



**Town of Amherst, NH**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**Barbara Landry Meeting Room**  
**2 Main Street**  
**Monday, December 12, 2016**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Dwight Brew called the public meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Reed Panasiti, Selectmen Tom Grella, Nate Jensen and Peter Lyon. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes.

Members of the Ways and Means Committee in attendance included: Chairman John D'Angelo, Jason Lozzi, Maggie Paul, Peter Moustakis, Dave Sullivan, April Savino, and Sarah Bonnoit.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance** – Ways and Means Committee members led the pledge.

**4. Citizens' Forum** – None

**5. Founder's Village Roads**

Mike Foisie of Michachunk Development, Inc. came forward to seek approval to have Founder's Village Roads accepted as public roads or "dedicated streets", as described by RSA 674:40-a. It was noted that the Planning Board has approved acceptance and the Department of Public Works recommends that Founders Way (2,520 linear feet), Potters Way (475 linear feet) and Trask Way (425 linear feet) all be accepted as town roads. Selectman Grella asked how the street names were determined. Mr. Foisie said the street names were based on Amherst principals so that they had some significance to town. Chairman Brew mentioned that the road is not completed. Mr. Foisie said Ketchell will be done in Phase III and that the first two phases have been complete since 2012. Currently there are a considerable amount of residents in the development. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to hold a Public Hearing on the matter at the Board's next meeting of January 9<sup>th</sup>. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

**6. FY18 Budget**

On behalf of the Conservation Commission, and at the Board's request, John Harvey came forward to provide further information regarding the Commission's budget request, and to more particularly address Selectman Jensen's concern about the percentage increase of the budget request. The Conservation Commission budget request includes:

Recorder	\$ 1,100
Professional Development	\$ 1,000
Land Management	\$ --
Town Meadow Maintenance	\$ 5,000
Trail Maintenance	\$ --
Water Crossing Repair & Replacement	\$ 3,000
Invasives Mitigation	\$ 4,000
Signage	\$ 2,195
Kiosk	\$ 1,000
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 700
Educational Outreach	\$ 500
Initiative: Lindabury Orchard Rehab	\$ 3,450
TOTAL	\$21,945

Mr. Harvey went through each item and explained the benefit gained to the town and its residents; such as professional development opportunities, bridge maintenance, mitigating the damage caused by invasives, and signage for increased areas being opened up. Mr. Harvey also indicated that going forward the Commission will focus on an active planning effort. All Board members were comfortable with the budget amounts requested.

Amy Lapointe, Library Director, and Liz Larson, Library Trustee, came forward to explain that their budget request of \$30,010 in employee compensation and \$6,400 for capital spending were simply “true up” figures. Director Lapointe indicated that the \$6,400 increase in capital spending was distributed over several lines in initiatives. Maggie Paul pointed out that several other departments were taking a little less and the library should do as well.

Town Administrator O’Mara reviewed a letter received from Interlocal Trust indicating that the medical trends in NH are the highest they’ve been in a decade, and in spite of rapidly increasing healthcare costs, the Trust’s overall increase for FY18 is at 10.959%. The town’s not-to-exceed renewal estimate for the plan year beginning on July 1, 2017 is 14.29% reflecting an impact of \$145,418 in the global assumptions.

The Board went over the global assumptions and proposed FY18 budget initiatives as follows:

Global Assumption Variables	Included	Current	Value	Impact
Step Adjustment FT	Yes	N/A	Various	
Step Adjustment PT	Yes	N/A	1.00%	
COLA (incl. FICA)		0%	1.50%	\$ 53,556
457(b) Employer Match		5.50%	5.50%	\$ 2,657
Health Insurance		0%	14.29%	\$145,418
Dental Insurance		0%	1.00%	\$ 437
NHRS Retirement-Police		26.38%	29.43%	\$ 28,541
NHRS Retirement-Fire Rescue		29.16%	31.89%	\$ 7,134
Heat, Gasoline & Diesel		0%	0%	-
Water, Electric & Telephone		0%	1.00%	\$ 1,577
TOTAL				\$239,320

The Ways and Means Committee voted in favor of the COLA and 457(b) Employer Match, 7-0.

PROPOSED FY18 BUDGET INITIATIVES				
Department	Initiative	Costs	Include?	Comments
Police	+Patrolman	85,000	Yes	W&M opposed 0-7
Recreation	Mower	15,000	No	
Tax/Assessing	Vision Software Update	9,000	No	
DPW	Roads	2,600,000	No	W&M in favor 7-0
DPW	Bridges	115,000	No	Went to CR/WA
DPW	Buildings	10,000	Yes	W&M in favor 7-0
DPW	Stormwater	80,000	No	Increase WA to \$150,000
Community Development	Planning	10,000	Yes	W&M in favor 7-0
Community Development	Zoning	20,000	No	
Conservation Commission	Various Projects	7,795	Yes	W&M in favor 7-0
Library	Employee Compensation	30,010	Yes	W&M supports 5-2
Library	Capital Spending	6,400	Yes	W&M has not met
Administration	Cable & Maintenance	11,000	Yes	W&M in favor 7-0

The W&M Committee was opposed to adding a patrolman because the position would not be used to reduce overtime or deal with the drug crisis, and that the police personnel complement was on par with other neighboring communities. Chief Reams indicated that it is his intent to change the overall model in addressing increased calls for service and in addressing liability concerns because of a lack of dedicated supervision ensuring that right decisions are made. In addition, increased longevity equals increased benefits and there remains overtime needs to cover vacations and holidays. The Chief said he was trying to maintain a high level of service. April Savino said she voted against adding a patrolman because there was no data backing up the request. Chief Reams said that crime statistics can be manipulated, and that a 40% increase in calls for service is enormous. Also, Amherst remains one of the top five communities with shoplifting activity. Chairman John D'Angelo said the Committee will discuss the matter again.

Regarding the road bond, and after some discussion, the Board decided to not include \$200,000 to the budget. John D'Angelo noted that there was a need to get maintenance up. Chairman Brew said the Board has increased the budget \$200,000 a year for the past several years. Selectman Lyon said he would like two lines in the DPW budget – one for road maintenance and one for road reconstruction.

Chairman Brew took up **Agenda Item 9.2 Station Manager** and mentioned his concern over the stipend for the Station Manager position proposed by Administrator O'Mara. Selectman Jensen said he was in favor of hiring a Station Manager because it is important to be transparent to the public. Selectman Lyon proposed approving the position and leaving oversight of the position to Administrator O'Mara, and revisit the matter in 12 months.

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to present at the deliberative session a proposed operating budget of \$13,133,326. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

## 7. FY18 Warrant Articles

The Board went through proposed warrant articles and agreed to move forward as follows:

Proposed Warrant Article	Amount	Budget Impact	Tax Impact	
Bridges CRF	\$115,000	\$115,000	.07	W&M supports 7-0
Contingency Fund	\$150,000			W&M supports 7-0
Assessing CRF	\$25,000	\$25,000	.01	W&M supports 7-0
Communications CRF	\$25,000	\$25,000	.01	W&M supports 7-0
Fire Truck Refurbish	\$200,000	\$200,000		
Ambulance CRF	\$50,000	\$50,000	.03	W&M supports 7-0
Computer System CRF	\$15,000	\$15,000	.01	W&M awaits info
Elderly/Blind/Disabled Exemptions	\$17,219	\$17,219	.01	
All Service Veterans Tax Credit	\$204,000	\$204,000	.12	
Forest View Cemetery Phase I Construction	\$200,000			No tax impact. W&M supports 5-1-1
TOTAL		\$651,219	.38	

The Board removed proposed warrant articles on the fire tower refurbish and the fire station renovation CRFs (including the LUCT). Administrator O'Mara will check on the legality of combining/closing out CRFs. Chairman Brew thought that if the Board chose to repurpose a capital reserve fund, it must first dissolve the fund and recreate another.

The Board discussed the All Service Veterans Tax Credit. Administrator O'Mara indicated that the amount of the tax credit must be the same for all service and wartime veterans. Selectman Lyon proposed a two-year phase in amount of \$400 a year and work up to the \$500 credit. Vice Chairman Panasiti said he would not be in favor of such a proposal. Selectman Grella agreed that everyone should have the full benefit of \$500. The Board agreed.

Administrator O'Mara suggested the inclusion of two additional warrant articles. The first article is to establish a Police Station Renovating Fund and appropriate \$200,000. The Board felt that with the addition of a patrolman the establishment of this fund should be postponed to next year.

The second additional proposed article was to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate \$18,000 from the amount collected and deposited into the Land Use Change Tax Fund (LUCT) in the preceding year, and to transfer said amount into the Fire Station Renovation CRF

## 8. FY18 Default Budget

A calculation of the default budget indicated the FY18 default budget at \$12,891,365; \$241,961 less than the proposed operating budget of \$13,133,326.

118 **9. Update – Fire Station Renovation**

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120 Town Administrator O'Mara stated that a meeting was scheduled with architectural and  
121 mechanical contractors in the next week. No estimated completion date is yet available.  
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123 **10. Town Administrator**

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125 **9.1 Road Spending Update**

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127 In response to the Board's request, Administrator O'Mara provided a breakdown of the \$15  
128 million road reconstruction bond approved by warrant on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The balance available  
129 December 2016 is \$2,679,263.80.  
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131 **9.2 Station Manager – Taken Up Earlier in the Meeting**

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133 **9.3 Employee Recognition**

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135 Administrator O'Mara read through a letter of thanks received from Justin Rioux, Owner of M. P.  
136 Rioux dated November 23, 2016 for the work of the building department, particularly Deb  
137 Butcher's professionalism and kind manner. Administrator O'Mara indicated that a copy of the  
138 letter will be included in Ms. Butcher's personnel file.  
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140 **9.4 MS4 Permit**

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142 Town Administrator O'Mara said that DPW Director, Bruce Berry, had participated in the  
143 conference call today on the matter. All of the appeals of the Massachusetts MS4 Permit are now  
144 consolidated in the United States Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit and the parties appealing are  
145 now in negotiations. Work continues on behalf of the towns of Manchester, Dover, Rochester,  
146 Salem, Merrimack, Londonderry, Bedford, Portsmouth, Amherst, Raymond, Hampstead,  
147 Stratham, Danville, and Wilton. Amherst's outstanding balance due is \$1,000, which expense was  
148 previously authorized by the Board.  
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150 **9.5 AFR Appointments**

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152 Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to authorize hiring Raymond Kong and Alex  
153 Mittell as firefighters effective December 9, 2016 and December 11, 2016, respectively. Motion  
154 passed unanimously, 5-0.  
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156 **9.6 Hawkers & Vendors Permit Application**

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158 Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to grant a Hawkers & Vendors permit to  
159 David Theriault to sell Christmas trees from November 26, 2016 to December 23, 2016 at the  
160 Homestead Grocery Store. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.  
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162 **10. Approvals**

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164 **10.1 Intent to Cut – ACC**

Town Administrator O'Mara indicated that years ago the Board had authorized Gail Stout, Tax Collector, to approve such requests; however, this request involves her husband so to avoid any appearance of preferential treatment, he ask for the Board's approval. Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve and sign the 2016 Intent to Cut for Map 10, Lot 6 and 9 located off Brook Road, owned by the Town of Amherst and managed by the Amherst Conservation Commission. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

## **10.2 Petition and Pole License**

Selectman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve a license request to install and maintain underground conduits, cable and wires, and maintain poles and structures with strengthening and protecting fixtures as may be necessary along and under the public ways: on (1) pole, 9/2Y located on Boston Post Road in the Town of Amherst. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

## **10.3 Payroll**

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY17 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$198,782.61 dated December 8, 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 (Longevity Payments) in the amount of \$25,396.01 dated December 9, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

## **10.4 Accounts Payable**

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$24,969.12 dated November 30, 2016, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve one (1) FY17 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$153,323.95 dated November 29, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

**Concentration Account:** Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve one (1) FY17 Concentration Account Manifest in the amount of \$5,754.67 dated December 2, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

## **10.5 Previous Meeting Minutes – November 28, 2016**

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of November 28, 2016, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.


## **11. New/Old Business**

Administrator O'Mara will arrange to separate out the DPW budget lines for road maintenance, and road reconstruction, and he will research the issue of dissolving CRFs.

215 **12. Adjournment**

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217 Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.  
218 Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

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220 **NEXT MEETING: January 9, 2017**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Selectman Nate Jensen  
Clerk, Board of Selectmen

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

1/9/17