



**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SELECTBOARD**

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*Minutes  
Selectboard  
Monday, August 23, 2021*

Selectboard members present: Drew Kellner, Eddie Arnold, Brendan Denehy, Dana Ketchen, and Steve Russo along with Town Administrator Tad Putney. Also present: DOT Safety Engineer Mike Dugas, Dave Ketchen and Maria Bechis.

**6:30pm Drew** opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the rules for hybrid meetings.

**Public Input**

**Brendan** acknowledged the recent passing of **Ross Jensen**. **Eddie** acknowledged the recent passing of **Del Porter**. Both were military veterans and long-time residents of Brookline. They will be greatly missed. **Eddie** said the Town of Peterborough announced they were recently a victim of a cyber-attack in the amount of \$2.3 million. He said this concerns us, since our insurance company just announced they will be reducing coverage for cyber-attacks. He suggested we reach out to our IT company to see what they have for insurance, and increased security. **Tad** announced a special COOP meeting at 7pm on Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> in the High School gym to update the articles of agreement. He said more information can be found on the SAU 41 website.

**Approve Minutes**

*Dana moved, seconded by Steve, to approve the public minutes from the Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting as written; Voted Yes 4-0-1, Drew abstained. Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to approve 4 sets of non-public minutes from the Monday, August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting as written; Voted Yes 4-0-1, Drew abstained. Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to approve the non-public minutes from the Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting as written; Voted Yes 5-0. Eddie moved, seconded by Dana, to approve the public minutes from the Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting as written; Voted Yes 5-0.*

**Sign Warrants for Payment**

*Eddie moved, seconded by Brendan, to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #33 in the amount of \$108,786.46, Payroll Warrant #34 in the amount of \$63,612.67, and Police Detail in the amount of \$3,701.26; Voted Yes 5-0.*

**Announce Hiring of Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector**

**Tad** said that **Patti** has hired **Tammy Salisbury** as the new part-time Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector and she will be starting right after Labor Day.

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**Review of Payment Request from Public Works Capital Reserve Fund**

*Eddie moved, seconded by Brendan, to approve payment to Superior Steel for work done on Truck #253, in the amount of \$1,500, from the Public Works Equipment Capital Reserve Fund; Voted Yes 5-0.*

**Update on Public Works Facility**

**Tad** said the \$2.67 million in bond proceeds was received on August 11<sup>th</sup> and the bond anticipation note was paid off on August 12<sup>th</sup>. **Tad** said the trusses were delivered a week earlier than we most recently expected, so the framers are at work and on schedule; the salt shed design has been finalized and we are awaiting stamped plans; water test results were excellent, so there is no need for a water softener; all materials testing on rebar and concrete has met or exceeded specifications; the ledge allowance is likely to be underspent, so we may end up with \$15,000-\$20,000 left. He said the owner's contingency started at \$86,405 and he reviewed the change orders to date. **Tad** said at this time the owner's contingency is at \$56,144.

**Committee Updates**

**Steve** said the School and Town Services Study Committee has a working session with the Planning Board on September 2<sup>nd</sup> and will be finalizing the warrant articles and regulations on September 16<sup>th</sup>. **Brendan** said the Planning Board will be meeting soon on the draft Capital Improvements Plan.

**NHDOT Safety Engineer Mike Dugas re Route 13/South Main St. Safety Audit**

**Mike Dugas** reviewed with the Board and the public (using a shared screen via Zoom) the final presentation of the Safety Audit Report for the Route 13/South Main Street intersection. He said one of the key concerns is traffic speeds through the intersection. He reviewed three alternatives for improving safety and recommended a "roundabout" as the best solution. **Mike** said additional analysis will be required as well as engineering and right of way work. He estimated construction could occur in 2024. He said the project would likely cost around \$1.5 million and would be fully funded by federal/state monies. *Dana moved, seconded by Brendan, to support "Concept 3" (a "roundabout") to address the intersection's safety concerns; Voted Yes 5-0.*

**Appoint Maria Bechis as Alternate Member to the Conservation Commission**

**Drew** said at their July meeting the Conservation Commission made a motion to recommend appointing **Maria Bechis** as an Alternate with a term expiring March 31, 2024. He said the Selectboard announced a notice to appoint **Maria** at their July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. He said due to availability issues, the appointment was put off until tonight's meeting. **Drew** said in the interim four letters have been received by the Selectboard regarding the potential appointment. **Drew** paraphrased the content of the letters. **Maria** responded by saying she believes that an individual resident has the right, and the responsibility, to look out for this township. She said she was not in any way inappropriate when taking photos and measuring tree stumps at the Transfer Station to determine the age of the trees. **Maria** said she doesn't understand why she is not considered a team player when she did everything the Conservation Commission asked. She said she should be judged solely on her merit as a scientist, environmentalist, and a conservationist. **Dave Ketchen** said he blew the horn and pointed for **Maria** to go

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when he saw her just walk out on to the public works construction site, and she wouldn't leave. He said a big construction site like that is extremely dangerous and involves safety requirements like hard hats, etc. **Dave** said then **Maria's** husband showed up on the site, swearing and verbally abusing him and another employee. He said he came down to speak to this because this cannot happen again, or someone is going to get seriously injured. **Dave** said while he appreciates **Maria's** passion, he is against her appointment as an Alternate on the Conservation Commission. **Drew** said he feels **Maria** has a strong resume and he is always happy to see people come forward to volunteer, but we have to be mindful of other opinions. ***Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to appoint Maria Bechis as an Alternate to the Conservation Commission; Voted 4-1 against appointing.***

**Review Draft Social Media Policy**

**Tad** reviewed the first draft of a social media policy for town employees, boards, and committees. The Selectboard suggested additions and changes that **Tad** will revise for a second review at the next meeting before passing on to town counsel for review.

**Discuss Approach to Budgeting 2022 Pay Increases**

Following discussion, the Board decided to set a conservative preliminary pay increase percentage for non-union employees in September, for 2022 budgeting purposes, and then either confirm or increase the preliminary figure based on peer town data received in December. **Tad** will present information to set the preliminary amount at the next meeting.

**Discuss Continuation of Fire Department's Assistance to Building Inspector**

**Tad** asked that the additional five hours per week added to the Fire Department's Administrative Assistant's hours to provide clerical help for the Building Inspector, be continued through the end of the year and included in the 2022 budget. **Tad** said the additional time had been approved in mid-May, but for only 90 days. He said it has worked very well and provides a valuable service for residents and contractors when the Building Inspector is out of the office or on inspections. ***Eddie moved, seconded by Brendan, to continue the five hours a week of support provided by the Fire Department's Administrative Assistant to the Building Inspector through the end of 2021 and include it in the 2022 budget, so long as the total hours worked by the Fire Department's Administrative Assistant does not exceed 35 hours per week; Voted Yes 4-1, Dana Voted No.***

**Update on Efforts to Sell Fire Truck**

**Tad** said there has been no interest received through the national on-line listing for the truck. He said **Charlie** recently heard from one NH town that may be interested. **Tad** said a fallback position could be using it for parts for public works trucks, but we will continue to market it at this point.

**Other Business – Schedule of Board Tasks**

**Brendan** said we need to review tasks that need to be done over the next 4-6 months.

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**Other Business – Complaints Concerning Employees and Town Administrator**

**Drew** said in an effort to keep Selectboard meetings from becoming the grounds for a negative forum, at the next meeting, he would like to adopt a policy that any complaints about employees be directed to the Town Administrator and any complaints about the Town Administrator be directed to the Selectboard Chair.

**Review Mail Folder**

The Board reviewed the mail folder.

**Review Next Meeting Agenda**

It was agreed the following items would be on the next meeting's agenda:

- 2022 preliminary pay and fuel price recommendations
- Review of year-to-date expenses and revenues
- Review of Selectboard Task List
- Discuss alternatives for additional meeting room equipment

**8:34pm Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation and (l) legal and potentially others; Roll Call Vote Yes 5-0.**

**10:50pm Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes; Voted Yes 5-0.**

10:51pm meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Sturtevant.

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Drew Kellner

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Eddie Arnold

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Brendan Denehy

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Dana Ketchen

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Steve Russo