



Town of Amherst, NH

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room

2 Main Street

Tuesday, October 14, 2014

I. Non- Public Session

Mr. Grella moved to enter non-public session at 5:30 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A: 3 II (c). Second by Mr. D'Angelo. Roll Call: D'Angelo -yes, Brew-yes, Grella-yes, Akillian-yes. Vote was unanimous, 4-0.

The Board and Town Administrator Jim O'Mara discussed a matter which, if discussed in public, may adversely affect the reputation of someone other than a member of the body.

Mr. D'Angelo moved to exit non-public session at 6:30 p.m. Second by Mr. Akillian. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

II. Public Session

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Mike Akillian, Selectmen John D'Angelo and Tom Grella. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes. Selectman Brad Galinson was absent.

III. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Town resident, Alice Handwerk, led the pledge.

IV. **Citizen Forum** – There was no citizen input.

V. CLG Grant – Amherst Heritage Commission

Will Ludt, Chairman of the Amherst Heritage Commission, reported that the Commission was recently awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant from the NH Division of Historic Resources. The grant is made possible by the 1966 National Preservation Act which – through the National Park Service – makes federal funds available to states and towns for historic preservation purposes.

Commission members chose four farmsteads to be surveyed that have a strong possibility for inclusion into the NH State Register of Historic Places. Proposals for assistance in performing the survey were solicited from qualified historic preservation consultants. Katy Holmes of Newton, MA was interviewed. The selection committee, made up of Will Ludt, Andy Ouellette, and Mary Mahar, unanimously recommend the bid be awarded to Ms. Holmes.

Selectman Grella moved to award the CLG grant bid to Katy Holmes. Selectman D'Angelo seconded. Vote 4-0

Safety Committee

Chairman Brew referenced a memorandum received from Chief of Police, Mark Reams. The Amherst Highway Safety Committee recently met to discuss several current and proposed traffic control device ordinances within the village area.

Administrator O'Mara read through the Safety Committee's recommendations as follows:

52 1) The Committee recommends posting of a TRUCKS/BUSES NO RIGHT TURN sign along
53 Amherst Street at the Main Street intersection;

54 2) Due to the ongoing bridge closure, the signs which had formerly been in place on Mack Hill
55 (southbound) at Manchester (1992 ordinance), and on Manchester (eastbound) at Mack Hill (no
56 ordinance on record) have been temporarily removed. The Committee recommends that both signs be
57 returned to their original location once the bridge reopens.

58 3) The Committee recommends that further discussion on creating a three-way stop at the
59 intersection of Manchester (westbound) at Mack Hill be discussed during the course of the town's
60 upcoming Village Strategic Planning sessions.

61 4) The Committee recommends that the Board of Selectmen enact ordinances to permanently
62 return two stop signs on Main Street (eastbound and westbound) at Middle Street following the re-
63 opening of Boston Post Road.

64
65 Administrator O'Mara mentioned that two public hearings must be held prior to enactment of ordinances.
66 Selectman D'Angelo moved to hold public hearings on October 27th and November 10th respectively.
67 Selectman Grella seconded. Vote 4-0
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69 VI. Business Retention and Expansion Program

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71 Chairman Brew read through a letter prepared by Community Development Director, Colleen Mailloux,
72 indicating that the Towns of Amherst and Milford and the Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce are
73 undertaking a project with the assistance of the University of NH Cooperative Extension focused on
74 identifying issues of concern for local businesses. Letters will be circulated to 160 businesses asking them
75 to participate in the survey. The intent is to interview 100 businesses, and the project committee is looking
76 for volunteers to assist with conducting the interviews. The time commitment would be approximately 5.5
77 hours. Chairman Brew and Vice Chairman Akillian will serve as volunteers and urged that others come
78 forward to help with this important project.
79

80 VII. Strategic Plan Presentations

81 a. Tax & Assessing

82
83 Gail Stout, Tax Collector, provided a FY16-FY20 strategic plan update that included the department's
84 mission, vision, valuation data and goals (attached). The department has two full-time employees and a
85 contracted assessing firm, KRT Appraisal. Services include inventory and valuation of real estate and
86 property tax collection. Ms. Stout reported on the inspection process. The Board encouraged Ms. Stout to
87 consider moving up the purchase of tablets used by assessors and was also asked to look into professional
88 development opportunities for staff.
89

90 b. Department of Public Works (DPW)

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92 DPW Director, Bruce Berry, presented an overview of the department's FY16 strategic update which
93 included a review of strategic initiatives, recommendations, and costs on roads, bridges, sidewalks, town
94 buildings, transfer station, solid waste, and the Baboosic Lake Septic as it integrates with EPA Stormwater
95 mandates. The report also included staffing and vehicle/equipment updates (attached).
96

97
98 It was noted that over half of the town's roads continue to need work. Board members discussed the costs
99 and financing of various projects, staffing, and retaining staff with engineering qualifications that might
100 allow for lesser use of outside consultants moving forward.
101

Board members thanked Director Berry for a thorough and comprehensive update of very complex issues. Chairman Brew asked that the vehicle/equipment update be provided to him in PDF format.

Vice Chairman Akillian felt that even though Fire and EMS were in the throes of work with MRI, it would be important to get strategic updates on those departments, and other board members and Administrator O'Mara agreed to have updates from EMS and Fire, as well. The Board will also get updates from the Town Clerk, Finance, and Administration at its next meeting on October 27th.

VIII. Town Administrator

a. Polling Place Warrant

Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, mentioned receipt of a letter from the Secretary of State's office enclosing a sample of the Warrant that must be posted at all polling places and at the Office of the Town Clerk or at Town Hall (RSA 658:1) no later than Tuesday, October 21st for the November 4, 2014 general election.

Selectman Grella moved to authorize execution of said Warrant. Selectman D'Angelo seconded. Vote 4-0

b. Annual 'Penny Pickers' Charity Application

Administrator O'Mara mentioned receipt of the annual "Penny Pickers" application for charitable solicitation. Selectman Grella moved to grant a permit to the Souhegan High School football and soccer teams to solicit for the Front Door Agency on Saturday, October 25th from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Selectman D'Angelo seconded. Vote 4-0

c. Accept Unanticipated Revenue

Selectman Grella moved to accept unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$2,773.34 representing Amherst's member group's share recovered by HealthTrust as a result of the BSR regulatory proceeding. Selectman D'Angelo seconded. Vote 4-0

d. Comstar Ambulance

Town Administrator O'Mara indicated that current practices of write-off/hardship allowances for ambulance services will cease. A new policy is being developed and will be shared with the Board at its next meeting on October 27th.

e. Budget Schedule

Administrator O'Mara proposed meeting schedule for budget and strategic plan reviews. Board members prefer meeting on the following dates: Monday, November 10, 2014, Thursday, November 13, 2014, Monday, November 17, 2014, Tuesday, November 18, 2014, Monday, November 24, 2014, Tuesday, and November 25, 2014, if needed. The meetings will start at 6:00 pm. Torrey Demanche will work with Lisa Ambrosio, the new Finance Director starting on October 20th, to share the Excel budget worksheets used during last year's budget process.

f. Preliminary Tax Rate – NHDRA

Administrator O'Mara reported that there was still no communication from New Hampshire's Department of Revenue Administration.

153 **IX. Old and New Business**

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155 **c. Tennessee Gas Pipeline**

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157 Chairman Brew distributed draft letters to be sent to the congressional delegation and state representatives
158 regarding the proposed natural gas pipeline being considered for Amherst and the lack of information about
159 what is being proposed. Selectman Grella moved to send the letters signed by Chairman Brew on behalf of the
160 Board. Vice Chairman Akillian seconded. Vote 4-0

161
162 **b.** Town Administrator O'Mara stated that Rita Donaldson has been in touch with the new
163 auditors. Field work will begin within the next 30 days and everything should be in place before December.
164 Administrator O'Mara also reported that effective September 30, 2014, Police Officer Matthew Saunders has
165 retired from the Amherst Police Department after 25 years of service.

166
167 **c.** Vice Chairman Akillian mentioned that he, Administrator O'Mara and Executive Assistant
168 Torrey Demanche had met to discuss the effort needed to completely redesign the town website. It was decided
169 to postpone the redesign until the Spring. However, new enhancements will continue to be made to the current
170 site.

171
172 **d.** Vice Chairman Akillian also reported that the first meeting of the Village Strategic Planning
173 Committee met last Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The group is off to a good start and has identified
174 various outreach efforts. Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of each month and all are invited to
175 attend.

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177 **X. Right-to-Know Request**

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179 Town Administrator O'Mara indicated there was one pending request where the requestor was not satisfied with
180 the first response.

181
182 **XI. Approvals**

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184 **d. Accounts Payable**

185
186 Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of
187 \$523,018.42 dated October 9, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo.
188 Vote 4-0

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190 Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of
191 \$106,197.92 dated October 10, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 4-0

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193 Vice Chairman Akillian moved to approve one (1) FY15 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of
194 \$23,394.70 dated October 10, 2014, subject to review and audit (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH).
195 Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 4-0

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197 **e. Payroll**

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199 Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$176,826.13 dated
200 October 2, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 4-0

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202 Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve one (1) FY15 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$165,124.54 dated
203 October 16, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 4-0

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205 **f. Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes**
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207 Selectman D'Angelo moved to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of September 22, 2014.
208 Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 4-0
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210 **XII. Non-public**
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212 Selectman Grella moved to enter into non-public session at 9:00 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c).
213 Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Roll Call: Akillian-yes, Brew-yes, D'Angelo-yes, Grella-yes. Vote was
214 unanimous.
215

216 Mr. D'Angelo moved to exit non-public session at 9:38pm. Second by Mr. Akillian. The vote was unanimous,
217 4-0.
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219 The Board exited nonpublic session at 9:38pm.
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221 Chairman Brew stated that in nonpublic session no motions were made and no votes were taken.
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223 Mr. D'Angelo moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:39pm. Second by Mr. Grella. Motion passed unanimously 4-
224 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:39pm
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