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Town of Northumberland Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes - Draft

Date: Monday, September 18, 2023

Place: Town Meeting Room - 10 Station Square

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Board members present: Bill Caron, Jim Weagle

Others: Tammy Letson, James Gibson, Judy Fox, Kathy Frechette, Pete Marshall, Norm Cotter, Peter Pelletier, William Daisey, Sean Durkin, Al Rossetto, Andre Brasseur, Amanda Anderson, Melinda Kennett, Ryan Shannon, Nancy Merrow, Bill Baxley, Dustin Supernois, Eric Brown, Rebecca St. Cyr-Minute Taker

1. Chairman opens the meeting: B. Caron opened the meeting at 6:00 pm

2. Acceptance of Minutes:

Corrections for the 08/21/23 were noted at the 09/05/23 meeting, but the Board didn't have any information as to what needed to be corrected. B. Caron reminded that the minutes are not verbatim; it's a synopsis of what was talked about. R. Shannon commented if there is anything that's important it needs to be in the minutes.

Amanda was concerned with the section about the crossing guards and the hours. It seems like it was all on Rick Ball. She didn't think that's what was said.

Sullivan – Tammy said she spoke to each of the Board individually and she thought they agreed to Mr. Sullivan to just put up a fence on the front side of the property before winter and anything on the sides or back he will work on as he can. B. Caron understood him to say that he would put the poles in the ground at least on the road frontage before the ground freezes and get the slabs up first. But will do a privacy fence around at least 3 sides, we didn't talk about height or color. Amanda reviewed what she heard him say. B. St Cyr said the recording is available, we can go back and listen to it again. Tammy agreed that's a good idea.

S. Durkin said you might want to get a height on it; he could put up a 4' fence and it wouldn't cover anything. You might want to get a color too. Min mentioned there have been some calls about it because there is a For Sale sign up there.

Tabled approval of the 08/21 minutes until the next meeting. B. St Cyr will go back to review the recording.

Motion to approve the 09/05 minutes by: J. Weagle 2^{nd} by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

3. **Department Head Business:** Ambulance and Police

Ambulance - Jim Gibson, EMS Chiefs Report - 09/18/23

1. 2023 as of this printing, we have had 336 called to date.



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- 2. 2022 at this time we were at 346 calls.
- 3. Comstar commitment report as of 09/15/23, \$141,372.40. This does not include contracts or direct payments.
- 4. A1 and A3 go out for State inspections and maintenance this week.
- 5. I attended the Vermont District 5 meeting last week for approval of our application for our Vermont transport license. I am signing our MRH with Weeks tonight and will be submitting the State of New Hampshire license for renewal tomorrow.
- Recently had a heads of service meeting at Weeks hospital and reviewed some of our large incidents and got compliments on handling our recent MCI in Stark. They were impressed with our management of the scene, patients, and communications with the hospital. Kudo's on the review

Police Dept - Peter Pelletier

Since last meeting – 470 calls for service, made 280 MV stops, issued 18 tickets.

Made 10 AR / 10 charges, 1 DWI, investigated 4 crashes

YTD - 2987 calls for service. Of that 1084 were MV stops, issued 110 tickets.

Had $105 \, AR / 229$ charges; 14 DWI, 46 crashes which is a lot for a small town. We are hoping the speed enforcement grants and others will help with that.

On 08/25 – conducted sobriety check points under a court order. 150 cars were stopped, no tickets issued and no arrests. Several in the community helped out by encouraging their peers and neighbors not to drive impaired. The whole point of the exercise is to deter impaired driving. Kudo's to anybody who helped us.

We got word that our Body Worn Camera grant application has been approved and awarded. It's a 50/50 grant with a total cost of \$30,000; \$15,000 is covered by the Town over 5 years. At some point it might be mandatory to have them.

2024 Eclipse planning is underway, we have reached out to Wyoming for their AAR. The last total eclipse was August 2017 in Wyoming. We are planning now because the numbers indicate that their population increased by 1/3 during the event. We are late in the process for planning; we have to meet with several of the State of NH resource departments, So that we can have a successful event. The biggest problem will be the traffic and what to do with all the people for lodging, feeding, etc.

R. Shannon asked if there is a procedure in place for the body cam's on the officers. B. Caron said the Town doesn't have a policy yet; we haven't had body cameras in the past. Pelletier said we do have a policy that we're working on to meet all the regulations. The policy will be issued with the cameras.

N. Merrow thanked the Chief for the additional activity on Lancaster Road. She is seeing a lot more activity with stopping people.



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A. Anderson asked if everyone would be using the body cam's all the time or at their discretion. Pelletier said anybody that wants to use the body camera's will be using them according to the rules. Amanda asked if when stopped will the camera be on? Peter said we will probably all be using them. Pelletier has worked with the cameras before; they can't use them in someone's home. We will be using based on best practices in the State and around the country.

E. Brown asked if they will be using the State Police policy? Pelletier said we will pick from several policies that's our own and within the best practices.

Other:

T. Letson made a recommendation, right before the meeting started she was given information from the Fire Dept. Presumably this kind of meeting is where they will be the part of the Public Safety night going forward if the Board is willing to discuss now as a Department issue.

Dustin Supernois said it used to be an appointment form for deputy wardens in the Town. There are some individuals that are being taken off, either they are not active, deceased or no longer on the force. There is another one to appoint another deputy warden that wasn't on the list. The forms are for this year.

Motion to sign by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

4. Requested Agenda Matters:

a. Parking – B. Caron asked if we have any good solutions to parking. Amanda said an
agreement was made by the Board at a previous meeting to add handicapped parking. J.
Weagle said we can add it, but it will take away one spot to put in one handicapped
parking spot. We can't do parallel parking due to the curb.

Amanda said there is enough space to put in the handicapped parking; she measured it, and it can be done. There is enough space for the easement for the driveway to put a handicap spot there. She has brought it up at previous meetings and was told there are signs there, but there are not any. She is frustrated that it's not getting done.

- J. Weagle said he just got the information today. B. Caron said we did vote to put a handicap spot over there. The Board further discussed the space; there is a hydrant there and we can't park in front of it. There needs to be approx. 5' on the passenger side.
- J. Weagle said we would lose 2 spots; ADA says it can't be next to a driveway. Amanda said she called Concord, and you can put it next to the driveway.
- R. Shannon commented to look at the demographics of the Town there are a lot more elderly. Most of the people that go over there already have handicapped parking. Amanda said look at Shaw's; J. Weagle said they are different, they have multiply spaces.

Min Kennett said Patience Cameron stopped in at the office and volunteered to put a spot in, she sent her up to see Tammy. Tammy said she volunteered to come in and paint the markings on the ground. We would still have to put up the signs, but she will paint to whatever the specs are.

B. Caron talked about a friend that gets out on the drivers side. Bill reviewed and further discussed the specs. Min commented when we put in the spot at the Town Office; it was just painted on.



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Tammy has a meeting this week and will be meeting with the engineers regarding the sidewalk project. They will be up to date on the rules; she will ask them what their opinion is on putting a handicap spot in over there. Bill will check with Ron Caron; he owns the driveway up to the stairway on the restaurant, we can't have the handicap access in front of his driveway, and we can't have it in front of the hydrant. We will get a solid plan in place and then vote on it at the next meeting.

Amanda said we have been trying to figure out the issue with the tenants and the business. She asked why can't we give the restaurant the opportunity to buy parking spots; and the tenants could buy spots as well. Amanda further discussed the options. B. Caron said there is a space in between one of the spots; he asked the Chief how close vehicles are allowed to park from the corner. The Chief said he thinks it's 20' from the corner. Amanda said this could be a source of revenue.

B. Caron said we will talk to the engineers and come up with a solid plan for the next meeting. It will be on the agenda for the October 2 meeting.

Eric asked why can't we put a 2 hour parking limit on the spaces; with the PD checking on the cars parked by writing down the plate # and checking them as they can. Amanda said we talked about that before. The 2 hour parking wasn't something that would be hard to enforce, and you can't chock tires. Peter said you are not allowed to chock tires now; some people might get upset with him, but we are in the middle of an opioid crisis, and we have a lot of other problems in Town. He feels with what the officers get paid, it's a bad use of resources. B. Caron asked if parking meters are the solution. They need a parking authority. Amanda another solution discussed was signs with specific hours. Discussion continued about the parking, putting up signs with time limits, winter parking etc.

R. Shannon said the small businesses bring a lot to the town. We've always had an issue during church services. B. Caron said there were a lot more businesses back in the day.

Bill said we will put the parking on the next agenda and look into what other options we can do. Will try to find out what Lancaster does. Tammy said she doesn't think Lancaster has signs with posted hours. They sent letters to the residents; we did the same. Keep in mind the signs in the sidewalks are another obstacle for the plows in the winter. Amanda said it keeps getting brought up and zero solutions. State St. is a State road.

Min said her daughter lives in an apartment in Lancaster close to the businesses. They were asked to be considerate and courteous to the businesses during business hours. After hours they are welcome to park there.

B. Caron said we know which buildings have apartments. Judy said three quarters of the people that live there are gone by 8:00 am or so; but they would be there on the weekend.

Amanda commented that we are going to lose another business if we don't get it done. She heard that Rotobec had a lay off today. B. Caron said they shut down the weekend crew; Min said some of the night crew was laid off too.



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5. Town Administrator Business:

a. Hill Project update and permission to proceed – T. Letson said during some of the work being done it's come to our attention that the original plans are missing about 900 linear feet of piping that needs to be replaced.. The dollar amounts we were given for Town Meeting are most likely too low. She reached out to DES to see what they could do. They said we were given a very good package we have no more money to give. Their answer was to do bid alternates, which means when we go out to bid we would bid each road separately and then we do what we can afford to do. She reached out to USDA, and they came back with the same answer. The engineers, before they begin work, need to know if the Board wants to move forward with this. Both USDA and DES have said if you don't move forward, they won't pay for the engineers.

If we wait until bid time to see what the dollar amount is we will be on the hook ourselves for \$600,000 - \$700,000 worth of engineering costs. Neither one of the funding agency's will pay unless we say right now that we will move forward.

- J. Weagle asked about the engineers; Tammy said the engineers will give us the extra engineering for free, which doesn't help us with the construction. Tammy called a private granting agency; she hasn't heard of this agency helping out with a water infrastructure program. The worse they can say is no. We all are in agreement that the project needs to be done. She hasn't been happy with the funding package from the beginning, she heard about it after it was signed. She doesn't know if we have a choice other than to continue. If we don't USDA and DES might not be willing to give us future funding.
- J. Weagle asked if we proceed and don't do the 900' does it compromise any of the grants. Tammy said no the funding package will stay there even though the scope will change. She strongly recommends that Reggie would need to weigh in on which streets could be done or not. Tammy further discussed.
- B. Caron said people voted on this at Town meeting; it's the W/S users that are going to be paying for this. There were valid questions are we sure this is going to cover the entire project not knowing about the other 900'. Bill further discussed.
- T. Letson said the engineers and Reggie have discussed this, it's a road and part on another that make up the 900'. She presumes they will need to be done; Reggie needs to make that decision. The taxpayers gave us the \$10.2 million and one of the grants gave us an additional \$1.5 million to add to the \$10.2; we are up to \$11.7 million. Tammy further discussed the economy, and doing 1/3 of the project, we don't know what the economy will do.

The time line for breaking ground is planned for next spring. The plan will be to have the engineering done before year end, bids to go out in February and breaking ground as soon as we can. J. Tierney has been informed about this as well. B. Caron asked when we need an answer? Tammy said if the engineers are going to meet DES's timeline, they need to start working.

Amanda commented that at Town Meeting there was someone on the hill that doesn't have water. J. Weagle said that issue has been solved for now as long as a certain building stays standing. Amanda asked if they would prioritize what gets done; this a prime example of why we are riding everybody to maintain what we have because the more we let it go, the worse it gets and that's more money we don't have.

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S. Durkin said at the last meeting Reggie was here, and his personal opinion was that this project will cost a lot more than what we budgeted for. There is an additional 900' that wasn't budgeted for. With the grants that we have, if we don't hire the engineers to come in and engineer this to find out what it will cost, we are on the hook for \$600,000. T. Letson said the engineers are the first step in the project. What both funding agencies have told us - if we get to bid stage and we cancel because the bids are so much; the granting agencies will not cover the engineering. Sean said it's a catch 22 and a big decision. It could end up costing 16M. Tammy further discussed.

Eric asked if it's feasible to reline the sewer lines instead of digging it all out. Tammy said in our case she doesn't believe it would work very well. When the lines were put in years ago they are clay, in lining we could break them, they are fragile. The other problem is all the angles in the lines. J. Weagle said it's a jig saw puzzle up there. Eric asked if an engineer made that determination or are we assuming; it would be worth getting an engineer's opinion on it. B. Caron said we sign off on the materials used – plastic or ductile iron. Eric said it seems worth asking the engineer and having it studies. B. Caron said since he started there have been issues with residents on the hill. He wants to do what the Towns' people want.

T. Letson said Eric's question is well worth asking and she will reach out to the engineers on it. Eric said if we don't do all of this, is the Town liable for sewer leaks, ground contamination, which could be in another ballpark . J. Weagle said we have been told as long as we are trying to rectify we are ok.

Amanda said this is water, people need water. Would it be worth talking to them about this. What if we did part of it? She doesn't know what the pipes are doing. She understands we like to use the stuff that lasts forever but would we be able to get more done with the stuff that doesn't last forever. Amanda further discussed. T. Letson said part of the contingency of the grants is the granting agency's have the right to say what we use. They may come through and say that we need to use the plastic and not ductile, because it's cheaper. Amanda asked if the Town crew could do more of the work; Tammy said it's too big for the crew. J. Weagle said replacing a small pipe isn't too bad, but there is rock, etc. It will be a challenge. Tammy said a temporary water line has to be run while they are working on it.

Discussion continued about the project, the depth of the lines, frost line, and where the water and sewer lines run; they are separate sides of the road.

Amanda asked what the estimated time line is – Tammy said it's planned to be done by fall of 2024 which is fast for a project this size. They plan to start in the Spring 2024 and end in the Fall 2024.

Motion to proceed with the project by: J. Weagle

It's not getting any cheaper and we don't have a choice. We need to get this done; hopefully we can get additional funding.

2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0



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We will work on the bid alternates if need be.

- b. Zoning letters next step the Board was sent an email of the letters sent out; the deadline for clean-up is rapidly approaching. T. Letson said if the Board wants to discuss each property separately she recommended discussing in Non-Public Session. If they want a more general way to handle them, she suggested talking about them
 - B. Caron said we've been sending letters; J. Weagle suggested sending one more letter with a fine after 35 days. At least give them one more opportunity.

Motion to send one more letter with 35 days from the mail date with fines on day 36 by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

- T. Letson suggested sending the letters certified and also sending a duplicate via regular mail, which shows a good faith effort.
- c. Authorization to claim abandoned property T. Letson said there is a decent amount of money sitting in the State of NH unclaimed property division. It's under the Town's name, the Police Dept and Ambulance's name. There is just a little over \$5,000 that we should go after. We need to assign a person to handle it. R Shannon asked if it is property or cash? Tammy said its cash values and it would come back in as revenue and fall to the fund balance for this year.

Motion for J. Tierney to be the assigned person by: J. Weagle 2^{nd} by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

- T. Letson will work with J. Tierney in regard to what needs to be done.
- d. Acceptance and authorization to sign for Body Worn & Dashboard Camera grant P. Pelletier discussed this earlier in the meeting. The amount is \$15,033, we have 5 years to spent this. She believes we did body worn.
 - J. Weagle asked if when we get the cameras are they owned by us and who repairs them. Tammy said that would probably depend on the vendor that we buy them from. Jim said that when we got radios, the grant directed who could repair them. T. Letson said they will be ours, it also includes the software, hardware. If we go with one that requires online access we would be subject to rules they have for online storage.
 - R. Shannon asked if when writing the grant, did you only put body cams and not dash cams. Tammy believes that's what we did. How much more is it to have both. Peter said he thinks it might be for either/or, it might be for both. When talking about who can service, Ryan thinks it would be wise to have a 3rd party service them. B. Caron said we are talking about if the camera breaks, or the software might need to be updated, etc.

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Amanda asked for further clarification on the grant. Tammy said the grant was for both when you applied for it you had to check what you were applying for.

Motion to accept the grant and authorize Tammy Letson to sign all necessary paperwork by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

e. Other Business:

R. Shannon asked about the email tree, he didn't receive an email for the minutes, but he did retrieve it. Becky Craggy is done now, is it common to use someone else's email? Tammy said it was the recommendation of our software company. Ryan feels it's a confidentiality breach. B. Caron said this should fall under Public Comments, he understands the confidentiality and checks and balances. The new person will be starting on October 2. Bill said he had an issue with the Rec Committee getting notification about a meeting.

Tammy said she found in Becky Craggys contacts a group for the minutes. From the sounds of it, she didn't choose the right group. She will contact the hardware company for assistance. Min commented that Becky's no longer working, her email should be shut down. Amanda said in the employee handbook there are certain things that only the Assistant Administrator has access to, legally by the handbook. Ryan said she is the head of the HR Dept. this is a huge concern, huge breach. Ryan said 2 people in the office were arrested for the same thing. B. Caron moved the meeting along.

6. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

a. Solar exemption - Map 214, Lot 021 -

Motion to approve solar exemption by: J. Weagle

2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

b. Veteran's exemption - Map 107, Lot 129 -

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

- c. Building permits (3)
 - 1. Map 103, Lot 003 Bruce Pelletier B. Caron went and talked to Bruce about the permit with Bruce, he's not putting in a driveway. He will move his patio pavers that are lining the road to the front step, he will move them over to the walkway that he wants to put in. Al Rossetto said we discussed at the last meeting, he is replacing the front porch there is a minor increase in the footprint size. There will not be another driveway cut.

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

Eric Brown asked about the cease and desist from the last meeting. B. Caron wasn't sure



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if it was sent but will check with Liz tomorrow.

2. Map 205, Lot 018-00-TW – Green Mountain Communications – B. Caron reviewed the permit.

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

3. Map 240- This one was received today 09/18; the Board established a deadline of Friday at noon.

Tabled until the next meeting.

d. Non-resident transfer station permit – Map 104, Lot 103 – New, Red Dam Conservatory. They own several properties.

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

7. **Public Comment:

- N. Merrow commented when she saw the video of the Sept 5th meeting; she thinks it's great that it's being done. However, after watching and listening to the yelling and the screaming and the constant discussions, you could hardly hear what was going on. She has been at these meeting a lot of years. She was disgusted at the way people were addressing each other. She thinks we need to have a little bit more of respectability to anybody that is talking Let them talk, let them answer. But wait until the chairman allows that to happen. That is part of the Chairmans responsibility for running the Selectmen meetings and the chairman can tell us all to not say a word and he won't call on you. He has every right to do that. If she was an outsider watching the program, she would be so unhappy about this town. It was very disrespectful, it's time we grow up.
 - B. Caron commented that everyone here was raised to respect others and to respect your elders. This is a Select Boad meeting that is run by the Chairman. As the Chairman it's his meeting to run and will call on people but if it's disrespectful he won't call on anyone. He thanked Nancy for her input.
 - R. Shannon said there's a lot of false statements just said. You have to call on us in public comment if you do not, you can't move on, that's our constitutional right. Yes it's your meeting and you can run it. But you still have requirements that you have to follow; if not he will file charges against the Town they are restricting my speech. He is a US citizen and a resident of this Town, and his voice must be heard when he wants to speak. The information just present is incorrect. He has RSA's to back me up on all of this, he has a lot of points to make in public comments.
 - J. Weagle said we have been advised to take the Public Comments out of the agenda. It's not a Public Meeting it's a Selectmen meeting. A public meeting is Town Meeting, We do not have to open up to the public. We don't have to take public comments, we choose to because that's how we want to run the meeting. We have a meeting to run and rules and regulations that we have to follow. We do the best we can to answer questions and listen to comments.
 - B. Caron thanked Jim for his input and Ryan's point are duly noted and have been heard before and are on record.

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Amanda discussed the email tree: it's bothersome to her that certain individuals weren't on there and some make no sense to be on it. She discussed the issue of the email having Becky Craggys name on it. There are a lot of confidential things that got sent to her. No one should have access to her email, if her contacts are needed – make a phone call to her. B. Caron said her email will be shut down.

R. Shannon referred back to the RSA for Public meetings. An argument ensued between him and B. Caron – Caron moved on with the meeting.

Judy Fox said she didn't' get the email either. It's not a big deal.

N. Cotter asked about the 2 people that are being hired to replace Reggie and Becky; T. Letson said that's not a valid statement - Reggie is not being replaced, the new person will work with Reggie and the other is replacing Becky Craggy. A background check was done on each of them. Norm asked if they are related, B. Caron said yes they are related; however, they will work in different departments. He carries the same licenses in Tennessee that Reggie carries, and they have been accepted in the State of NH.

Both of them grew up in Groveton. They are Bart Merriam and Nikki Merriam. Both are highly qualified. She has 20 years of paralegal experience and other experience that qualified her for the position.

E. Brow asked when they will be starting - October 2 for both of them.

8. Announcements:

9. Next Board Meeting Date: Monday, October 2, 2023 - 6:00 pm

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

Motion to go into Non-Public Session by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

Roll Call - J. Weagle - Yes; B. Caron - Yes

Into Non-Public Session at 7:48 pm

Motion to come out of Non-Public Session by: J. Weagle

2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

Out of Non-Public Session at 8:53 pm

Into Regular session at 8:53 pm



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No further business was discussed.	
11. Adjournment:	
Motion to adjourn by: J. Wea	gle, 2 nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0
Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm	n
Respectfully submitted,	
Rebecca St Cyr, Minute Taker	
Agenda	is subject to change
_	oon on the Friday before scheduled business meeting Selectmen at 7/11/2005 meeting)
Minutes approved by Northumberland Sele	ect Board Members on
X	X
William Caron Northumberland Select Board Chair	Jim Tierney Northumberland Select Board Member
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im Weagle Northumberland Select Board Member	

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