



**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SELECTBOARD**

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*Minutes  
Selectboard  
Monday, September 24, 2018*

Selectboard members present: Brendan Denehy, Eddie Arnold, Tom Humphreys, Valerie Ogden and Ron Olsen along with Town Administrator Tad Putney. Also present: Mike Wenrich, Ann Somers, Lisa Markarian-Proulx, Gary Proulx, Drew Kellner, and Roger Ogden.

**6:30pm Brendan** opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Input**

**Tad** said the DOT will begin a month long project on the Route 130 bridge in front of the old Village Store on Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be one lane of traffic during this time. **Eddie** read the resignation letter from **Jerry Farwell** for his position as Road Agent. **Brendan** asked that a letter of thanks be prepared and signed by the Board at the next meeting. **Brendan** expressed thanks to everyone who worked at the polls during the election. He also announced the Fire Department's open house and duck race, Friends of the Library book sale at the Annex, and breakfast at the Community Church are all happening this weekend.

**Approve minutes**

***Eddie moved, seconded by Ron, to approve the minutes from the Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 meeting as written; Voted Yes 5-0. Eddie moved, seconded by Ron, to approve three sets of non-public minutes from the Monday, September 10th 2018 meeting as written; Voted Yes 5-0.***

**Sign Warrants for Payment**

***The Board signed Accounts Payable Warrant #39 in the amount of \$73,719.29, Payroll Warrant #40 in the amount of \$55,492.75 and Police Detail Warrant in the amount of \$2,232.50.***

**Old Business: SHARE Collection Bin Information**

**Tad** said he reached out to SHARE and the contact reported receiving about 4 cents per pound on items from collection bins in the area. **Eddie** said he would be interested in getting such a bin for the Transfer Station with proceeds going to SHARE. **Tad** said he will inquire about getting a bin.

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**Consider Revision to Initial Sawtelle Road Extension Construction Bond**

**Tad** said the Town Engineer had recommended to the Planning Board that a construction bond be put in place for the Sawtelle Road Extension. He said that since the Planning Board initially recommended a bond to the Selectboard the owner has performed some work, thereby reducing the recommended bond amount to \$526,007. *Tom moved, seconded by Ron, to revise the construction bond amount to \$526,007 for the Sawtelle Road Extension; Voted Yes 4-1, Val voted No.*

**Update on Board Tasks**

The Board reviewed the timelines on upcoming projects.

**TAP-2 Sidewalk/Bridge Engineering Study**

**Tad** said we have completed the first step of the TAP-2 Sidewalk Bridge Project with the conditional approval of the Engineering Study by NHDOT. The second step is Preliminary Engineering and the third step will be Final Engineering. He said that he expects Preliminary Engineering to be completed by January. **Tad** noted that due to the significant time NHDOT is taking to review and approve projects steps, he does not believe construction will occur until 2020.

**Discuss Potential Review of Fire Trucks**

**Tad** said at the next Board meeting we begin budget discussions. He said it has been suggested that the Board and Finance Committee be invited to meet with Chief Corey at the Fire Station just prior to the next meeting to review the condition of the trucks and equipment and better understand the future needs of the Fire Department. **Val** requested information with a description and history of the equipment along with what equipment is being phased out of the Fire Department's budget. It was agreed that members will meet at the Fire Department at 5:15pm on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Review 2017 Audit**

**Tad** said we received the final auditor's report for 2017 and there were no surprises. He noted the unassigned fund balance declined from \$754,000 at the end of 2016 to \$310,000 at the end of 2017. He said the primary driver of the decrease was the use of \$500,000 from the unassigned fund balance last fall to reduce the tax rate. **Tad** said the report suggests that significant funds are not likely to be available to reduce the tax rate this year. He said the auditors provided recommendations for the Town to generate the monthly budget report directly out of the QuickBooks software, however he feels the current excel spreadsheet works better for that particular report at this time. He noted the Town Trustees of the Trust Funds are now meeting on a quarterly basis, as recommended by the audit. He said the auditors recommended the Transfer Station attendants place accumulated cash in a cash box periodically throughout the day. The audit also recommended a periodic review of all adjusting journal entries by the Town Administrator and **Tad** said that will be done on a monthly basis moving forward.

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**Discuss Guidance for Melendy Pond Planning Committee**

**Tad** reviewed a memo from the Melendy Pond Planning Committee seeking guidance on three issues so they can complete their work. He noted the issues are contingent upon town meeting approving the extension of leases. He said the first issue is the board's/town's objective for rental income from the tenants. **Tad** noted that currently 17 tenants pay annual rent on the land of \$75-\$125 per year. The remaining six tenants pay \$615-\$2,800 per year with these higher amounts calculated to help offset the cost to the town for structure demolition at the end of the leases. He said the most recent demolition cost was \$7,500 and the committee has estimated average demolition costs to be at least \$10,000 per structure in 2018 dollars. Additionally, **Tad** noted that annual maintenance costs at Melendy Pond have ranged from \$3,000-\$8,000 per year for the last three years, excluding demolition costs. In researching competitive lease amounts, he said the committee has looked at area mobile home parks as a reasonable "market reference" as the tenants own their structure, but are leasing the underlying land, similar to Melendy Pond. He said based on four area mobile home parks the "market" annual rent for a ground lease is about \$5,000. **Tad** asked if the Board was interested in setting rents that cover demolition costs, cover demolition and annual maintenance costs, or cover demolition and maintenance costs and provide a profit. **Ron** asked what was included in the historical maintenance cost figures. **Tad** said mostly road maintenance and water testing. He said the one year totaling \$8,000 included costs for milfoil treatment and therefore he estimated annual maintenance costs are likely to be in the \$3,000-\$4,000 range moving forward. **Val** asked if there are people living there in the winter. **Tad** said the committee conducted a survey of the tenants. Based on the responses from about two-thirds of them, some are there for just the summer and others 40-50 weeks a year. He said it is possible one or two tenants are living there year around. **Ron** said he feels the least we should do is cover demolition and maintenance costs. **Brendan** said he would like to collect money for the demolition and maintenance costs, but wants to be mindful that if the rent is too high some tenants would not renew and then the town will be faced with absorbing all of the demolition costs. **Eddie** said that he favors covering demolition and maintenance costs as a minimum and that setting rents above that level would be even better for taxpayers. **Tom** asked how many structures are sitting empty currently. **Tad** said one. **Val** said she agreed with the objective of covering demolition and annual maintenance costs. **Tom** agreed.

**Tad** said the second issue involves whether the Board wishes to seek a legal opinion on addressing the removal of the structures at the end of leases. He also noted the desire for guidance on whether the current restrictions in the leases should be continued in any new leases. **Brendan** said he would like legal guidance on the town's potential recourse for enforcing the tenants to remove their structures and ask how such a situation is dealt with at mobile home parks. **Val** said she thinks legal counsel would need to look at the current leases in order to provide guidance on potential new leases. The members agreed to pursue legal guidance on the town's recourse for removal of structures within both current leases and future leases as well as potential restrictions within future leases.

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**Discuss Social Security Participation – Group I Employees**

**Tad** said the intent of this discussion is to bring to the Board’s attention recent information regarding Social Security and a subgroup of full-time employees. He said there are currently ten full-time “Group I” employees who participate in the NH Retirement System, but do not participate in Social Security. By not contributing to Social Security, he said these employees, when they retire, could have their Social Security benefits reduced by up to 50%. **Tad** noted that while participation in Social Security is not required, Brookline is one of only eighteen towns in NH, out of 234, that does not participate in Social Security for this group of employees. He said the decision of whether to participate rests entirely with the Selectboard and that participation by the employees is all or nothing; individual election to participate is not an option. **Tad** said he reached out to the Social Security Administration and they said we are not doing anything wrong, our approach is just unusual. He said that if the Board opted to change the approach and have these ten employees participate in Social Security, the town’s estimated matching cost for 2019 would be about \$34,000 and the employees would have 6.2% of their pay withheld. **Eddie** suggested **Tad** meet with the ten employees who would be impacted and see how they feel about it. The Board agreed for **Tad** to talk to the employees. **Tad** said the Social Security line item for the 2019 budget is due to be discussed at the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and he will have more information for the Board at that meeting.

**Review and Discuss New Website Contract**

**Tad** said the town’s website provider, which we have been with since 2012, is moving to a new platform which will include a one-time cost increase of \$2,400. He said they are willing to spread the cost over three years. **Tad** said the new platform will allow for the website to be much more compatible with smartphones and recent data suggests that approximately 45% of website access is done using smartphones. He added that if we don’t want the upgrades, we will need to find a new website provider over the next year. ***Eddie moved, seconded by Ron, to authorize Brendan sign the website upgrade agreement; Voted Yes 5-0.***

**Discuss Electric Aggregation Opportunity; Authorize Contract Signing**

**Tad** said the Nashua Regional Planning Commission has secured a 36-month contract with Constellation for the supply of electricity to the town, saving the town an estimated \$4,000 over the period of the contract. **Tad** said the pricing and contract will be finalized tomorrow and is good for the day. He said Drescher had reviewed the contract. ***Tom moved, seconded by Ron, to authorize Tad to sign the contract with Constellation tomorrow; Voted Yes 5-0.***

**Finalize Ambulance Billing Committee Membership**

**Tad** listed the proposed members of the committee that have been identified to this point. He said two residents had expressed interest in serving as the “at large” resident and the Board also had to select its representative to the committee. **Brendan** asked if any Board members were interested in serving on the committee. Following no responses, **Brendan** said he was willing to serve on the committee. Other members

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agreed. **Eddie** said he was impressed by the email that had been received from **Todd Christensen** expressing interest in serving on the committee. Other members agreed. ***Eddie moved, seconded by Ron, to approve Todd Christensen as the At-Large-Resident to the Ambulance Billing Committee; Voted Yes 5-0.***

**250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Photo Contest**

**Eddie** said he approached the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee with an idea he received from **Peter Webb** for a photo contest to commemorate Brookline's 250th Anniversary. The photos would depict "Brookline". He said the committee liked the idea and it has been suggested the Selectboard judge the contest. It was agreed the grand prize winner would be featured on the cover of the Town Report or inside the cover. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place photos could have honorable mention and also be featured within the report. **Eddie** said that, depending on timing, we could announce the winners at the New Year's Eve Gala. **Drew** suggested a cash prize of \$250 for the winner and offered to collect donations.

**Michael Wenrich – Periodic Discussion with Board**

**Mike** said in the past two months he has been slowly acquiring DPW tools and is working on an overall town database for road infrastructure, so we know what we have and the life cycle of it. He said the Transfer Station recycling market is volatile and he has been referring to **Jerry** and **Eddie's** judgement since they are members of the SRLD. **Mike** said he has earned 16 credits in the Road Scholar Program and will have 31 by December. He said he has completed the Winter Maintenance and Culvert courses and a Budgeting course. In response to a question from **Ron**, **Mike** said he expects the DPW truck to be ready by the end of October. He said we managed things pretty well during the recent flooding and we will be addressing an ongoing culvert issue on West Hill Road that will provide a long-term fix. **Brendan** said if the people in town want to report low branches or debris they should email **Mike**. **Brendan** asked about the plan for Hood Road. **Mike** said **Jerry** doesn't feel he can take it on this year, so we will defer it to next year.

**Mail Folder**

The Board reviewed the mail folder.

**Discuss Next Meeting Agenda**

**Tad** said the next meeting would be focused on 2019 budget discussions.

***Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) personnel and (l) legal; Roll Call Vote, Yes 5-0.***

***Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes; Roll Call Vote, Yes 5-0.***

***Eddie moved, seconded by Ron, to adjourn the meeting; Voted Yes 5-0***

Meeting adjourned 8:28pm.

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Minutes submitted by Sharon Sturtevant.

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Brendan Denehy

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Tom Humphreys

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Valerie Ogden

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Eddie Arnold

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Ron Olsen