



Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, August 4, 2014 at 6:30 PM

Call to Order: Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Attendees: Chairman, Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Mike Akillian, Selectmen John D'Angelo, Brad Galinson, and Tom Grella. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes.

Chairman Brew started the meeting with a moment of silence for Dr. James Starke who died recently at the age of 85. Dr. Starke served as Amherst's Health Officer for over four decades and is survived by his wife of 59 years.

Pledge of Allegiance: Colleen Mailloux, new Community Development Director, led the pledge. The Board welcomed Director Mailloux who indicated that she had been on the job for a couple of weeks and was enjoying the community and her new position.

Citizens' Forum

Maureen Mooney, former Merrimack State Representative, came forward to introduce herself as a candidate for the State Senate seat vacated by Senator Bragdon. State Senate District 11 encompasses the towns of Amherst, Merrimack, Milford, and Milton. Ms. Mooney hopes to earn everyone's vote and serve the town of Amherst in the State Senate.

V. Town Treasurer's Report

Liz Overholt, Town Treasurer, provided an end-of-fiscal-year report on investments as required by RSA 41:29. Treasurer Overholt reported that from the last tax cycle (July 1st), five laddered \$3 million CDs are held at Lake Sunapee Bank at 0.55%. \$14.5 million held at Citizens Bank at 0.05% was transferred after researching the options for this tax cycle. \$9.5 million was transferred to Century Bank who offered a 0.5% money market with pledged securities and the interest rate guaranteed until October 31, 2014. A five-month CD was purchased at Century Bank, due November 28, 2014 for \$5 million at 0.45% with pledged securities and no penalty for early withdrawal. Chairman Brew noted that taxes are collected by the town twice a year with the majority of funds going to the schools.

VI. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – BOS and Cemetery Trustees

Selectman Galinson provided an update on the work of the Cemetery Finance Committee. The Committee met on several occasions during the Spring and early Summer. Much research was done and a "Statement of Findings" was produced and placed on the town's website. Detailed recommendations were developed and used by Cemetery Trustee, Bill Belvin, and Selectman Galinson in developing an initial draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cemetery finances. The Board was asked to review the document and provide their input. Selectman Galinson expects to get back together with Mr. Belvin in early September to finalize the MOU, which is to be officially agreed upon by the BOS and the Cemetery Trustees.

VII. Website Update

Vice Chairman Akillian indicated that in April 2013 the Board had determined to better engage and communicate with citizens and that a core mechanism to do so was through the town's website, which has

52 been in need of considerable updates in information, navigation, and presentation design. He said major
53 work has been done in each area, and asked Torrey Demanche, Executive Assistant, who has responsibility
54 for maintaining the site, to demo the recent enhancements.
55

56 Assistant Demanche stated that this most recent upgrade focused on the visual appearance of the site,
57 navigational ease and/or difficulty, and the information provided. Assistant Demanche provided a slide
58 presentation on some enhancements made to the site that include quick links for residents and businesses
59 and a calendar section listing Board and Committee meetings as well as recreational events. The goal going
60 forward is to have all committee meetings listed on the town's calendar and easier access to meeting agenda
61 and minutes, providing periodic updates on various issues or events, the use of analytical reports, shortening
62 content for easier reading, and linking to one database so that all pages phone directory get updated at once.
63

64 Vice Chairman Akillian commented that significant limitations exist with the current software and an
65 upgrade will ultimately be necessary. In addition, in reviewing a number of websites, it was found that the
66 more useful, effective sites had two full-time staff working on IT. Going forward, Amherst might want to
67 consider adding some horsepower to the project, perhaps via internships for high school students. Vice
68 Chair Akillian thanked Assistant Demanche and resident, Katie Holt Button, for their work on this upgrade
69 project. Chairman Brew invited all those wishing to make suggestions do so directly to Vice Chairman
70 Akillian.
71

72 **VIII. Town Administrator**

73 **a. Hoyle-Tanner Manchester Road Bridge**

74 Town Administrator Jim O'Mara reviewed an amendment to the Hoyle-Tanner contract that summarized
75 the additional professional engineering services provided. Administrator O'Mara also pointed out that
76 review and approval of the proposed amendment by the NHDOT was required prior to execution by the
77 town. Vice Chairman Akillian asked for a breakdown of services constituting the sum of \$10,372, and
78 whether the newly designed bridge will cost more than the previously designed bridge. Selectman Grella
79 moved to accept the amended contract with a total fee adjustment of \$18,305. Seconded by Selectman
80 D'Angelo. Vote 5-0
81

82 **b. Resignations**

83 Town Administrator Jim O'Mara stated that EMS Director, Brian Gleason, has submitted his resignation.
84 Vice Chairman Akillian moved to accept the resignation of Director Gleason with regret and appreciation
85 for his service. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0
86

87 Administrator Jim O'Mara stated that Finance Director, Paul Hebert, has submitted his resignation.
88 Selectman D'Angelo moved to accept the resignation of Director Hebert with regret and appreciation for
89 his service, especially relative to bringing Amherst into statutory compliance with audits. Seconded by
90 Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0
91

92 **c. Strategic Planning**

93 Vice Chairman Akillian reviewed the comprehensive strategic planning process undertaken by department
94 heads in 2013, and proposed that this year's review include only an "addendum" to the plan noting any
95 factors over the past year that may affect the strategic plans, any proposed changes to goals, initiatives and
96 related costs. Vice Chairman Akillian also felt that the proposed 3 year budget be extended by another year.
97 Vice Chairman Akillian indicated, too, that it would be useful to get the input of the two new department
98 heads as well as that of Acting Chief Matt Conley. Vice Chairman Akillian and Administrator O'Mara will
99 meet with department heads on August 6th to go over expectations to include an update before the Board in
100 September. The Board will, in turn, provide guidance and weigh in on various departmental strategies and
101 initiatives prior to the FY16 planning and budgeting process.
102

Vice Chairman Akillian distributed a proposed composition of the Amherst Village Strategic Planning Committee which was prepared with the recommendation of the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) who suggested limiting the committee to no more than 10-12 people. Vice Chairman Akillian stressed the fact that those serving on the committee must be willing to “roll up their sleeves” since the work of the committee will include soliciting input from various resident groups, developing and conducting surveys, organizing forums, and the like. A number of suggestions were made by Board members. It was felt that representatives from the Zoning Board, Conservation Commission, and DPW serve in different capacities rather than as formal members of the committee. Vice Chairman Akillian will prepare an announcement to be included in various publications asking citizens who are interested in serving where they live, what experience and skills they can bring to the effort, and why they’d be interested in serving on this important committee. Vice Chair Akillian will distribute the proposed announcement to board members for their input prior to publication.

d. Department of Transportation – Block Grant

Town Administrator Jim O’Mara reported that a State Highway Block Grant Aid will be available to the Town of Amherst during FY15 in the amount of \$283,257.26 to be distributed in four payments: July 2014 - \$84,977.18; October 2014 - \$84,977.18; January 2015 - \$56,651.45; and April 2015 - \$56,651.45 (estimated).

e. 2015 March SB2 Important Dates for Town Meeting

Town Administrator O’Mara distributed a 2014-15 Important Dates for local officials SB2/Official Ballot Town Meeting, and reminded the Board that per the NH Constitution a quorum of the Board must be at the polls on election days September 9th and November 4th, 2014. Polls are open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

f. Roy Family Playground

Parks and Recreation Director, Craig Fraley, proposed moving a two bay swing structure and the tire swing from the Roy Family Playground at Cemetery Fields to Bean Field #1. Total cost is expected to be \$2,080 to be taken from the ’02 revolving fund. Discussion took place about the lack of storage space for a lot of the playground equipment. The Board asked Director Fraley to prepare a listing of those items that might be salvaged and the cost associated with each item. If the town is unable to erect/utilize the sign that tells the story of the Roy family’s daughter, the family would like the sign returned to them. Vice Chair Akillian moved that the proposed plan be brought to the Amherst School Board for approval at their next meeting on August 19th [Administrator O’Mara will attend meeting]. Seconded by Selectman Galinson. Vote 5-0

g. Meeting with Brad Knight - Update

Selectman Grella went over a proposed agreement on the use of Acorn Fields following a discussion with Brad Knight. The majority of the Board felt the \$50,000 lease cost plus tax abatements equal to an additional \$6,364 for a total annual cost of \$56,364 per year was too costly and were not inclined to support the proposed 5-year lease agreement. The Board asked that the Parks and Recreation Director review the situation and report back on the scope of the problem. The Board expressed a need to get input from the voters on how best to resolve the problem if a field shortage exists.

h. Stormwater Coalition – No updates at this time.

i. Right-to-Know – None at this time.

IX. Old and New Business

Town Administrator O’Mara announced that the town had been awarded a federal grant from the “Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program” in the amount of \$325,000 of which the town will receive

\$308,750 and will need to match \$16,250. In accord with RSA 31:95-b requires that a public hearing be held for the purpose of obtaining public input on the acceptance and expenditure of the grant. The public hearing will be held at the Board's next meeting on August 25, 2014. Administrator O'Mara indicated that the fire truck Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) has a current balance of \$358,653.46, and he expects acting Chief Conley will be available at the next meeting to provide a plan on how much, if any, he'll request from the CRF to purchase the new pumper.

Administrator O'Mara indicated that Director Berry has sent a "letter of intent" to the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) manager at the NHDOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance for approximately 4785 feet of five feet wide sidewalk on Jones Road, Mack Hill Road, New Boston Road and Manchester Road. The project is estimated to cost \$200,000. The town will be requesting 80 percent reimbursement of federal TAP funds in the amount of \$160,000.

Administrator O'Mara stated that the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley has extended complimentary invitations to each Board member to attend a production of "Anything Goes". Performances will be held on August 7-8-9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Amato Center for the Performing Arts.

Administrator O'Mara will immediately post the vacancy announcement for the Finance Director position, but will hold off announcing the EMS Director position for now.

X. Approvals

a. Accounts Payable

Vice Chairman Akillian motioned to rescind one (1) FY14 Estimated Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$60,000 dated July 31, 2014, and approve one (1) FY14 Actual Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$494,237.63 dated July 31, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0

Vice Chairman Akillian motioned to rescind one (1) FY15 Estimated Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$235,881.04 dated July 31, 2014, and approve one (1) FY15 Actual Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$182,102.15 dated July 31, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0

Vice Chairman Akillian motioned to approve one (1) FY15 Actual Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$31,450.71 dated July 16, 2014, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0

Vice Chairman Akillian motioned to approve one (1) FY15 Actual Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$23,233.61 dated July 28, 2014, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0

Vice Chairman Akillian motioned to approve one (1) FY15 Estimated Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$555,000 dated August 14, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 5-0

b. Payroll

Selectman D'Angelo motioned to rescind one (1) FY15 Estimated Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$197,975.24 dated July 24, 2014, and approve one (1) FY15 Actual Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$201,814.14 dated July 24, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chair Akillian. Vote 5-0

Selectman D'Angelo motioned to approve one (1) FY15 Estimated Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$185,221.29 dated August 7, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0

Selectman D'Angelo motioned to approve one (1) FY15 Estimated Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$198,151.24 dated August 21, 2014, subject to review and audit. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0

c. Board of Selectman Minutes

Selectman D'Angelo motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of July 14, 2014. Seconded by Vice Chair Akillian. Vote 4-0-1 (Selectman Galinson abstained).

Selectman D'Angelo motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of July 24, 2014. Seconded by Vice Chair Akillian. Vote 5-0

d. Accept and Expend Unanticipated Funds

Selectman Grella moved to accept and expend funds received by the State of NH Reimbursement for Coop Communication Grant in the amount of \$1,832.48. Seconded by Selectman Galinson. Vote 5-0

Selectman Galinson moved to accept and expend funds received by the State of NH Grant Join the NH Clique (seat belt safety) for the Police Department in the amount of \$1,427.12. Seconded by Selectman Grella. Vote 5-0

XI. Non-public

Selectman Galinson moved to enter into non-public session at 8:10 p.m. pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (d). Seconded by Selectman Grella. Roll Call: Akillian-yes, Brew-yes, D'Angelo-yes, Galinson-yes, Grella-yes. Vote was unanimous.

The Board and Town Administrator Jim O'Mara discussed the status of two (2) properties.

Mr. Galinson moved to exit non-public session at 8:34pm. Second by Mr. Akillian. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

The Board exited nonpublic session at 8:34pm.

Chairman Brew stated that in nonpublic session no motions were made and no votes were taken.

XII. Adjourn

Mr. Akillian moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm, Second by Mr. Grella. The vote was unanimous, 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.