

Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING
October 4, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

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

Public: Walter Cheney, Charlotte Mee, Polly Katwick, John Katwick, Jeremy Watson, Stacy LaPierre, Leroy Robinson, S Robinson, Robert Saunders (Underwood Engineers), Clarence Nason (highway dept), Senator Jeb Bradley, Karen Bradley, Karen Brown (recreation).

Claudine Burnham, Chair, opened the public session at 6:00PM.

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

2.) Public Comment:

Mr. Cheney attended the meeting to let the BOS know he has purchased the property on the corner of Depot Road and 603 White Mountain Highway (duplex with 10 acres). As owners of the property, they are interested in working with the town to ensure this benefits the town and vision. He will have information regarding his ideas within a few weeks' time period and is prepared to work with the town in any direction they are interested in pursuing.

Mr. Cheney also discussed an issue that he felt occurred during the latest planning board meeting, his opinion that Ryan (board member) was trying to stop the whole project. Mr. Cheney believes this to be a bad situation for the town as a whole. Mr. Cheney explained this project is aimed specifically for the elderly and will supply them with good housing. He wanted the BOS to know that the following evening another planning board meeting was occurring and if any BOS member had interest, they should plan on attending. He gave the BOS a handout with information.

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

a.) **Casey Road Conservation Land Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** October 9th, 10:00AM.
Public is invited to attend.

b.) **Transfer Station closed Monday, October 11th for Columbus Day.**

4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:

a.) **Dawson Street Drainage Project Contract - Signing.**

Mr. Robert Saunders from Underwood Engineers was in attendance and prepared to answer questions from the BOS regarding the contracts which had been prepared for BOS signature. Ms. Burnham and Mr. Rawson stated they had not really had an opportunity to look at the contracts, however this project has been discussed at previous meetings. Mr. Rawson questioned if anything had changed since the original signatures (within the past month). Mr. Saunders explained the contract now included the contractor's actual bid along with appropriate documentations. The project is scheduled to begin the week of October 18th. Mr. Rawson questioned

the state of easements? Mr. Saunders indicated two of the four have been collected. They will work to get the final two, however both parties are aware of the project and indicated their approval. They are still waiting to receive one final approval for the wetlands permit which should be received by the following week.

All BOS members indicated they are fine with the initial contract and ready to proceed.

Mr. Rawson made a motion for the Chair to sign the composed contract for Dawson Street. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed.

Mr. Rawson questioned if the 50% for Underwood is above & beyond or included in the original contract price? Mr. Saunders indicated this is not included in the contractor's bid price. He did indicate in conversations with Mr. Jacobs, while not speaking for Mr. Jacobs, he understood that Mr. Jacobs has determined where the remaining money will be located and be sufficient to cover for the project.

b.) Senator Jeb Bradley:

Ms. Burnham welcomed State Senator Jeb Bradley to the meeting. Senator Bradley introduced his wife, Karen, who was also in attendance. Ms. Burnham invited him to tell the audience and residents of the town how he serves Milton. Mr. Bradley stated if anyone has questions at any time to contact him. Serving since 2009, as a majority leader in the senate, he represents a large district. He considers himself a problem solver.

A couple of items he wanted the town and residents to know about:

Budget: Milton should receive ~\$80,000 for FY22 and additional ~\$90,000 through the Rooms & Meals Revenue Sharing fund. This is happening due to this past summer's overall increase in visitors to NH. He also indicated the latest budgets have increased educational funding.

Broadband: Depending on the town situation, there will be increasing opportunities for connections. There might be pockets of areas that may not have good service available. The matching grant program will help to jump start local Broadband infrastructure projects working with local providers.

Ten-year highway plan is being written this year. If there are any specific roads, bridges, etc. that may need work, please contact him.

NH is in line to receive ~\$1B in discretionary money. If there are specific items, i.e., COVID related, water projects, etc., the town may have an opportunity to receive state funds.

Mr. Rawson thanked Senator Bradley for attending the meeting. He questioned if monies might be available for infrastructure projects such as running water up Rt. 75, etc. Senator Bradley indicated monies could be available which could provide opportunity toward these efforts. Mr. Rawson also questioned if there are any grants for school systems as the local schools need some major work. Senator Bradley explained grants for school building aid were suspended about ten years

ago. There is better opportunity now to access some school building aid monies and suggested the school superintendent contact the state (or Senator Bradley). Mr. Rawson questioned the very high rates of electricity and wondered if this could be addressed. Senator Bradley indicated good news that rates do flow with the market price of power. However, the bad news is there will probably be shortages with propane and natural gas. In the short-run electric rates will probably increase over the next six months. He also indicated there may be opportunities for renewables which would allow for the town to develop their own services. Ms. Burnham thanked Senator Bradley for attending the meeting

c.) Cemetery Trustee Operations and Possible Warrant Article:

Ms. Burnham presented from the Cemetery Trustees, the open position for Cemetery Sexton. The trustees are looking for an experienced sexton who will be responsible for overseeing the municipal cemeteries. A list of responsibilities and duties is available for review.

Mr. John Katwick, current Cemetery Trustee Chair was in attendance. He expressed his confusion at this position and indicated no one has contacted him to discuss this. He questioned if the plan was to replace him with the sexton position as he knew nothing about this. He has received many calls from others also questioning if he has resigned and what is going on. He also indicated that the town had recently removed his name as cemetery chair from the town's website. Mr. Rawson acknowledged his and the BOS confusion as well. This had been previously brought to the BOS attention that Mr. Katwick had indicated his intention of stepping down. Mr. Katwick said while his plan is to retire, this last term which he ran for was for three years and plans to remain until his term is complete in 2024. He believes someone should be trained to do all the things for which he is currently responsible. While Ms. Burnham stated they were under the impression this was to happen before 2024, Mr. Katwick does not understand where that arose from. He explained the process of finding someone to assume all these responsibilities has been going on since around 2018 and said it's increasingly harder to find cemetery trustees who are willing to do the things that are needed. He read to the BOS his recommendations for how best to proceed: The total cemetery budget with a new hired sexton was approved by cemetery trustees and town administrator in 2018 with an increase from \$10,000 to \$27,482 (currently at \$14,000). He is against this, especially to the town voters / residents who pay taxes, this is not fair to proceed this way. While he knows he needs to be replaced this is not until 2024. He recommends making the discussion around the goal to be resolved by next year. The total budget for 2022 will be \$14,000 (no changes from the current year). His stated his goal for next year is to setup a team of all those involved with cemetery business to clarify the total financing and management of town cemeteries. Another trustee has just resigned which leaves Mr. Katwick and Mr. Woodruff remaining as two alternatives. He provided an example of what will be focused on with the team using Milton Mills cemetery as the example:

For ten years the total Milton Mills cemetery income was: \$102,765 (beginning balance); total ten-year operating cost was \$83,993. After ten years the balance was

\$18,772. This can be interpreted as a self-sufficient business.

Today, the budget for the cemetery is at the end of the year, the cemetery trustees reimburse the town for what was budgeted which is directed to a general fund under revenue. He recommends this process be reviewed.

Ms. Burnham questioned if this means he is suggesting a revolving fund? He is requesting the board give him the opportunity to explain so the entire town understands what is going on with the cemetery business. He also stated that other communities are experiencing the same issues as Milton with trustees are retiring from their committee roles. He stressed again he is not walking away from the cemetery and has pledged his help.

Ms. Burnham indicated she believes this is what the issue is about is to help Mr. Katwick. The other consideration of this was to put this into a possible warrant article which is why this was an agenda item for discussion. She also asked if Mr. Katwick could be suggesting the cemetery operate on its own? Mr. Katwick stated his recommendation to the town administrator was for the BOS to take full charge of the cemetery trustees and then possibly consider hiring a sexton. He also stated the town has had a sexton for years with someone already in the role – Pat Smith. Mr. Katwick apologized for any confusions which have arisen over the past few months since he has been unavailable due to personal reasons.

Mr. Rawson agreed and said the BOS will further discuss. He also agreed with keeping the budget at the \$14,000 for this year if Mr. Katwick feels comfortable with that budget. Currently there is \$5,000 remaining from this year's budget.

d.) Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day, Rochester:

The town has received an invitation from Rochester to participate in the Spring 2023, Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day. The cost is anticipated to be \$2,205.33. The town received this invite because Rochester is applying for a Household Hazardous Waste grant through NH DES and community participation is part of the grant eligibility determination. Grant applications are due a full year prior to the event date.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept the agreement. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

e.) Commemoration Event, Veteran's Park, Rte. 125, November 11th:

The town received an event application from Mr. Peter Hayward. This is to hold a commemoration on November 11th in honor of Veteran's Day. The application was received on September 16th. The event is scheduled from 11-11:45AM with anticipation of ~20 participants and expecting ~50 attendees. The event will not close any roads and they do not anticipate any traffic issues.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept the event application from Mr. Peter Hayward for November 11th event. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

f.) Request to approve FY2020 Audit (MS-535):

Mr. Rawson made a motion to approve the FY2020 Audit (MS-535). Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

g.) Christian Crafters Christmas Fair:

The town has received a rental agreement for use of the Town House. Mr. Katwick explained this group has decided to dissolve after 43 years. This will be their last craft sale and will be very nice event for the town.

He said the Women's Club of Milton is also interested in using the Town House for a future event. Mr. Katwick explained he will be at the Town House for the event and will follow-up with police and other departments as needed. The Christian Crafters is also requesting a waiver of the security deposit which is \$250.00 and the general liability for the Christian Crafters Christmas Fair at the Milton Town Hall on November 6, 2021, from 10:00AM-2:00PM. Ms. Burnham had talked previously with Chris Jacobs who had checked with the town insurance who gave the go-ahead.

Ms. Burnham made a motion to accept the request and to waive the security deposit of \$250.00 and the general liability for the Christian Crafters Christmas Fair at the Milton Town Hall on November 6, 2021, from 10AM-2:00PM. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

5.) OLD Business:

a.) **FY2022 Budget Question and Review:** This item was table due to the Town Administrator's absence from the meeting.

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

There was no other business.

7.) Approval of Minutes:

Non-Public Minutes:

There were none.

Public Minutes:

Sept. 18, 2021 – Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept the 9/18/2021 Public meeting minutes as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

8.) Public Comments Relative to Current Meeting Topics: There were no public comments.

9.) Town Administrator:

- a.) The MS4 report for Year 3 has been submitted to the EPA. A copy is available on the website.
- b.) Excavation within the Town's r.o.w. reminder.
- c.) Next BOS meeting scheduled for October 18, 2021.

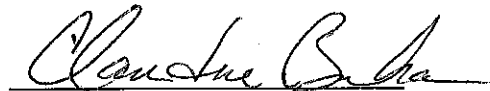
11.) Selectmen Comments:

There were no additional BOS comments.

12.) Adjournment:

Mr. Rawson made a motion to adjourn the public meeting and to enter into the non-public meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:00PM.

Given under our hands this 18th day of October, 2021.



Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS



Matthew Morrill - Board Member



Andy Rawson - Board Member

END OF DOCUMENT