internet Committee will be meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 12:30 in the Barbara Landry meeting room.


Selectman Jensen went over pending items as follows:

- 1) Central Station Renovation – Administrator O’Mara said RFPs were sent to five companies and specifications had to be amended. Companies were contacted and informed of the changes and no one wanted an extension to September 23rd. Administrator O’Mara expects to bring forward a recommendation to the Board at its October 10th meeting.
- 2) Chairman Brew asked Administrator O’Mara to inform Mike Akillian that another work session is not necessary now but another might be scheduled in the future. Board appreciates all of his efforts.
- 3) Status of 2nd work plan for Merrimack Road – Administrator O’Mara said that Steve Keach put a plan together and Continental Paving has accepted it. The road will be closed this week. Plans are designed to address every resident’s concern on that road.
- 4) The Board asked to get the previously requested update on A2 calls from Fire Chief Matt Conley. Administrator O’Mara will schedule the report for the Board’s next meeting.

Pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:2, II (b) and (c), Selectman Lyon moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to enter into non-public session at 8:50 p.m. Roll Call: Brew-yes; Grella-yes; Jensen-yes; Lyon-yes; Panasiti-yes. Vote was unanimous, 5-0.

8. Adjournment

NEXT MEETING: September 26, 2016



Selectman Nate Jensen
Clerk, Board of Selectmen



Date