

Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING
August 16, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Claudine Burnham (Chair), Andrew Rawson, Matt Morrill

Staff: Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, Julius Peel

Public: Chief Richard Krauss, Aimee Krauss, Joseph Zirpolo, William Balhert, Taylor Harkins, Rep Glenn Bailey, JP Russo, Mike Parker, Karen Anderson, Lynette McDougall, Norene Nason, Amanda Patch, Clarence Nason (highway), Virginia Long (conservation commission), Officer Nicholas Young, Officer Ryan Clark, Lt. Evan Favorite, Officer Nicholas Nirgianakis, Humphrey Williams (budget committee), Kym Dawson-Boulanger

Claudine Burnham, Chair, opened the public session at 6:05PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Claudine Burnham, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Public Comment:

Mr. John Russo, 255 Governors Road: Mr. Russo explained that he did not license his dogs and received a citation from the town. He questioned why he did not first receive any reminder letter, nor did he see any notice of this when he had previously been in the town hall for other business. He admits that it is his responsibility to license but believed this to be an inefficient process and could be handled in a different manner. Mr. Rawson questioned the protocol for dog licensing asking if reminder letters are sent? According to Julius Peel, while reminders are sent, there are times when an address is changed which could cause a lapse in delivery. Mr. Russo stated that he did not receive any reminder letter. Mr. Russo suggested posting signs in the town hall to serve as reminders. Ms. Burnham stated there are signs posted with reminders. Ms. Burnham and the BOS thanked Mr. Russo for coming to the meeting. Ms. Virginia Long requested the town schedule the NH Mobile Vaccination van for an upcoming town event. She believes this could help additional residents to receive the vaccination as Milton has a lower vaccination rate compared to other towns. Mr. Jacobs indicated this would be explored further.

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

- a.) Town Hall closed September 6, 2021
- b.) BOS meeting rescheduled from September 6 to September 13.
- c.) Transfer Station closed September 6, 2021.
- d.) BOS/Budget Joint Committee meeting scheduled for September 18th, 9:00AM
- e.) School Board special meeting scheduled for August 17th to discuss COVID 19 and school opening
- f.) The Efficiency Task Force will be meeting with the BOS to review the recent town survey.

4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:

- a.) Presentation of 20 Year Service Recognition to Noreen Nason: Chief Krauss thanked her for her hard work, dedication and 20 years of service to the town. Ms. Burnham and BOS thanked Ms. Nason for her years of service.

b.) Swearing in of New Officers for Police Department:

Chief Krauss presented two new officers who will be attending the police academy starting August 30th. After the police academy, they should be on the road in January 2022. Ms. Burnham congratulated Mr. Joseph Zirpolo and Mr. William Balhert and swore them in as officers in the Milton Police Department. The BOS congratulated both Mr. Zirpolo and Mr. Balhert.

c.) Departmental Updates:

Public Works – Clarence Nason: Due to recent severe weather (extreme heat and downpours), there was damage to several roads including Nute, Tenerife and Willy Road which all required additional repair work. Additional focus includes mowing in West Milton, brush cutting.

Building Grounds: Focus on repair work to dugouts at the beach, library steps and the town hall entrance and signage.

Police – Chief Krauss: Dog licenses – going through the list of 576 which is now down to ~300 unlicensed dogs. Hired two new officers entering the academy and will be back in January. They are currently down three officers which has led to increased stress on the five remaining. Because the volume of service calls has not decreased, this can cause a decrease in the response time, proactive policing and investigations. The speed trailer continues to be out with the same stats reported as before. 90% of residents are obeying the speed limit (or within acceptable limits). There have been a couple of instances of extreme excessive speeds which mostly happen overnight.

Building and Codes – Julius Peel: Mr. Peel explained most received complaints are due to junk on neighboring properties which takes an increased amount of time for investigation.

Town Clerk / Tax Collector: Dog licenses were due April 30th. As of August 16th, there were still 439 unlicensed dogs. First installment of 2021 property & sewer bills taxes were due July 2nd. As of August 16th, the outstanding 2021 balance was \$345,517. 2020 Tax lien was executed in May with certified letters sent in July. As of August 16th, the outstanding balance was \$188,729. Impending 2018 tax deed notices were issued by certified mail in July. Deeding will take place on September 17th at 9:30AM. Outstanding balance was \$49,568.

Land Use: Current focus has been primarily on the Capital Improvement Committee, America Rescue Grant and the Impact Grant.

Planning: Will be reviewing any developments on Governors Road, Shortridge Academy. Hearing is scheduled for August 17th.

Assessing: August has continued to be a very busy month for this department with customer service calls from realtors, mortgage companies, appraisers, etc. Finalizing abatement applications for 2019-2020.

Recreation – Karen Brown: Town beach attendance has increased. The cleaning team has done a great job. Have kept the Milton Public Works very busy. The beach field looks great. Fall soccer registration underway. Welcome back Coaches Steve & Steve. We are looking for parent volunteers to get involved. Contact the Recreation Department if interested. The Milton 3 Ponds camp had an excellent season with the biggest camp year so far. Thanks to Erika and Dianna, Camp Directors, who did an exceptional job. Also upcoming will be Kid's Night, Senior Bingo and Spooktacular.

- d.) **Representative Glenn Bailey presentation** – Ms. Burnham explained as part of a recent goals meeting, a suggestion was to hear from state representatives. Mr. Bailey is a junior state representative from Strafford County representing Milton and Middleton. Mr. Bailey shared with the audience of processes at the state level. The BOS thanked Mr. Bailey for his attendance. Mr. Jacobs explained again this came from a recent goals meeting and the fact that residents are asking to receive more information to know what's going on.
- e.) **Review & Adopt process for welfare assistance directed to property taxes:** In an August 5th memo to the BOS, the town has a process under 65:4A; when the town is preparing to pay a welfare benefit, such as rental assistance, down-payment assistance, or back rental assistance to a tenant in arrears, the monies can be redirected to an outstanding water, sewer or tax bill. To do this, the town must adopt a standard operating procedure. With the assistance from Julius, they looked to another community for their Rental voucher landlord delinquency SOP". The document lays out the process for how cases such as this would be handled. For example, a landlord owned rental business or building with an outstanding sewer or property taxes, the town could then apply those monies to the outstanding bills. The proposed SOP before the board outlines how exactly the process would work and how it would be applied. Mr. Jacobs is requesting for BOS to approve the policy. Ms. Burnham questioned who is the recipient of the rental assistance check? Mr. Jacobs stated this would come from the welfare assistance line, which includes food, electric, heat, etc. Also included is rental assistance which could then be diverted to pay for property taxes. Mr. Rawson believes this to be a very good idea and is fair to those people who pay taxes and makes all accountable. Mr. Jacobs explained there is only one case to date.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to adopt the 65:4-A application of rent paid by the municipality. I herein motion to approve the standard operating procedure titled Renters Assistance Voucher Landlord Delinquency as prepared. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

5.) OLD Business:

a.) **Jones Brook Project Proposal (Conservation Commission)**

Ms. Virginia Long of the Conservation Commission, spoke to the letter already submitted by Karen Golab regarding Jones Brook. Jones Brook is located near Union, off of Route 125. While the area is currently in much disrepair, there is good fishing available and the possibility of good walking trails. The Conversation Commission had been approached by Mr. Katwick about the possibility of their assuming responsibility for revitalization of area. The Commission is requesting the BOS create an independent committee that would be willing to do much of the needed work such as bank excavation, fixes to the parking area, etc. While the Conservation Commission believes this is an area that would be beneficial to the town, they are still working on the Casey Road project, along with other several projects. Mr. Rawson is aware of Jones Brook and knows there are people who might be interested in helping with the property. Ms. Long stated if this is something the BOS is interested in pursuing, the Conservation Commission would help with recruiting.

b.) **Trout Unlimited Letter of Support for DES:** Ms. Virginia Long of the Conservation Commission explained the BOS had previously voted to support the pre-application to the Department of Environmental Sciences for a grant for the Sam Plummer Road Culvert project.

They submitted the pre-application. They received feedback that the grant was not competitive from a fisheries perspective and given an average review. They were also told they could still apply and if another application was withdrawn, there is a possibility of still receiving a grant. Ms. Long is requesting the BOS submit a letter of support. She also asked if they would include a sentence which addresses the use of federal reserve funds. She feels if the BOS would pledge, as an example, \$25,000 matching grant in support of the project, that additional support from the town would make the application more competitive to application reviewers. Mr. Rawson questioned Mr. Nason from Public Works as to the current state of the culvert area. He said this area is badly repaired with much work needed. Mr. Rawson believes it's time to move forward with this project and the overall work would cost much more than the requested \$25,000. Mr. Nason suggests this culvert would help address erosion from 100-year floods. The BOS is very supportive of this effort. Ms. Long explained the letter is due by August 31st of this year.

6.) Other Business that May Come Before the Board:

There was no other business.

7.) Approval of Minutes:

Non-Public Minutes:

Already approved

Public Minutes:

August 2, 2021 – Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept the **8/2/2021 Public meeting minutes as written**. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The motion was accepted.

8.) Public Comments Relative to Current Meeting Topics:

There were none.

9.) Expenditure Reports & Financial Reports:

There were no expenditure reports for this meeting.

10.) Town Administrator:

a.) **American Rescue Plan Grant:** Julius Peel gave an update. The plan had been approved through the Federal Government. They submitted an interest in receiving the funds. All funds, totaling \$430,000, received will be tracked on their utilization. The funds received and organized will be split into two years. They plan to present to BOS regarding upcoming projects that will be considered for BOS selection.

b.) **Campbell vs. Milton Tax Hearing** is September 9, 2021, in Concord: For public information – there is a hearing before the revenue department of taxation and appeals board (property of Mr. Campbell). The meeting is scheduled for September 9th to review a previous abatement case which had been delayed due to COVID. Mr. Jacobs will review the case and bring to BOS if needed.

c.) **State Highway Block Grant Revenue:** Mr. Jacobs explained they received a letter from the state for FY2022 the grant funds will be \$126,105. These grants are typically used for highway department.

d.) **79 Charles Street:** The property was conveyed to Nick & Megan Stanley on August 4th. As the closing was on July 19th they have until September 2nd to submit a building permit explaining what they are going to be doing with property – demolish, rehab, etc.

e.) **Update on the Handicap Lift Repair.** People have questioned as to when this item is going to be fixed. Mr. Jacobs has had someone in to look at the lift. It needs a new door and other repairs. They submitted a quote for \$6,714. Mr. Jacobs further investigated additional options. He would be able to buy a new ramp system for less than \$4,000. Other options are available that would be less than the above quote.

f.) **Resignation of Conservation Commission Chair:** The BOS received a request from Karen Golab from the Conservation Commission. Ms. Long explained that Karen did a great job while the Chair of the commission is on leave. At the moment, the Conservation Commission does not have a chair although Mr. Steve Panish can step in as Interim Chair. Ms. Burnham thanked Karen for her service to the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Burnham made a motion to accept Karen Golab's resignation from the Conservation Commission with their thanks for her service. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

g.) **Update on contract between Milton and Wright Pierce:** Mr. Jacobs received a letter to amend the contract between the town of Milton and Wright Pierce for the wastewater treatment facility in the amount of \$5,800. This is to add one additional monitoring well (installation, service, contractors, ensuring the well is in the correct location, and updating information with DES). Mr. Jacobs believes this is something that must be undertaken. Mr. Rawson questioned where the funds would come from as he believes the fund should be coming from the Sewer Department line-item. Mr. Rawson wants to ensure more discussion occurs regarding this at the appropriate time.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to amend the original contract increasing it in the amount of \$5,800 with Wright Pierce. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed.


11.) **Selectmen Comments:**

Mr. Rawson thanked Jane and Jim for their phenomenal work – the beach, restroom and all public facilities have never looked better. Thanks again to Public Works for erecting the new structure at the beach. He acknowledged the short staff around the town, and that everyone is working very hard.

12.) **Adjournment:**

Ms. Burnham made a motion to adjourn the public meeting and enter the non-public meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:55PM.

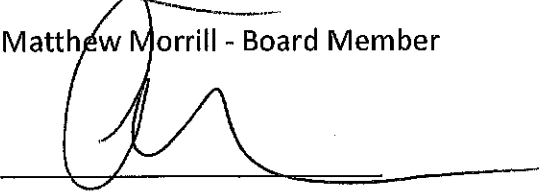
Given under our hands this 13th day of September 2021.



Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS



Matthew Morrill - Board Member



Andy Rawson - Board Member

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Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING
Workshop / Presentation & Recommendations from Local Efficiency Task Force
August 18, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Claudine Burnham (Chair), Matt Morrill

Staff: Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, Julius Peel, Kathy Wallingford

Public: Kym Libby, Karen Golab, Betsy Baker, Mike Beaulieu, John Giocco, Tammy Smith, Bruce Woodruff

Claudine Burnham, Chair, opened the public session at 5:30PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Claudine Burnham, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Tax Assessor – Kathy Wallingford:

As in previous years Ms. Wallingford prepared a blanket document for tax abatements, adjustments and assessments, and asked the board to support their decisions. She reviewed the list which included exemptions and explanations. She asked the board to support what the assessors have presented and can begin the process. She emphasized that no one will be denied any right to pursue it further if they disagree with the actions.

Ms. Burnham made a motion to grant the property tax abatement for the properties presented by avatar for the amounts recommended by avatar plus statutory interest. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Jacobs stated he was happy that in his absence the previous week, the necessary work continued, and staff were confident in their abilities to do their jobs as needed.

3.) NEW Business – Local Government Efficiency Task Force Presentation:

a.) Presentation of Town Survey Responses to BOS:

Ms. Burnham welcomed the committee members to the BOS.

Ms. Karen Golab of the Local Government Efficiency Task Force introduced the members of the committee and explained the purpose of this workshop was to present the findings from the survey completed by town residents earlier this year. The members of the committee included, in addition to Ms. Golab: Mike Beaulieu, Larry Brown (absent from meeting), Claudine Burnham, John Giocco, Kym Libby, Tammy Smith, Doug Shute (absent from meeting) and Bruce Woodruff.

Mr. Bruce Woodruff presented the background and purpose of the LGETF (Appendix A attached to minutes). As explained, the committee formed in early 2020 under the direction from the BOS.

Ms. Golab reviewed the LGETF mission: *We, as the Local Government Efficiency Task Force, have been charged by the Board of Selectmen to identify and recommend changes that will*

improve the financial position of local government by identifying local and regional cost sharing opportunities, revenue stream enhancement opportunities and other collaborative efforts to reduce redundancies and identify underutilized capacities in ours and other communities that can be shared fairly through what might be termed "Intergovernmental Mutual Aid."

Mr. Woodruff reviewed their **overall goals**:

- 1.) Review the scope and funding of town government services;
- 2.) Regional and cross-border partnerships;
- 3.) 'Best Practices' goals for staff, contracts and 3rd party purchases; and
- 4.) Identifying and meeting Community Vision goals.

Ms. Golab presented "**Did we accomplish what we set out to do?**" See Appendix B as reference. As an overall goal, it was not felt they accomplish all their intended goals. However, from a committee perspective, they achieved a different goal and what they believed to be an even more important goal... the process of developing and undertaking of a survey to hear from the residents about their thoughts of how to make Milton a better community and the opportunity to those share those results. The LGETF sent 3,636 surveys to residents and out-of-town taxpayers. They received back 375 completed surveys which is a 10.31% return rate.

Ms. Golab thanked all the residents who took the time and responded to the survey. It should be noted that while the results of the survey, including comments, will be shared with the BOS and ultimately with the public, there were several comments from submitted surveys that the LGETF did not feel appropriate to share for public viewing and have been redacted from the final report.

b.) Presentation of LGETF Recommendations to BOS:

Review at high level Town Survey and overall results – Ms. Tammy Smith:

From the surveys submitted, the committee was able to determine which areas were most important to residents. The survey helped to point what the town residents feel are the most important assets to Milton, what kind of development they wanted or felt was needed, what kind of housing is needed, important issues they would like to see the town focus on, and overall top capital improvements.

It should also be stressed that most of the town people who responded are invested in the community and do believe that development is important; however, not at any cost to the natural resources. They are also interested in the revitalization of the downtown and stressed the need for increased communications.

Review summary spreadsheet and process for how it was populated – Mr. John Giocco:

From the surveys submitted, the committee reviewed all survey questions and comments, focusing on which of the questions had the most corresponding questions and then assigning them to categories such as communication, transparency, town departments, etc.

How was the data used? Mike Beaulieu:

Mr. Beaulieu reviewed how the committee developed their list of recommendations based on the surveys completed and submitted. Each question was reviewed, and each comment was assigned one of the following: a.) Status – In Process (IP), Not Started, or N/A; b.) Next Steps – For IP, steps were listed and for most included where the recommendation should be addressed, c.) By Whom – the committee assigned to what committee or department they believed would be best able to implement the recommendation.

Recommendations Review:

- 1.) Have committee / department heads meet with BOS on a regular basis – IP (also develop multi-committee workshops)
- 2.) Develop annual plans – establish priorities, communications, tasks – IP
- 3.) “Little Green Book” – development of a guide to help residents know how, who and when to call, would include overall job descriptions & responsibilities – IP
- 4.) Chain of Command Chart – IP
- 5.) Road systems management software (from UMaine as example) – Not started
- 6.) Strafford Regional Planning Membership – recommend join the group, 2022 budget – IP
- 7.) Newsletter article – “A Day in the life of...” example staff member
- 8.) Large cost of line-items – provide explanation and education to town residents – Not started
- 9.) BOS & Town Administrator – regular forum for public providing updates – Not started
- 10.) Complete evaluation on department & committee inefficiencies – In process
- 11.) Solar panels on all town buildings – Not started
- 12.) Creation of a separate committee to focus on revitalization of downtown, i.e. – “village-committee”, focus on downtown area – Not started
- 13.) More options for online payments (with reduced fees) – Not started
- 14.) Better maintenance of town vehicles to help hold on to them longer – better overall spending practices –
- 15.) Close the school (joining / combining with another school district) – In process (underway in conjunction with school board)
- 16.) Meeting with other small towns / communities – departments and committees; “First Impressions Program” – collaboration with other communities, share how each is doing things – Not started
- 17.) Restart Chamber of Commerce – Not started
- 18.) Already started
- 19.) Joining NH Municipality – already members

Ms. Golab opened the workshop up to Question & Answers:

Mr. Jacobs questioned the options for payment on-line – are there other options the committee may be aware? Ms. Golab suggests potentially reviewing vendors on an annual basis and determine if there are others that are less expensive. Ms. Burnham noted that the cost may be higher due to credit card charges and those fees are passed along to the customer.

Mr. Peel noted that he and other staff already interact frequently with other communities to find out what they are doing.

Mr. Jacobs discussed the comments/concerns regarding website usability – it would be helpful if residents would say specifically what issues they experience using the website –

for example, navigation. Perhaps this could be something to add to the "Little Green Book" – section on common questions asked about the website, how to find something fast. For the BOS/TA/Staff residents should be as specific as possible with what they struggle with on the website.

Conclusion – Recommendations for future surveys:

Ms. Golab explained the LGETF strongly recommends future surveys. They believe this process was very successful and received great feedback from residents of Milton and Milton Mills. The committee purchased the use of Survey Monkey for one year. This could be a great opportunity to solicit additional feedback. A thought was to add a survey to the website asking specific questions for departments or other topics.

The bulk mailing costs were held to ~\$1,000.

The committee recommends possibly using outside vendors for survey construction in the future to increase overall effectiveness.

The committee also recommends conducting surveys annually, every four years. During election time might facilitate the return of completed surveys and increase response rate.

Next Steps for the LGETF:

The survey results will be added to the website for town residents to review – this will include original survey responses, summary of responses and the BOS presentation.

The committee wants to thank the BOS and Ernie Creveling, prior TA – they were very supportive of the process and helped to get everything started. The committee believes the survey, which originally began as a way to find out what local businesses needed for success, has generated a wide array of information which points to a great reservoir of interest and goodwill for the "community pride and spirit" that is our town of Milton. We as a town, need to continue this good work completed by this committee. ~Larry Brown.

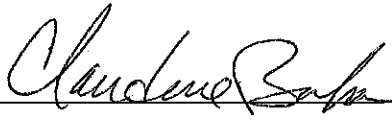
Ms. Golab once again thanked all the residents and committee members, with a special thanks to Julius. Because the LGETF completed its purpose, they requested the BOS discharge the committee members and dissolve the committee.

Ms. Burnham made a motion to accept the discharge of the LGETF committee and members and dissolve the committee with the thanks from the BOS. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

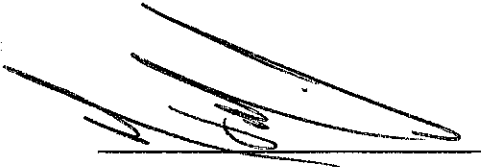
4.) Adjournment:

Ms. Burnham made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:30PM.

Given under our hands this 13th day of September, 2021.



Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS



Matthew Morrill - Board Member

absent

Andy Rawson - Board Member

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