



# Town of Amherst, NH

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room  
2 Main Street  
Tuesday, October 9, 2018

1       **1. Call to Order**

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3       Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

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5       Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Selectmen John D'Angelo, Tom Grella, Peter Lyon,  
6       and Reed Panasiti. Also present: Executive Assistant Mary Guild.

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8       Ways & Means members present: Peter Moustakis (Chair), Sarah Bonnoit, Margaret Paul,  
9       Elaina Bedio, and Scott Tuthill.

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11       **2. Pledge of Allegiance** – John Harvey, Treasurer of the Amherst Conservation  
12       Commission, led the pledge.

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14       **3. Citizens' Form** – none.

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16       Chairman Brew updated the Board on the search for the next Town Administrator process.  
17       The deadline for applications was Monday the 8<sup>th</sup>. 34 applications were received from 11  
18       states, including 1 from South Africa. These applications are currently being reviewed and  
19       ranked by MRI. Essay questions will be sent to the top candidates. MRI's team will  
20       review the essays and complete preliminary background checks before phone interviews  
21       begin. The Board will be presented with the top 3-5 candidates during the week of  
22       November 5<sup>th</sup>. More comprehensive background checks will be completed and  
23       negotiations will begin. The hope is to have a new Town Administrator on board shortly  
24       into the new year.

25  
26       Chairman Brew also gave an update on the Horace Greely Road Bridge. The bridge was  
27       closed for repairs on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Construction has been ongoing six days a week since then.  
28       There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the bridge on October 10<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. The bridge  
29       will remain open, from that point forward.

30  
31       **4. Committee Appointments**

32               **ACC Appointments - Alternate**

33       Chairman Brew introduced William Stoughton and thanked him for his effort to volunteer  
34       for the Conservation Commission.

35  
36       Mr. Stoughton gave a brief description of his background, including his involvement  
37       volunteering for Habitat for Humanity.  
38

39 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*  
40 *appoint Mr. Stoughton as an alternate to the Amherst Conservation Commission until*  
41 *2019.*

42 *Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

## 44 **5. Strategic Planning Presentations**

### 46 **5.1 Cemetery Trustees**

47 Marie Grella, Chairman of the Cemetery Trustees, and Eric Hahn, DPW Director  
48 presented the Trustees' strategic plan. Ms. Grella stated the targeted outcomes for the  
49 cemeteries to be: 1) May 2022, Forestview ready for interments and 2) May 2019, Scatter  
50 Garden at Meadowview open for cremains. Bids will go out for work on the construction  
51 of Forestview in Jan/Feb 2019. The work on the scatter garden in Meadowview Cemetery  
52 was begun in Jun/July 2017 by Eagle Scout Eric Roberts. This garden will be open for  
53 scattering in May 2019 and there will be a cost associated with scattering.

54  
55 In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Ms. Grella stated that the money from  
56 plots purchased goes into the Cemetery Fund. More information regarding this part of the  
57 budget will be presented during the budget process.

58  
59 The Board, Ms. Grella, and Mr. Hahn discussed from where funds for the maintenance of  
60 the cemeteries comes.

### 62 **5.2 Conservation Commission**

63 ACC Chairman, Rob Clemens, Vice-Chair, Jared Hardner, and Treasurer, John Harvey,  
64 presented the Commission's strategic plan. Mr. Clemens stated that the first strategy of the  
65 ACC is to influence zoning and planning. The Commission does this in part by working  
66 with the Planning Board and reviewing applications to NHDES. A second strategy of the  
67 group is to acquire properties or development rights for conserving priority lands in town.  
68 There is a prioritization scheme used to determine which properties in town are most  
69 valuable from a conservation standpoint. Thirdly, the group works to manage 1566 acres  
70 of the town's forests. Another strategy is to manage the town's 250 acres of grasslands.  
71 These grasslands are managed usually for the production of hay or for bird habitat. A fifth  
72 strategy is to control the invasive plant species throughout Amherst. The group works with  
73 DPW and hopes to encourage private landowners to manage what's on their property as  
74 well. Strategy 6 involves promoting low-impact outdoor recreation on town land. Finally,  
75 the last strategy involves education outreach initiatives, which the group would like to  
76 expand upon in the future.

77  
78 Mr. Hardner explained to the Board that the ACC added one property, Sky Meadow, to  
79 their portfolio this year. They intend to continue to manage the property as a meadow.

80  
81 Selectman Lyon thanked the Commission for their work and the terrific number of  
82 volunteer hours associated with the group.

84 In response to a question from Selectman D'Angelo, Mr. Hardner explained that the  
85 Commission uses a matrix that looks at irreplaceability and vulnerability, along with other  
86 criteria, to evaluate potential properties.

87  
88 The Commission and the Board discussed the protection of water and aquifers in town.  
89 Chairman Brew suggested that the Commission come back to the Board with a small  
90 amount of information regarding options on this topic that could help with the next level  
91 of discussions.

92  
93 Mr. Hardner explained that the ACC has a map specific to aquifer protection which could  
94 be used to choose properties to acquire to protect the town's water supply if that's what  
95 the town would like to do. He stated that the town's most valuable water supply runs along  
96 101A. This is also, unfortunately, the most threatened supply in town.

97  
98 In response to a question from Chairman Brew, Mr. Clemens stated that the ACC works  
99 closely with the Planning Board on the topic of density bonuses for new developments.  
100 The developers are given extra bonuses for open space areas, and more for these areas to  
101 be made publicly accessible. The ACC is often asked to manage this areas after  
102 development is complete, but they often don't get too involved due to the amount of other  
103 land they already manage and the general quality of these areas.

104  
105 Peter Moustakis, Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee, asked the ACC to run a  
106 cost/benefit analysis on the plots of land that they allow farmers to hay without charging  
107 for. Mr. Harvey explained that the farmers are under contract to provide sufficient  
108 nutrients back into the soil on these plots to continue the crop.

### 109 110 **5.3 Department of Public Works**

111 Director of DPW, Eric Hahn, presented the Department's Strategic Plan. He stated that the  
112 first intended outcome is for 68% or more of Amherst roads to be rated as good, according  
113 to industry standard, by 2025. This shifting of balance in road ratings will lead to a  
114 decrease in red roads from 29 miles, to about 12.5 miles. A second outcome is to build or  
115 upgrade an additional 6 Amherst bridges and water crossings that will last for 75+ years,  
116 with the last 3 enrolled in DOT's bridge program, by 2025. Included in this outcome is the  
117 plan to replace 6 at risk steel culvert crossings with Concrete Box or Beam. Another  
118 outcome is to have all Amherst town buildings and outbuildings be functionally sound and  
119 compliant with all appropriate regulations and codes by 2025. A fourth outcome is for  
120 Amherst DPW to achieve work force productivity of 90% by 2020. The Department is  
121 currently implementing their Mobile 311 maintenance management software to aid in this  
122 outcome. The final outcome presented involves Amherst continuing to comply with the  
123 evolving requirements of the Clean Water Act under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer  
124 System permit, issued by the EPA. DPW is working closely with the Office of  
125 Community Development to develop a new way of ensuring this compliance.

126  
127 In response to a question from Selectman Grella, Mr. Hahn stated that the financial  
128 numbers in his strategic plan don't include any bond money. He believes that bond money  
129 should be left alone, and that this way of doing things allows the freedom to attack roads  
130 by segment, not driven by bond money.

Selectman Lyon thanked Mr. Hahn for presenting the plan with a fresh look and for thinking outside of the box on many of the DPW proposed outcomes.

Selectman Grella stated that he has heard many instances of people noticing how much is getting done around town. The new management system appears to be working well.

Selectman Panasiti thanked Mr. Hahn and stated that he is excited for the new roads and bridges plan. He believes it will save the town money over time.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that he is excited to see red roads proposed to be reduced by 11% by 2025. He explained that the 12 miles of red roads left at that time will probably be quite expensive to fix, but that the Department will also have more money to work with at that point. He requested that Mr. Hahn add information on a future upgrade to the DPW facility in next year's presentation.

Chairman Brew thanked Mr. Hahn and Selectman D'Angelo for their work on this plan. He explained that the town's bridges should be looked at broadly, in hopes of possibly leveling the amount needed to fix them, if possible.

In response to a question from Mr. Moustakis, Chairman Brew stated that, in the budget there will be two separate line items for road repair and road maintenance, but in reality there is money allocated for rebuilding and maintenance and it is up to the DPW Director to determine how to split this up.

## **6. Budget Discussion**

### **6.1 Global Assumptions**

Chairman Brew presented the Global Assumptions numbers for FY20 to the Board and Ways & Means Committee.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that he reviewed these numbers with previous Town Administrator James O'Mara, before he left his position. Some of these numbers are targeted placeholders that will be replaced with actual numbers once they are known. In terms of the Cola number, Selectman D'Angelo and Mr. O'Mara compared data from other towns and Amherst's is in average with the rest.

Selectman Lyon stated that he agreed with using these numbers for the first draft of the budget and that they can be changed, if needed, later.

## **7. Administration**

### **7.1 Unassigned Fund Balance**

Chairman Brew explained that the Board reviews the policy to generally apply 50% of the unassigned fund balance that exceeds the targeted 10% each fall to offset property taxes. The estimated fund balance over 10% for 2018 is approximately 1.4 million dollars. As 50% of this balance is applied to offset property taxes, it is generally returned in

installments, instead of all at once, which helps to avoid huge spikes in the budget process each year.

## **7.2 Buchanan Park/Roantree Bocce Ball Courts Sign**

Executive Assistant, Mary Guild, explained that Mr. Craig Fraley has received a quote on the sign for the bocce ball court/Buchanan Park. The sign will cost \$1,700, including installation.

In response to a question from Chairman Brew, Ms. Guild stated that the funding for this sign is already in the Recreation Department's budget. This sign will be like those found at Birch Park and Joshua's Park.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman Lyon to approve the design of the sign for Buchanan Park, Roantree Bocce Ball Courts and authorize the Recreation Department to move forward with construction and placement of the sign.*

*Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

## **7.3 Preschool Evacuation Plan**

Executive Assistant, Mary Guild, explained that the Preschool in the Village requested using Town Hall as an evacuation location in the event of an emergency back in 2001. She could not find information stating that the Board was ever notified of this plan at the time, and she is requesting they follow-up on this item now.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Lyon to approve the use of Town Hall as an Emergency Evacuation Center for the Preschool in the Village, as needed.*

*Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

## **7.4 New Hires - AFR**

Selectman Lyon commented that these hires are all for part-time, on call positions.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to appoint Daniel Burke, Ryan Douzanis, and Sean Waclawik to the Amherst Fire Rescue, effective immediately.*

*Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

# **8. Approvals**

## **8.1 Petition & Pole Licenses**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Eversource Petition & Pole License to place 1 pole on Candlewood Drive.*

*Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Eversource Petition & Pole License #12-0709 to place 1 pole on Baboosic Lake Road.*

*Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

225  
226 **8.2 Assessing**

227 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to*  
228 *approve and sign the Timber Tax Levy/Certification of Yield Tax for:*  
229 *Property Map/Lot 004-062-006 in the amount of \$132.68.*  
230 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

231  
232 **8.3 Payroll**

233 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to*  
234 *approve one (1) FY19 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$212,568.77 dated September*  
235 *27, 2018, subject to review and audit.*  
236 *Voting: motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

237  
238 **8.4 Accounts Payable**

239 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti,*  
240 *to approve one (1) FY19 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$38,625.85 dated*  
241 *October 1, 2018, subject to review and audit (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH).*  
242 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

243  
244 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti,*  
245 *to approve one (1) FY19 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$901.01 dated*  
246 *September 27, 2018, subject to review and audit.*  
247 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

248  
249 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti,*  
250 *to approve one (1) FY19 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$165,961.28 dated*  
251 *October 2, 2018, subject to review and audit.*  
252 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

253  
254 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti,*  
255 *to approve one (1) FY19 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$2,938,852.00*  
256 *dated October 1, 2018, subject to review and audit (School Disbursement).*  
257 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

258  
259 **8.5 Concentration Account**

260 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti,*  
261 *to approve one (1) FY19 Concentration Account Manifest in the amount of \$8,071.83*  
262 *dated October 1, 2018, subject to review and audit.*  
263 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

264  
265 **8.6 Minutes**

266 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo,*  
267 *to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of September 24, 2018, as written.*  
268 *Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

269  
270 **9. Action Items**

271 *Selectman Panasiti reviewed the action items with the Board.*

Chairman Brew reviewed the warrant for voting with the Board.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to post the warrant for voting day on November 6, 2018 from 6am-8pm, as presented. Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.*

Selectman Lyon reviewed an item from the Cemetery Strategic Plan. He stated that currently when a cemetery plot is sold 100% of the funds go to the town's General Fund. This then helps pay for the maintenance of the cemeteries.

Selectman D'Angelo explained that the Trustees are billed annually for the cost of maintenance, but that the funds from plots sold are netted against this billed amount.

#### **10. New/Old Business**

Selectman Lyon stated that the Planning Board recently heard from a potential development on New Boston/Boston Post Road. This could consist of several new dwellings and is currently in the conceptual stage.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Panasiti and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m. Voting: Motion passed unanimously, 5-0-0.*

**NEXT MEETING: October 22, 2018 – Monday**

**SIGNATURE ON FILE**

**2018.10.22**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Selectman Reed Panasiti*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*