



Town of
Northumberland
Office of Selectmen
19 Main St
Groveton NH 03582
Phone (603) 636-1450
Fax (603) 636-6098

www.northumberlandnh.org

Town of Northumberland

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Date: Monday, February 6, 2023

Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Select Board Members Present: Bill Caron, Jim Tierney, Keith Bronson (Chair)

Others Present: Tammy Letson, Al Rossetto, Nancy Merrow, Sean Durkin, Glenn Cassady, Judy Fox, William Daisey, Peter Pelletier, Joseph Kennett, Melinda Kennett (Town Clerk & Tax Collector), Reggie Charron, Terri Charron, Cathy Conway, Ryan Shannon, Steven Collins

- 1. Chairman opens the meeting:** Keith opens the meeting and asks for a motion to accept minutes from the last meeting.

- 2. Acceptance of Minutes:** Jim makes motion to accept minutes as written, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

A comment was made that there did not seem like there was much for minutes for a 2-hour meeting.

Sean brings up that the recorder died.

Jim: minutes are just a gist of the meeting.

Tammy gives the Selectmen a copy of the minutes from the budget workshop. They do not have to approve as it is not on their agenda.

Jim makes motion to approve the minutes from the budget workshop, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

The question was asked why the budget workshop was on a weekend.

Keith replies that it was the only time all 3 Selectmen could get together. Bill agrees.

- 3. Department Head Business:** Highway and Water/Sewer

Glenn gives his report: a busy month, out for weather related incidents 11 to 12 times

Used 3 loads of salt, but still on track for the year with use. Keeping the salt shed stockpiled within budget, to save money for next year.

Lots of weather clean up keeping drains open.

Pot hole patching, lots around the manholes

Water break response repair went well.

Minimal breaks on equipment, just regular maintenance.

Dirt roads are ok, a little rough and wash boardy, concerned about mud season.

The stockpiled dirt on Page Hill is now a big frozen chunk.

Jim asks if Lancaster has asked for supplies for snowmobile derby.

Glenn answers no they have not.

Steve Collins asks a sand question, are 8 buckets available for personal use?

Glenn: yes, each storm.

Concern about going thru the fence.

Glenn: it is ok to do that.

Tammy asks that everyone state their name for the minute taker.

Reggie gives the report for water and sewer. Chasing water issues. There was a break at the high school but was easy to fix with a stainless-steel band-aid.

Dollar Tree sprinkler head froze and where the 4" and 1" met it blew apart. Notification came from Glenn's daughter, not from monitoring. There was 7 to 8" of water in the building. The owner of Ocean State was notified and entry gained. The Dollar Tree end's water is shut off.

Jim asks if there will be a bill for services.

Reggie replies that they are working with them on this.

Tammy will have a letter written.

Reggie: it is up to them to monitor.

Reggie says he will have the numbers soon.

Reggie continues with reporting lots of overtime spent replacing meters that froze up.

Jim asks if older meter could be bought.

Reggie does not want to go back, stay with the new technology.

Reggie continues with CPU classes for Keith and himself, and budgets have taken lots of time but should have numbers by the 10th. Working on a sewer ordinance with Tammy. The waste water treatment plant totally froze up, never saw that happen before. We were at all time lows but now we are heading back up, not sure what is going on.

Sean asks that regarding the Dollar Tree water break, isn't there a mechanical room where it is monitored?

Sean offers his help in writing the ordinance as he has experience in that area.

Further discussion on the possible danger of electrified water at that break and how they were lucky it was not, and discussion on backflow preventers.

4. Matters from the public:

- a. Cathy Conway – Horizons Engineering – Water Project – Discusses the update on the hill infrastructure. USDA funding is received and now working with Tammy to reduce the loan amount. The Town has received DES loan funds with up to 30% forgiveness as well as AARPA grant, also this project may be a good candidate for the drinking water trust fund program. The Town did not make the first cut for funds but other towns did not take the funds, so the Town received some of the State revolving loan dollars. Would like to have the Selectmen approve the submittal of a Special Projects grant application. As a disadvantaged community wants to ask for 20 to 25% of the total project cost.

Bill asks what the total cost is estimated at.

Cathy replies that for the water project only it is estimated to be \$6 million. Funding answer will be received before Town Meeting.

Cathy is asking the Selectmen to vote to submit the application and vote to have Tammy sign the forms.

Tammy says that submitting the application does not mean they are taking the money, asking before town approval is not an obligation on the town's part.

Jim asks if the 25% is denied will the 20% be considered?

Cathy says you will have to reapply.

Jim makes motion to have the application for 25%, \$1.5 million dollar to drinking water trust fund. Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Jim also makes motion to authorize Tammy to sign forms, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Al cites an example of money received for expansion of landfill was lower than it ended costing, that was a hit to the taxpayers.

Tammy answers Al with it cannot go over the amount estimated and voted on by the taxpayers. If it runs over then do what can be done with the money and ask the Town for more money. Cathy says there is a 15% contingency built in.

Discussion on amending the amount of the contingency, why that would not work as bidders know the amounts and can raise their bid. Extra money cannot be padded in.

Sean brings up that there are laws to protect non-system users from paying for the project.

Al says that as citizens of the town it is the taxpayer's responsibility. Curious on how the Town's water rate relates to State's.

Cathy mentions the water rate is based on a state amount, Northumberland is just below. Tammy and I are working on a repayment schedule. Tammy says it could be a high of \$220,000.

Jim: it could add \$1.80 onto the tax rate based on the grand list.

Al, the Chair of the Planning Board is working on updating the Master Plan. Working on the questionnaire, the number of questions has been reduced. Need input from the public and wants to know if the Town will pay for printing the questionnaire so it can be handed out at the vote and Town Meeting, and finished questionnaires can be returned to the office or library, can also be put on Facebook.

Sean mentions that it can be put on the town's website as well.

Al would like the Select Board to vote on allowing the questionnaire to be passed out at the time of voting and town meeting, and to defray the printing costs.

Jim asks Min if this can be handed out at voting.

Min: yes

Ryan suggests that students hand the questionnaires out as community service.

Discussion of whether the money is in the budget or can be found somewhere.

Al mentions there is a need to move forward on the Master Plan. The Master Plan is very important for grant writing, the government likes to see a current Master Plan.

Further discussion on different methods of distribution. Nancy Merrow agrees social media can be used but not everyone uses it.

Jim makes a motion that if money can be found there will be 300 copies printed and also fillable forms. Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Al suggests the Selectmen fill out the questionnaire and give back to the Planning Board.

Roach brings up that he read in another town's meeting minutes that the town is entering a deal with Stark for Police coverage. How much will that cost?

Keith answers that it will cost nothing as the other towns will pay.

Jim brings up a warrant being put in for 3 more full time officers for 24-hour coverage, if this warrant is shut down then there will be no agreement with Stark and Stratford.

Questions on cost and coverage, what is the plan.

Peter explains that from 2am to 6am, a period of least calls, there would be 1 officer. From 6am to 2am there would be 2. Grants are being applied for. Currently there has been a \$25,000 grant for new radios, and there is a Federal grant from the USDA for \$100,000 for vehicles.

Nancy Merrow asks if they have legal rights to do work in other towns.

Peter says they will probably have to be sworn in and that it may have to be a regional department versus a municipal.

Ryan Shannon wants to know how much money this will make the town.

Jim says this is not a money-making venture.

Peter adds that there will probably be a loss at the end of the year.

This is being proposed by Tammy to other towns, they have to decide.

5. Town Administrator Business:

- a. Conservation Commission resignation and appointment

The Conservation Commission is looking for another member and are currently talking to someone. To be looked at after next Conservation Commission meeting.

- b. Discussion of lost earned time – discussion of significant loss of time by one employee.

Policy changes to be made, currently has significant gray areas.

Jim makes motion to unwind lost time for anyone burned last time and make policy changes this year.

Tammy suggests making the change with other policy changes.

Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

6. Other Business:

Tammy says she has been approached by 2 department heads regarding a trailer on Cumberland Street. It is in the road right of way and hindering road maintenance. Suggestion to send letter to RV owner.

RV was supposed to be there temporarily, and it is also on Railroad land.

Jim suggests sending 2 letters.

Tammy suggests calling first and then, if that does not work, sending letters.

Bill mentions that the winter parking ban is in effect.

Sean asks if an email is considered a legal document.

Tammy mentions that there may not be an email available.

Peter asks if there is a process to move if owner fails to move.

Discussion by Roach of vehicles on lawns and considered lawn art. Jim mentions the Town has been sued several times and lost because of the lawn art rule. Bill says this is different because it is on a right of way. Keith says send letters; Jim says call first.

Terri asks if there has been an envelope received?

Tammy tells her that it will be covered in non-public.

7. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

- a. Supplemental warrant – Town of Northumberland – town wide drains, a quarterly expense, \$8,750. Jim makes motion to sign, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.
- b. Meeting Room Use Application – Granite State Rural Water – non-profit, a small fee to be charged to attendees. Donation of \$25 to Town to use. Jim makes motion to sign, Bill asks if a drawing has been received, there has so he seconds, all in favor, 3-0.
- c. Building Permit Application – Map 256, Lot 001 – Al needs to sign but they have met all requirements and paid fee. Jim makes motion to sign, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.
- d. Solar Energy Exemption Application – Map 225, Lot 015, 01 – questions arise on whether the solar is in place or not.

Tammy says there is an active building permit but does not know if it includes the solar.

Jim makes motion to table until next meeting or until proof of installation can be proved. Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

8. Announcements:

- a. Public Hearing and Bond Hearing Notice – February 10th, 2023
- b. Groveton Precinct Budget Hearing – February 15th, 2023, 6 pm
- c. Holiday Announcement: February 20, 2023 – Observance of Presidents Day
- d. Supervisors of the Checklist Session – Saturday, March 4, 2023, 8:00 – 8:30 am

9. Next Board Meeting Date: Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Jim makes motion to go into non-public, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

10. Non-Public Session: (Pursuant to RSA'S 91-A:3, II ()):

Jim makes a motion to come out of non-public at 8:27pm. Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Jim makes a motion to seal the #2 non-public minutes until the matter is fully resolved for both parties. Bill seconds, all in favor 3-0. Roll call vote to seal.

11. Adjournment: Jim makes motion to adjourn at 8:30pm, Bill seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Kathan
Northumberland Select Board Minute Taker

Next meeting Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Minutes approved by Northumberland Select Board Members on _____

X

Keith Bronson
Northumberland Select Board Chairman

X

William Caron
Northumberland Select Board Member

X

Jim Tierney
Northumberland Select Board Member

*****This Institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer*****