



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

[www.northumberlandnh.org](http://www.northumberlandnh.org)

**Town of Northumberland  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes (Draft)  
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023  
Place: Conference Room – 19 Main Street  
Time: 6:00 P.M.**

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

**Others Present:** Tammy Letson, Sean Durkin, Al Rossetto, Ryan Shannon, Courtney McLain, Joseph (Roach) Kennett, Peter Pelletier

**1. Chairman opens the work session:**

- a. Keith opens meeting at 6:00 pm

**2. Miscellaneous items**

- a. ATV – People have been emailing Becky their opinion regarding the proposed ATV trail on Brown Rd. We are printing them out and will keep them in a file for the board to review.
- b. The police department performed yet another successful search warrant removing drugs and packaging material from the residence.
- c. Sean Durkin asked what, if anything the Board has heard of migrants coming across the border in Pittsburg. Jim and Bill discussed they only heard on the news that Pittsburg has seen some illegal crossings.

**3. Preparation for Town Meeting**

- a. Article 3 – Hill Project
  - i. Tammy has prepared a possible amendment in case the voters and the board lean toward moving the repayment of the bond off the users and onto the taxpayers. The board was good with the wording.
  - ii. There was discussion about revising the water / sewer rates to allow the water and sewer funds to stabilize. Tammy told the board that RCAP, the company looking into our rates for USDA said they hoped to have the water rate to us sometime this week.
  - iii. Al asked if the bond passes, would this impact our ability to borrow funds in the future. Tammy said no as water and sewer infrastructure bonds are excluded from the net indebtedness calculations.
  - iv. Discussions on the tax impact for people both on the water / sewer system as well as current water / sewer rates.
- b. Article 4 – Petition for lot line adjustment
  - i. Tammy has prepared a possible amendment clarifying the petitioners would be



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responsible for all costs normally related to a lot line adjustment presented to the Planning Board. Specifically, the cost of a survey for the entirety of both parcels. The amendment also grants the Town right-of-way access through the parcel as that is one of the few places not in wetlands granting us access to the back corner of the parcel. The Board was good with the amendment.

- ii. There was discussion about the access and the lot size. There was also discussion about if we could amend as it is a petitioned article. We cannot change a petitioned article before town meeting, but it can be amended at town meeting.
- c. Articles 5 – 8 no need to discuss
- d. Article 9 – Operating budget
  - i. Tammy has prepared an amendment for the forestry needs. This amount was given to us after the Board held the Budget Public Hearing. The amendment increases the budget by \$15,000 but is completely offset by forestry funds. No additional amount will be raised by taxes. The Board was good with the amendment.
- e. Articles 10 – 15 no need to discuss
- f. Article 16 – Lancaster Food Pantry
  - i. Courtney remarked that Lancaster’s warrant article only raises \$4,000. Jim mentioned that a person representing Lancaster Food Pantry will be at the meeting and can speak to that topic. Tammy will prepare an amendment with a blank line for the amount in case someone wants to amend the article. Ryan asked if the catholic church still has a food pantry. Jim and Courtney both answered in the affirmative. Courtney also expounded that they also have a program for kids in school.
- g. Articles 17 – 18 no need to discuss
- h. Article 19 – Sidewalk upgrades
  - i. Tammy verified the Board was okay with this being a non-lapsing fund for five years. The Board is good with it being non-lapsing.
- i. Article 20 – no need to discuss
- j. Article 21 – Expanded police revolving fund
  - i. Tammy gave the amounts of money collected in 2022 which, if the article passes, would be an example of what could go into the fund in the future.
    1. Parking – \$105 (tickets were only issued in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter).



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2. Citations – \$2,752.59 (Citations were issued in the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> quarters).
  3. Special Details, which is what was approved in 2009 when the fund was created – \$8,687.50 of revenue with \$5,880.99 of direct offsetting wages and benefits, for a net amount of \$2,806.51.
- ii. Al asked why these revenues should go into this fund. Tammy and Jim explained this fund would allow for expenses related to the tickets, citations, and special detail to come out of this fund and so as to be outside of the operating budget. Only the Board of Selectmen would have the ability to authorize the expenses.
- k. Article 22 – Accept Precinct
- i. Bill asked if we should skip over this article for another year based on the attorney’s opinion. Jim disagreed and explained how he feels the article meets the attorney’s points. He explained how the process works. He further discussed how he thinks the fire chief, and firemen should be appointed by the Selectboard which is one of the options allowed by RSA.
  - ii. Ryan asked how hiring a police officer works? Jim replied it works in a similar way – the Chief interviews the potential hires and reviews the background checks then presents his suggestion to the Board. The Board then reviews and makes the final decision. Roach – the Chief interviews, comes to see board, but the board does not do the background check? Do they check social media? The Board deferred to the Chief who said they use a third-party person out of Cape Cod, who is a retired detective, for all background checks including everything the Police Standards and Training Council requires and he does it all for free. Chief then weighs answers against all other findings. There was further discussion on this process.
  - iii. Tammy gave the three options available by RSA 154:1 on how to appoint the fire chief and firemen. The board opted to go with the board appointed fire chief and appointing firemen with the recommendation of the fire chief.
  - iv. Courtney – will the fire members stay the same? Jim said yes; Courtney – will the pay change? Jim said at the moment no, but Tammy is looking at alternative methods of paying if the article passes. Courtney– are we ignoring the attorney opinion? Jim answered that is one opinion, but others have said what we have works fine. Courtney – What is the other lawyers, NHMA? Jim – yes.
  - v. Roach – one good thing is the expenses would be voted on by the town and not just precinct meeting. He has attended precinct meetings that do not have many people at all attending. This could leave the voting in of a new fire truck up to a handful of people.
  - vi. Jim – next town meeting we will have to change the capital reserve to be the Town’s and assign new agents to expend as it is currently the precinct commissioners.
  - vii. Bill mentioned our article could pass but precinct could fail. Sean asked if we could we get people to stay and vote at the precinct meeting. Tammy said she



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was planning on asking the moderator to remind the attend of the precinct meeting directly follows the town meeting.

- viii. Ryan asked if the precinct is volunteer? Jim said yes but they do receive minor payments. Courtney – volunteer means they volunteer to go but most have full-time jobs. Discussion turned to ability to respond to calls. Jim said Lancaster may charge us in the future if they need to continue to cover for us. This would be paying for the availability, not just the response. He gave the example of 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel charging Colebrook a large sum for the ambulance to be available then 45<sup>th</sup> charges the users what the can for expenses of the call; Sean asked what our ambulance brought in for revenue that cover everything else – approximately \$190,000; Courtney said there would be significant savings for us if we regionalized with Lancaster, who will charge \$45 per person; Bill talked to 45<sup>th</sup> a few years ago and the quote was just shy of \$300,000 plus needing a building to house the crew and ambulance. He said Jim Gibson spoke with Lancaster at the same time who said absolutely no way; Sean – need neutral party to make inquires; Ryan – what take in for revenue? What expenses? About \$190,000 for revenue and \$448,000 for expenses, which included about \$81,000 or radio purchases approved in a prior town meeting and offset by about \$51,000 in grants; Courtney spoke with someone on the ambulance when it became part of the Town originally. It was supposed only be part of the Town if it made money.; Discussion on transfers as that is the only portion of the ambulance that makes money; Ryan when is it enough? Discussion on outsourcing and charging more for ambulance services.

4. Al talked to board about Gorham tax value lawsuit in regard to ATV use. Request was made and the Board was good to have a copy of the article regarding the Gorham lawsuit be scanned and sent out as a separate item with the minutes email. Ryan wanted to know how decision for ATV trail will be made. Jim’s personal opinion is to strongly weigh the opinion of the abutters then consider the remainder of the opinions. Courtney it should not be made that way; further discussion including possible trial period; Roach – Does not care if the ATVs drive up and down the road as it already has cars at all hours of the day. He did not think the ATV traffic would be high as he thought you could not get from the pool to Mom’s. The Board said that bit opened about a year ago. Further discussion on the trail.
5. Jim made the motion to go into a non-public session. Bill seconded, all agreed 3-0. Roll call vote – Jim Tierney yes, Bill Caron yes, Keith Bronson yes.
- a. Discussion on waiving taxes owed on a property in town who owe a little more than one year’s back taxes. Jim made motion that no adjustment will be made, Bill seconded – all agreed 3-0.
- b. Jim made a motion to come out of non-pub at 7:32, Bill seconded, all agreed 3-0.



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**6. Adjournment:**

- a. Jim made a motion to adjourn at 7:33, Bill seconded – all agreed 3-0.

Minutes approved by Northumberland Select Board Members on \_\_\_\_\_

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Bronson  
Northumberland Select Board Chair

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
William Caron  
Northumberland Select Board Member

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Tierney  
Northumberland Select Board Member