Attendees: Chairman Danielle Pray, Selectman Bill Stoughton, Selectman Cynthia Dokmo, Selectman Peter Lyon, and Selectman Tom Grella

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Danielle Pray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance –** led by John D’Angelo.
2. **Citizens Forum**

John D’Angelo, Woodland Drive, stated that he was previously the Board of Selectmen representative to the Highway Safety Committee. This group met several times to discuss the proposed No Thru Trucking Ordinance. The Committee rejected the proposal with a vote of 4-1 as there was no objective data or factual evidence found to support it. Chief Ciampoli disagreed with the majority vote. As previously mentioned by Selectman Stoughton, there is a 19-year history which shows no speed related incidences in the Village. Mr. D’Angelo stated that Selectman Stoughton also expressed that the ordinance could be considered as he could imagine that an incident could occur in the future. Mr. D’Angelo explained that he does not believe the Board should consider restricting the liberties of certain people traveling through this area based on imagined scenarios. He noted that an ordinance may not even prevent these imagined instances from occurring. He explained that passing of this ordinance will push traffic off Boston Post Road and into other neighborhoods in Town which may be less well suited for this type of traffic. Those neighborhoods will then lose some quality of life. He asked if the Board plans to pick and choose which neighborhoods in Town will lose quality of life versus having it improved. He asked what will happen if truck drivers decide to sue the Town if this ordinance is passed or seek a class action lawsuit. He urged the Board not to create a discriminatory ordinance that will impact truck drivers, especially as there is not a current problem with safety and there is no data to support this. At the very least, he requested that the Board have Town Counsel review the draft ordinance in terms of its legality.

1. **Board of Selectmen Reorganization**
   1. **Board Reorganization and committee assignments**

The Board agreed to the following committee assignments:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Board of Selectmen Assignments** | 2024-2025 |
|  |  |
| **Commissions** |  |
| Conservation Commission | Peter Lyon |
| Heritage Commission | Tom Grella |
| Historic District Commission | Tom Grella |
| Recreation Commission | Cynthia Dokmo |
| Roads & Bridges Commission | Tom Grella |
|  |  |
| **COMMITEES** |  |
| Baboosic Lake Septic Committee | Peter Lyon |
| Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory | Peter Lyon |
| Capital Improvements Committee | Cynthia Dokmo |
| Energy Committee | Bill Stoughton |
| Highway Safety Committee | Tom Grella |
| Stormwater Committee | Bill Stoughton |
|  |  |
| **LIAISONS** |  |
| Legislative liaison | Danielle Pray |
| Schools | Bill Stoughton |
| Cemetery Trustees | Cynthia Dokmo |
| Library Trustees | Danielle Pray |
|  |  |
| **REPRESENTATIVES** |  |
| Planning Board | Bill Stoughton/Cynthia Dokmo (alt) |
| Trustee of the Trust Fund | Cynthia Dokmo |
| Master Plan Steering Committee | N/A (not currently meeting) |

1. **Board Discussion**
   1. **Draft of Select Board Consent Agenda procedure**

The Board reviewed the draft Select Board Consent Agenda procedure. Selectman Stoughton explained that topics for the Consent Agenda were chosen based on items the Board usually moves through without much discussion. It was noted that any member of the Board can request to remove an item from the Consent Agenda in order to have further discussion.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Dokmo to adopt the Board’s Consent Agenda procedure, with the addition of pole licenses to the list.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

* 1. **No Thru Trucking Ordinance draft**

In response to question from Chairman Pray, Police Chief Ciampoli stated that Town Counsel has not yet reviewed this draft document.

Chief Ciampoli explained that, if this was a blanket No Thru Trucking ordinance with a weight limit set at 26,0001 lbs., he would tend to agree with some of the legality comments made earlier by Mr. D’Angelo. However, with a weight limit suggestion of 60,000 lbs.+ and a specific roadway in Town (Boston Post Road), he believes this is closer to meeting the Board’s goals and will be acceptable to Town Counsel. He noted that the draft ordinance also outlines a waiver process. This proposal seeks to stop large commercial, thru traffic from using the Village as a cut through. He noted that this could lead to an influx of traffic onto other nearby roads, leading more neighborhoods in Town seeking relief through this ordinance. Chief Ciampoli stated that he has not heard of any legal issues for other nearby towns that have similar ordinance sign postings.

Selectman Stoughton asked if the draft ordinance proposes a weight limit of 26,001 lbs. Chief Ciampoli stated that it does not. The ordinance language allows the Board to authorize different weight limits for various roads in Town. The most common weight limit for similar ordinances is 26,001 lbs., but if the Board would like to allow some 6-wheeled dump trucks, as previously discussed, the weight limit should be increased. Chief Ciampoli noted that ancillary roadways to Boston Post Road could be a concern for shifting traffic and so he is thus proposing including Mont Vernon Road, Christian Hill Road, and Lyndeborough Road.

Selectman Stoughton stated that his concern is safety. He is not willing to wait for an accident to occur along Boston Post Road involving a child. This is a narrow roadway with sidewalks directly next to the road and children walking to school. If, as suggested by Mr. D’Angelo, this is simply his imagination creating concerns, then he does not have an issue with this. He would advocate for a lower weight limit along Boston Post Road for the ordinance but will support the proposed weight limit. He suggested that nearby roads should be examined to see how much traffic is being pushed onto them before implementing the ordinance on them as well.

Selectman Grella agreed that a good first step would be having Town Counsel review the draft ordinance.

Selectman Dokmo stated that she would like to wait until the required public hearings before deciding on the ordinance. She stated that she believes all ancillary roadways should be considered if needed in the future. Chief Ciampoli noted that an important piece of the ordinance will be how the Town decides to advertise it.

Selectman Lyon stated that he would also like to reserve judgement on the ordinance until the public hearings. He likes the direction thus far in terms of limiting only very large vehicles from traveling down Boston Post Road. He suggested that the Town should notify Milford as to when the public hearings on this item are being held.

Chairman Pray stated that she believes the 60,000+ lb. weight limit seems high but deferred to the expertise of others. She suggested seeking options for penalties for first and second offenses from other towns with similar ordinances.

There was agreement that the ordinance should consider a weight limit along Boston Post Road from Mont Vernon Road at the Town line to Boston Post Road, and Boston Post Road south to Amherst Street. There was discussion regarding where to post this in Mont Vernon in order to alert truck drivers.

Town Administrator Shankle explained that the Board may want to use traffic study data in order to back up the proposal to post this ordinance for other roads in Town as well. Chairman Pray asked if other towns with similar ordinances have used data in their processes to pass them. Chief Ciampoli stated that he believes other towns likely passed similar ordinances due to community concerns.

Selectman Grella noted that Mack Hill Road could also be used as a way for trucks to get around the Village and could also be studied. There was discussion that additional roads should not be added until it is clear what the impact of passing the ordinance will be.

* 1. **Energy Committee**

Selectman Stoughton noted that the Committee has reviewed community power, solar on Town buildings, and increased reliability in Town. He asked if the Board had other areas it would like the Committee to focus on. Mercedes Olster, Chair of the Energy Committee, explained that this depends on if the Town has other renewable energy or sustainability goals.

The Board agreed to pause action by this Committee at this time, with the note that the Committee may be called back in the future.

1. **Administration**

**6.1. German Christmas Market response to request**

Town Administrator Shankle explained that the German Christmas Market group has offered to pay the Town $2,542 or half of what was requested for Town services provided during the event.

Selectman Lyon expressed disappointment over the offer but noted that he was inclined to accept it over nothing.

Selectman Dokmo stated that she does not believe the Town’s citizens should have to pay for any of the costs incurred by this event. This should be paid in full by the German Christmas Market group. It is not the Town’s fault that this group underestimated the number of people that attended the event this year and the cost of the Town’s services for this.

Selectman Grella expressed his disappointment. The group’s financial information shows the amount of money it earned from this event and none of it came back to the Town. The citizens should not have to pay for these costs.

Selectman Stoughton expressed his disappointment. He noted that the financial statement shows that the group made approximately $11,700 on this event, leaving enough to pay for the Town’s services. The Board has asked numerous times about who the beneficiary is of this charitable organization without any answer. It is unclear where the money earned by this event is going. The taxpayers subsidized these profits. The Board has certainly learned its lesson in terms of approving this type of event moving forward.

Chairman Pray expressed her disappointment, especially after seeing the amount of revenue from this event which could have covered the costs incurred by the Town.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to accept, with disappointment, the offered amount from the Amherst German Christmas Market.*

*Vote:* *4-1-0; motion carried [Selectman Dokmo against.]*

**6.2. Update on Thornton Ferry Road 1, PFAS Concern**

Town Administrator Shankle explained that the Town was recently approved by the State to amend the date by which to spend the $1.5M State grant to remediate the PFAS exceedances in Town to January 1, 2026. The Town has spent approximately $574,000 of the grant so far. There should be plenty of funding left to take on the water line project on Thornton Ferry I. There is also a balance in the Town’s ARPA funding of approximately $852,000. If the Town decides to take care of the non-exceedance issues on Thornton Ferry I, it will need to use ARPA funding. On Thornton Ferry I, only #14 and #17 are in exceedance and are the Town’s responsibility.

There was agreement on the Board regarding the recommendations to connect #14 and #17 to the water line and to provide #23 with filters. Selectman Stoughton noted that the remediation needed for the Fire Station site is still unclear and will require use of ARPA and/or other funding.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Stoughton to authorize Town Administrator Shankle to direct Pennichuck to make connections to all residences on this side of the bridge on Thornton Ferry Road I that are affected by the Town’s PFAS contamination and to offer filtration equipment to the residents at #23 Thornton Ferry Road I.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**6.3. NHIT Renewal, Health Insurance**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the renewal of the NHIT contract, as recommended by Staff.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**6.4. HealthTrust Renewal Package for Dental, Life, STD, and LTD**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the benefit renewal package from HealthTrust as written.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**6.5. Action Items list**

The Board reviewed its action items.

**7. Staff Reports**

**7.1. Regular Part-time Hire – Transfer Station Attendant**

DPW Director Slosek explained the DPW recently conducted interviews for the vacant position of regular part-time transfer station attendant. He recommended Jake Coulter, an Amherst resident, for this position.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Selectman Lyon to hire Jake Coulter to fill the vacant position of Regular Part-Time Transfer Station Attendant, effective Tuesday, April 2, 2024, under the conditions as specified in the conditional offer of employment at Grade 3, Step 5 at $21.35 an hour.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**8. Approvals**

**8.1. Assessing**

**Solar Exemption**

**Item A.** The Assessor has reviewed the application for the solar exemption under RSA 72:62

and recommends approval.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the solar exemption in the amount of $30,000 for Map 004 Lot 100-004 commencing in tax year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item A-1.** The Assessor has reviewed the application for the solar exemption under RSA 72:62 and recommends approval.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the solar exemption in the amount of $12,500 for Map 002 Lot 146-059 commencing in the tax year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item A-2.** The Assessor has reviewed the application for the solar exemption under RSA 72:62 and recommends approval.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the solar exemption in the amount of $20,000 for Map 008 Lot 074-000 commencing in the tax year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item A-3.** The Assessor has reviewed the application for the solar exemption under RSA 72:62 and recommends approval.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the solar exemption in the amount of $20,000 for Map 001 Lot 010-002 commencing in the tax year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Veteran Tax Credit**

**Item B.** The attached Veteran Tax Credit Application has been reviewed and the applicant qualifies for the Tax Credit under RSA 72:28 for the 2024 tax year.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 002, Lot 098-029 commencing in Tax Year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item B-1.** The attached Veteran Tax Credit Application has been reviewed, and the applicant does not qualify for the Tax Credit under RSA 72:28 for the 2024 tax year.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to deny the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 003, Lot 166-001 in Tax Year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item B-2.** The attached Veteran Tax Credit Application has been reviewed and the applicant qualifies for the Tax Credit under RSA 72:28 for the 2024 tax year.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 002 Lot 146-059 commencing in Tax Year 2024.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Abatement**

**Item C.** The Assessor has inspected the property and recommends changing the assessed value from $505,000 to $475,300.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the abatement in the amount of $650.00 for Map 002, Lot 087-031.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Item C-1.** The Assessor recommends granting the abatement due to the small building envelope and adverse development conditions.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman to grant an abatement for this property in the amount of $753.00, revising the assessed value from $68,800 to $34,400 for Map 021, Lot 018-039.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Timber Tax Levy**

**Item D.** The attached is a Timber Tax Levy and Certification of Yield Tax to be collected by the Tax Collector for the cutting of timber. The Department of Revenue provides the stumpage values that are used to calculate the tax.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve and sign the Timber Tax Levy and Certification of Yield Tax in the amount of $3.20 for Map 010, Lot 028-007.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**8.2 Atlas Fireworks Permit for Wholesale/Retail sales**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Application & Permit for Wholesale / Retail Sales of Permissible Fireworks for Atlas Fireworks.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**8.3. Payroll, AP, and Minutes**

**Accounts Payable**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of $46,608.94 dated March 16, 2024, subject to review and audit. (NH DMV)*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of $7,992.38 dated March 6, 2024, subject to review and audit. (Vendors)*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of $654,553.06 dated March 28, 2024, subject to review and audit. (Vendors)*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**Minutes**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of March 18, 2024, as amended.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

1. **Action Items**

*This item was previously addressed.*

1. **Old/New Business**

Chairman Pray stated that she would like to work on the Town’s Hiring Policy. It was agreed that she would work with Selectmen Stoughton and Staff on a draft of this item.

**9. Adjournment**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Stoughton to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm.*

*Vote:* *5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

**NEXT MEETING: April 15, 2024**

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*Selectman Peter Lyon* *Date*