

**Town of Northumberland**  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**Meeting Minutes (Draft)**  
**Date: Monday, November 9, 2020**  
**Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square**  
**Time: 6:00 P.M.**

**\*During the meeting "social distancing" will be practiced and wearing of masks is strongly encouraged\***

Select Board members present: **Michael Phillips, Jim Weagle, William Caron**

Others present: **Pete Marshall, Norman Cotter, Robin Irving, Glenn Cassady, Allan Clark, John Call, Denise Johnston, Alexander Johnston, Al Rossetto, Nancy Merrow, Reginald Charron**

**1. Chairman opens the meeting:** Michael opens the meeting and asks for an acceptance of minutes.

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

**3. Selectmen Business:**

a. Department Head Business: Highway and Water & Sewer

**2.** Glenn Cassady with Highway goes first.

Small jobs including the winter sand pile being completed, some cold patching, cemetery work, etc. Plow equipment is ready to go. Paving crew came in and did area for the Salt and Sand shed, but ramp to compactor steeper than expected. Need to get rubber parking lot chaulks to keep from having someone back into the compactor and then that will create a trip hazard which we need to address. We have the salt in the bins.

Michael asks if there is a total invoice for the paving.

Glenn: not as of yet, estimated, intend to take the remainder out of the operating budget.

Michael: that will be helpful when we talk about the bid.

Ryan: you may want to look at the spot where the sewer line for my Grandmother's house was done. Put the slabs back but you (Glenn) may want to look at it for plowing purposes.

Reggie Caron is next with water and sewer. Found scorched intake screens 84 feet down when replacing well pump. Got a good reading from the Aquafir. It is 3 feet less than it was 4 years ago. Could be due to the static head or the screens. On October 15 received the Sanitary Survey, it is strongly recommending screen cleaning. This is the primary source for the town. Five years ago we were using 600,000 gallons per day, now we are down to 165,000 gallons. But we need to make a Plan B which DES and Horizons are working on. The suggestion is to truck water in to maintain the system for screen cleaning. So will be requesting at the budget hearing that \$40,000 be put into the budget for the cleaning.

Michael asks about the water to be trucked in.

Reggie explains that the time for the work would be in the month of the least water usage, probably October. We should be able to not run the pumps for 48 hours or

more, but could have water trucked in to go into the 10,000 gallons holding tank at the Treatment Plant if we needed. Of course when the time comes there would be lots of notice to residents and the Fire Dept. After 5 years of improvements I (Reggie) feel confident we can accomplish this.

Michael asks if this would be for both wells.

Reggie: one at a time, may take more time that is why we need a Plan B.

Robin: because we submitted \$100,000 for the well siting the first round DES did not think we needed a new well and wanted more information. The second round was no well recommendation. A new well is costly so this will save the Town money, and there are no indicators of growth at this time.

Reggie: wells are in great shape, just need screens cleaned.

Michael asks how far apart wells should be.

Reggie: probably about 1,000 feet, not 65 feet dead center.

Robin: another long term alternative would be another holding tank on the hill.

Michael: is that going to be proposed?

Reggie: Yes it is.

Robin: I'm getting elevations confirmed for an alternative area.

Reggie: We are not in need of this new tank right now, the screens just need to be cleaned, not in dire straights, can still supply extra water if needed.

Michael reads letter from DES and requests the following to be put into the minutes:

By returning the wells to their original permitted production capability and continuing to locate and fix leaks, the water system will essentially gain additional water supply capacity. In addition, water main replacement within the Hill area of Town would also reduce water loss. The managers should implement all of these actions prior to investigating development of a new water supply.

Michael: I want the residents to realize the hill project has relevance in avoiding a \$200,000 cost.

Reggie goes on to explain that there has been a 25% loss of supply capacity of both wells due to the water not being able to get thru the screens.

Robin: we have no letter of deficiency from DES at this point but without a plan we will get a letter of deficiency.

Reggie: that is why we need to get done next year. In other items, Keith and Winston are working on the meters and have approximately 75 meters left in town to do then will begin installing the radio leads.

On Sewer – we have sewer laterals fixed by homeowners, the plant is up and discharging again. The water level is at a good water level for Winter. The plant was down for 3 weeks and we saved money. The testing is excellent, the electricity use is trending downward because of the variable speed drives, a \$10,000 savings. CPU training is difficult to get the time to do, other than that, business as usual.

Michael asks Reggie if he will be staying for the Brookview Cooperative meeting?

Reggie will stay.

a. Department Business: Solid Waste Dept.

Michael discusses Paul is not here, but brings up 2 items.

1. Paul received official letter that the NHDES permit has been approved.
2. Asking the Board to approve 2 signs to be put up at the Transfer station. Paul

would like them to read "Notice Strictly Enforced unauthorized use of Transfer Station when closed is strictly prohibited". This is a liability risk for the Town.

Reggie and Glenn admit that they have both allowed some people to dump brush after hours because of storms.

Jim says that since it was authorized it should be ok.

Michael: but it crosses that gray line. Paul stated that he does not take liability for after hours. What I would like to do is to avoid is more fence and another gate.

Robin asks if a certified operator has to be on site during open hours.

The thought is that this is true.

Jim is curious about where Paul will be getting the signs. Mention by others that is probably from his usual supplier or the State.

Michael asks for a motion to approve signs. Jim makes motion to approve signs that unauthorized use of the transfer station after hours is prohibited per RSA 149M.15 and Town SW ordinance H12.

Norm Cotter asks if it can still be used after hours if authorized.

Michael says "no".

Norm complains that it is a pain if you have to wait for it to open to dispose of storm debris.

William makes second, all in favor, 3-0.

b. Demand fee policy pertaining to rental homes

Robin received a call from a rental home owner regarding the policy on rentals. When checked out the policy is all over the place, want to clarify and make policy.

Michael asks Robin what the Residential and Commercial rates.

Robin: Commercial is \$50, Residential is \$20. Quarterly.

Jim: how many will this affect?

Robin: getting pretty large and no way to police.

Denise Johnson: even if zoned for residential getting commercial rate?

Robin says yes.

Michael: can we make a motion? Jim makes motion to charge commercial rates on rentals. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

c. Discussion/decision of PILOT extension request by Power House Systems on rate determination due to health reasons until spring and continue with old rate.

d. Continued discussion of Salt Shed Construction RFP Michael reviews. There was a warrant article passed to build in 2020. Bids came in too high for the budget from local contractors, submitted to other area, no success. Board would like to get a contract signed before the end of the year to encumber the money and proceed. Suggests to put out another contractor ad to local contractors and others.

Jim: ok with local 7 contractors but we should put the ad in the Manchester Union, a broader area.

Michael: we would need a response by mid-December. So we can move on it.

e. Discussion/decision/signing of Health Trust Transmittals for 2021, Dental, Life, STD

Michael: This is for dental, life and short term disability for town employees, split 80/20 with employees. Dental rates are unchanged, a 4% increase in short term disability covered by the Town, no change in Life.

Jim makes motion to approve rate change and Chairman to sign, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

f. Discussion/decision of letter of interest received Recreation Commission

Christin Parks would like to join. She has volunteered with Fire Dept Christmas. Jim makes motion to accept, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

g. Discussion/decision/signing of NHDOT Municipal Emergency Dispatching Agreement

Michael informs that NHDOT has been handling dispatches but within two years will not be. This is an agreement that shows we are aware of the transitioning. Jim makes motion to accept, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0. There is a committee formed to work on the transition, we may work thru Haverhill.

Jim says yes, of which me and Peter are on.

h. Discussion of TAP project

Robin explains that this is the sidewalk replacement on Church, Main and State streets. The State denied the request. Robin had a discussion with Glenn and Tammy regarding the \$200,000 match and the time frame of the project. The State moved the date way out. It was asked if we could repurpose the \$200,000 to be put into the General Budget with a warrant article. It could be put into the hands of the Town instead of DOT.

Michael asks Glenn what he can do for \$200,000.

Glenn and Reggie: can be expensive.

Michael: should we pursue the Tap program and the bureaucracy?

Discussion ensues on engineering, state requirements, etc.

Nancy Merrow asks if these were originally Safe walks.

Yes part of the safe journey to school.

Michael: well not deciding tonight.

Glenn to have more information to bring to the Board by December meeting.

i. Review/discussion/signing of letter from Board to Brookview Cooperative Inc.

Michael: problem is they are putting sewage into their tank and then once a day pushing into our system causing backups, etc. Do we give them a 30 day notice to fix or else they can be in violation and fined.

Reggie: it has broken since January, they should be pushing sewage every hour, but don't and it causes smells and other problems. Have to go down every 10 days to unplug. Talked to Park Manager, he is trying, we offered to go down and fix, he doesn't want that. This letter gives us leverage.

Discussion of how much money it costs and downtime.

Jim makes motion to send letter to Brookview, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0

j. Discussion of Town hiring 2 Part Time people

Michael announces that Elaine is retiring and they are seeking a Deputy Town Clerk/ Tax Collector and an Assessing Clerk. An ad to be put into the paper.

Nancy Merrow asks if the part time job is going to be included with Select Board

information.

Michael explains that the State was fine with one person handling this, but now that Elaine is retiring they are requesting us to do differently. There will be one part time 20 hour Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector which has to be a Groveton resident. The other part time 20 hour person would be assessing and not necessary to be a Groveton resident.

k. Discussion of letter from Building Permit Facilitator

Zoning Board meeting of October 20 – noted a conflict with Swallows and Al is concerned that the Select Board not consistent with zoning rules. Al Rossetto not comfortable to go onto Swallow property. There are letters from Al and Nancy Mellow to be submitted into the minutes.

Michael asks Nancy to read her letter.

I read the Zoning Board Meeting minutes from Oct. 2020 with disbelief and disgust and am stating my reasons for same.

It appears that being a business owner, with a lawyer, negates the fact that there is a Town Zoning Ordinance and NHMA RSA's that apply to the situation regarding a Building Permit. No one should be above abiding by these rules/laws. Had the abutter been notified, as required by law, this situation would most likely have been averted.

Zoning Board and meeting attendants did not appear to be familiar with rules/laws applicable to this situation. Did anyone contact Elaine or Becky at the Town Office to view the documentation of the events leading up to this meeting? Were they aware of the confrontational meeting between the abutters?

Discussion of a conflict of interest between Mr. Rossetto and Mr. Swallow had absolutely nothing to do with this meeting and should never had been allowed for discussion. Proof of this NON conflict is the building permit signed by Mr. Rossetto and the Board of Selectmen pending the merger of both lots for Mr. Swallow:

This appeared to be an uninformed, chaotic and insulting meeting on many levels. Is this REALLY how we want to promote the Town of Northumberland? What happened to respecting one another, being informed and factual?

To all Boards- Do the jobs you were elected to or selected for, but do so within the legal requirements.

Michael: there are 2 issues, the Zoning Board and the Planning Board need to get more specific on what is a home business and to define light residential district from commercial district. Need clarity. Two aspects of concern, one with respect to Suzi Batchelder not getting a building permit, the cease and desist order or implementing a fine of \$250 and another \$100 fine for continuing construction with the cease and desist fine in effect.

Jim: \$250 late fee for filing late building permit, that needs to be paid.

Michael: It is floating out there that she is not going to pay it. If she does not pay, she does not get a building permit and eventually it becomes a lien can be

put on the property.

Jim: or there can be an order for the building to be torn down.

Al Rossetto speaks that he is monitoring the situation per his title. There is still dirt being compacted, so activity is still going on. Sent a picture to Becky.

Al brings Michael up to speed on Swallow situation (merger). Conversation between Shawn, Ryan, Jim and Al on possible lot line adjustment should have been done instead of merger. The Town tries to help the resident go the less expensive route and the merger was the least expensive. Discussion on DOT problems with existing and new driveways.

Jim: if Al does not feel comfortable....

Al explains there is no longer a conflict of interest with the Swallows now that they are not abutters.

l. Michael announces that there is a new full-time police officer. Logan Basta. The third full time officer in town.

m. Legal review of agreement with REA – Owner’s Project Manager Services for Ambulance, Police Facility. The lawyer suggested additions, that the Project Manager for Phase II be under a separate agreement. There needs to be a Town Meeting to approve the \$95,000. Wording change. Need motion to change these changes. Jim makes motion to approve changes, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

n. Cash Summary by Michael Phillips

Not reconciled. Started with \$783,000. Revenues from early payments of 2<sup>nd</sup> issue taxes are \$420,000. We had expenses of \$357,000 and ended the month with \$845,000.

Applications/Permits and Warrants:

o. Intent to Cut – Call

Map 101 Lot 37, Call-Parker. Three of the four heirs. Lawyers ok’d this to proceed. Need motion to approve. Jim makes motion and Ryan seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

p. Intent to Cut – Parker

Map 101 Lot 29 off Graham St. Ives Marquis the logger on both job. This is an heir but a different lot. Jim makes motion to approve, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

q. Meeting Room Use Application

Northern Human Services of Groveton. James Michaels representative, non-profit, no fees. Use Nov 6 to April 2<sup>nd</sup> on Fridays from 12 to 4.

Jim: have we lifted the ban?

Michael: not to my knowledge

Jim: I’m fine with this as long as State does not change Covid rules to ban.

Jim makes motion to approve pending more State restrictions. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

Second request by Megan Littlehale from Neural Development Institute of NH

Thursdays at 3pm, non-profit.

Michael: No length of time stated, not sure of start and stop.

Jim: want more info on time.

Michael: tabled until more detail.

- r. Abatement Request – 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter water/sewer  
Request by Dennis and Joyce Morin of 11 West St.  
Owner: pressure relief valve faulty, Fitch replaced. Abatement asked for: \$166.80 water and \$222.40 sewer.  
Jim makes motion to deny, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.
- s. Housekeeping Abatement Request – Taxes  
Rotobec with the 50% relief for first 3 years for developing asks for \$39 additional rebate.  
Jim makes motion, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.
- t. Building Permit  
Evelyn Hopkins of 7 Marietta Lane. Requests permit for 12 x 18 utility shed in one of the mobile home parks. No cement slab. Park director, Mike Robinson has signed off as land owner. Paid \$100 fee, Al has not signed. Jim makes motion to accept, William seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

**3. Public Matters To Be Addressed By The Board:**

- a. Holiday Announcement  
Town Offices closed on November 11 for Veteran’s Day, reopens November 12<sup>th</sup>, 8am to 12pm.
- b. Building Committee Meeting Notice  
To be held after this meeting.

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

Motion to go into Non-Pub by Jim, seconded by Ryan, all in favor, 3-0.

- a. Resident Matter-Utility  
Jim makes motion to move out of Non-Pub to Pub. William seconds, all in favor, 3-0 at 7:38pm.

**5. Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Jim, seconded by William to adjourn at 7:39pm.

Next meeting, November 16, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Kathan  
Select Board Minute Taker

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

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Phillips  
Northumberland Select Board Chair

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Weagle  
Northumberland Select Board Member

X

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William Caron

Northumberland Select Board Member

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