

Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
October 16, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Humphrey Williams (Chair), Claudine Burnham, Andy Rawson

Staff: Pat Smith- Public Works, Chief Richard Krauss- MPD, Lt. Tom Hebert- MPD, Officer William Bachert - MPD, Officer Matt Cumber - MPD, Officer Peter Ciccarello - MPD, Devin Marcella-MPD, Dan Winchell-MPD, Brian Leclerc- Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Chief Nick Marique- MFD, Deputy Chief Jason Behrens – MFD, +1

Public: Bob Carrier, Virginia Long, Kimberly Wischniewski, Robert Saunders-Underwood Engineers, Jeff McIver-Consolidated Communications, B Christensen-Comcast, +3

Humphrey Williams, Chair, opened the public session at 6:00PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Humphrey Williams, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Public Comment:

Virginia Long – for the Guided Forest Immersion Walk on October 21st, MCC is asking for people to register – space is limited to 12 people. This should be a fun and interesting walk.

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

1. Milton Three Ponds Lake Drawdown – began October 9 (3ft drop).
2. MCC will be hosting a Guided Forest Immersion Walk led by Robin Schumaker, a certified Forest Therapist. It will take place 10-11:30AM, Saturday, October 21st at Casey Road Conservation Land.
3. Milton's 9th Annual Trunk or Treat – Saturday, October 21, 4-6:30PM (Milton Town Beach). In case of bad weather, the rain date will be the following Saturday.
4. Moose Mountain Regional Greenways will hold a Trails Day at Teneriffe Mt in Milton on Friday, October 27 from 12:30-4:30PM. Volunteers will help hang trail signs and move brush to block off severely eroded trails. For directions and to let them know you are coming, please email MMRG's Office Manager at astrid@mmrgnh.org or contact the Milton Conservation Commission at mcc@miltonnh-us.com.
5. Trick or Trick will be held October 31st from 5-7:30PM.

4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:

- a.) **Milton PD-Swearing in of new Officers:** Chief Richard Krauss introduced two new Officers to the Milton Police Department. Devin Marcella and Dan Winchell were sworn in as Milton Police Officers by Humphrey Williams. He congratulated them and welcomed them aboard.

- b.) **Winding Road Bridge – Status/Update:**

Pat Smith provided his Department Head Report:

Public Works: They have replaced a culvert on Winding Road and prepped areas that need to be

paved with crushed gravel. At 55 Industrial Way his crew have prepped and extended the parking area. State inspections for all departments have been completed and they are preparing for upcoming winter operations.

Solid Waste: Everything is working as normal.

Government Buildings: Work includes landscaping at the new Town Hall; renovations in the building include removing the wall between the two large rooms and prepping floors for the new tile installation. In addition, they found several doors requiring repairs. Building cleanup will begin soon. Pat said the Highway and Government Buildings crew have really worked together as one team to help speed up renovations. They have done a great job in a short period of time. Mr. Williams thanked the Highway Department and Government Buildings crews; they have been working together to take care of the needed renovations.

Winding Road Bridge Update: Pat reported the bridge has been closed to one lane and limited to 3 tons. The temporary bridge design is moving forward. Pat talked about the options available including shoring underneath the bridge, purchasing a temporary bridge and hiring a contractor to install the bridge, a temporary bridge through NHDOT and hiring a private contractor to install the bridge or having NHDOT put the bridge in. Both Pat and Mr. Williams have been working to get an answer as quickly as possible since Pat is now getting calls from oil companies and other service vendors that need access to the area and will not cross the bridge due to the current weight limit.

Pat did talk earlier in the afternoon with CR Wilkie (on the Bridge Maintenance Staff) who presented him with several options. The two key options are:

Option 2a. Temporary bridge through NHDOT and hiring private contractor to install: rental cost \$25,000-\$30,000/year for a 2-3 year rental period for 70ft bridge. Bridge would be hauled from Franklin NH to Milton.

Option 3. Temporary NHDOT bridge installed by NHDOT: rental cost \$25,000-\$30,000/year; labor costs ~\$100,000; estimated overall cost \$175,000-\$200,000 for 3 year period. Bridge would be hauled from Franklin NH to Milton.

Mr. Williams said hiring a private contractor would cost another \$15,000-\$20,000. Option 3 is probably the best option. Pat said he will follow-up with Chris Fournier. Mr. Rawson said this has to move forward; Pat agreed and said he will work with Chris Fournier with Option 3.

Northeast Pond Road Update: Robert Saunders, Underwood Engineers, said he and Pat Smith have looked at the NE Pond Road issues around culverts, drainage areas and the flooding specifically from the ongoing construction in that area with related developments and lot clearings. There is a location where he believes they can add improvements by adding a terraced set of detention ponds to help mitigate potential flooding. He recommends working only within the area where the water currently flows. He also said formal easements may be required to move forward.

There has been ongoing discussion about what level of drainage study should be involved. Mr. Saunders estimated the drainage study of the area would cost ~\$40,000. He knows shoreland permitting would be required and may require wetlands permits. He cautioned, with all the trees that have been removed, it will not take long for this area to become a wetlands area.

Mr. Rawson said it's apparent these issues have been caused by the ongoing huge construction project and asked if the contractors should provide help. Mr. Williams agreed and said the lot clearings have contributed to the flow rate.

Mr. Saunders said the first stage is the drainage study to cost ~\$40,000. Without the permits (shorelands and wetlands permits) the cost is \$27,500. Mr. Williams said we need to move forward with this and figure out the funding aspect.

Dawson & Silver Streets project: Mr. Saunders recommended a strategy session with the BOS. Mr. Williams will add this to the next meeting agenda.

c.) Department Head Reports:

Fire Department – Chief Nick Marique:

To date, there have been 658 calls which is a slight decrease compared to same time last year. The full-time position remains open. There has been no interest in this position, although there is new interest in the per-diem position.

Last Friday, Chief Marique sent a letter to Middleton informing them of upcoming cost increase from \$500 to \$750 for any response call. This will take effect November 1st. To date Middleton has paid \$14,500 for responses with \$3,000 remaining in outstanding bills. Chief Marique did receive a response from the Middleton Fire Chief. Their BOS is meeting tonight.

Expense projections are now slightly over around \$739,000 due to unanticipated vehicle repairs. The Ambulance Revolving Fund currently has a \$230,000 balance. YTD ambulance operating expenses stand at \$26,000. They have completed the Medicare evaluation process and are now importing data into CMS system.

Police Department – Chief Richard Krauss:

They are currently down just one position with the recent hiring of two Officers.

Since September, they have increased school patrols to help slow down traffic in the school areas. There seems to be an increase in student drop off / pick-ups by parents due to ongoing bus driver shortage at the school. The department will work with the schools to better plan for upcoming winter months.

Reminder October 31st is Trick or Treat.

October 28th they will participate in the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Scheduled from 10-2:00PM. They can take tablets, capsules, ointments, patches (over the counter and by prescription). They cannot take needles, lotions, inhalers, illegal substances. A reminder there is a drop-off box in the Police Department lobby at all times if someone is unable to make it on October 28th.

The fiber upgrades are continuing at the Police and Fire Departments. The phone system kick-off should happen at the end of the current week.

Chief Krauss received an email regarding tasers informing him their current taser model will be discontinued by March 2024. He also knows prices will increase by 5-10% in 2024. They will be looking to other devices for purchase and the cost benefits of purchasing now vs. waiting.

Town Clerk / Tax Collector – Brian Leclerc:

He attended the annual meeting of NH Town Clerks; this was very informative and provided a lot of resources.

Ms. Long explained the Town will continue to be the landowner with MCC managing it. MMRG will be responsible for yearly boundary walks and be legally responsible for taking care of any problem should one arise. They serve as a back-up guarantee to keep the land preserved. The property has wetlands on it with wildlife along with valuable natural resources.

Mr. Rawson motioned to move forward with MMRG to complete the conservation easement on the Jones Brook and Payne parcels with MCC making a contribution of \$7,000. Seconded by Ms. Burnham. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

5.) EVENT PERMITS

- a.) There were none.

6.) OLD BUSINESS

- a.) 2022.02.04.00- 549 White Mountain Highway – status of building: Have not heard anything yet about the demolition timeline.

- b.) 2023.05.22 Townhouse Road Bridge Update: **Received draft engineering study on 9/20/2023 from NH DOT. Need to review the study, coordinate with Lebanon BOS, and arrange with NHDOT a public hearing about the potential bridge plans.**

Mr. Williams had submitted a list of concerns about the bridge project to NH and he read the response he received from the NHDOT Project Lead.

Mr. Williams reported there have been a number of residents who have submitted questions and/or concerns to NHDOT, although they had been asked to hold their questions until the public hearing.

General concerns expressed include the increased cost due to time delays. Mr. Williams said this was also because of the addition of a pier based on the added height which was requested by the town.

There were also cost reservations/concerns about the bridge height. Mr. Williams said any height can be requested; however raising the bridge will increase costs.

A concern that the height was not shown in any of the drawings and once the bridge is in, the towns would be stuck with the bridge height.

Mr. Williams said a major concern is that NHDOT's expectation appears to be that the towns of Milton and Lebanon have to decide on a design for HNDOT to proceed with before NHDOT would schedule a public hearing. Then, once the public hearing is held, they (NHDOT) expect the towns will then, at that time, be ready to move forward with the project. Several resident comments show a preference to hold a public hearing before any decision is made. It appears residents are being asked to buy-in to the engineering draft study at the time of the hearing. Chief Krauss asked if it might be better if both Milton and Lebanon BOS hold a public hearing prior to that? Why not first get town opinions, questions, needs, and find out if the towns are willing to pay.

The current costs are estimated at \$2.7M. It was noted that about 60% of the boats on the water would not be able to go under the bridge including the Police boat (without first dropping its bar). In addition, how would the town fight invasive species if the boats are

stuck are one side continuously churning up the waters. There would also be increased costs with that. It would be cheaper to hold a public hearing in November and put out a Warrant Article in March and ask the forward if they are interested in moving forward or not. Mr. Williams agreed and said they need public input before moving forward. He will contact Lebanon BOS and move forward with scheduling a public hearing.

- c.) 2022.03.20.7 – Community Power Action Committee – seeks committee members.
- d.) Long-Term Goal – website functionality improvements: **Civic Plus ADA Audit of Town Website:** Mr. Williams will setup a meeting to work through their findings.
- e.) New Town Hall, 55 Industrial Way- Status: **Workmanship issues and additional repair plans.** We await the installation of internet service. Once installed the video and phone systems will be tested and a final move-in date will be determined. **McKay Walk-in Freezer and True T-72, HC 72 cu. Ft. Refrigerator. Space Management.**

Mr. Rawson motioned to move forward with selling the McKay Walk-in Freezer to Brett McKenzie for \$750. Seconded by Ms. Burnham. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Ms. Burnham motioned to accept the final bid result of \$16,200 for the 1998 Caterpillar Excavator. Seconded by Mr. Rawson. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Ms. Burnham will put the refrigerator out for bid with no reserve.

Mr. Williams again thanked Pat Smith and his crews. The work at the new Town Hall was not done right the first time and his crew moved in to fix and repair and have done an outstanding job. They anticipate the building should be ready in a few months.

- f.) 2023.09.11 - Fund Balance Policy:
- g.) ECA Solar Power Purchase Agreement – schedule for BOS Agenda:
- h.) **2023.09.25 Town Beach Boat Ramp – bids received & additional grant status:** Mr. Williams reported the lowest bid received (\$224,000) is more than double than what had been expected. He is not in favor of moving forward with any submitted bids. Mr. Rawson said he is concerned that they continue to kick this down the road. The received grant was for \$93,000 with an additional \$134,000 in the Beach Revolving Account. Mr. Williams addressed that there was another grant that might be able to be applied toward the cost. Mr. Rawson said he will ask Karen Brown to come in and discuss. Mr. Williams will add this to the November 6th agenda.

7.) Communications Received:

- a.) No communications.

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

- a) There was no other business.

9.) Approval of Minutes:

Non-Public Minutes: **None**

Public Minutes:

October 2, 2023 – Mr. Rawson motioned to accept **10/2/2023 public minutes**. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

10.) Public Comments Relative to Topics Previously Discussed:

Virginia Long: Regarding the discussion around NE Pond Road situation – if the town would have a Steep Slopes Ordinance, that would help address any future problems. She believes people need to be more aware of this kind of situation which would help save money and future preventions. She would be willing to work with the Planning Board.

Bob Carrier: Mr. Carrier thanked the BOS for keeping the public informed regarding Winding Road Bridge. He also appreciates all the work by Pat Smith. Mr. Carrier is also happy to see the Police Department finally coming up almost to full staff; this is very encouraging to see.

Brian Leclerc: Mr. Leclerc asked for information on item C under Old Business - Community Power Action Committee – this has been on the agenda for a long time and asked what this is about. Mr. Williams explained it was to see if town residents were interested in electricity offered at lower rates. To do this would require a committee of residents to put all the information together to put forward a Warrant Article. As there was no interest at all and the deadline has now passed, this will be removed from future agenda.

11.) Expenditure Reports:

Ms. Burnham said the Budget Committee will review the reports at the upcoming meeting. Mr. Williams provided a summary; at the 75% YTD mark, they are at 73% expenses. While this is good, they still have to keep a close watch on expenses.

Chief Krauss reported he heard from Stafford County and dispatch fees will increase by 10%. He also said that Eversource announced price increases in January. His 2024 budget currently does have a decrease in fuel costs. By the time of the meeting with BOS and Budget Committee, he will have another monthly bill and should have more information on whether or not to increase that line-item.

Ms. Burnham asked for information on the structure of Milton Water Commission. Mr. Rawson explained there are three commissioners – a resident must live within the water district to be part of the commission. There are only ~350 users. It is good quality water and the district is run on a budget. They are their own entity with the commissions running it as a business. Bob Carrier said they should have a representative from the Water Commission serving on the Budget Committee – they do have voting powers on the Budget Committee.

12.) Town Administrator:

1. The next public meeting of the Board will be November 6, 2023.

13.) Selectmen Comments:

1. Mr. Rawson – two upcoming Saturdays, October 21st and October 28th, there will be a food donation drive to help the food pantry. Students will be involved with the drive and there will be a number of donation buckets around town. This is a tough time of year for

many residents and the food pantry is really hurting right now.

Trunk or Treat will be this Saturday. The weather does not look promising and may be postponed until the following Saturday.

They are moving forward with a good plan at the new Town Hall. He acknowledged there had been poor oversight and apologized there should have been more involvement at the beginning. They are doing the right thing and are moving forward.

2. Ms. Burnham – There had been some prior miscommunications. The recent walk through has really helped to change everyone's focus. It feels like everyone is on board. The space assessment company have really looked at the space and this will be a help moving forward.

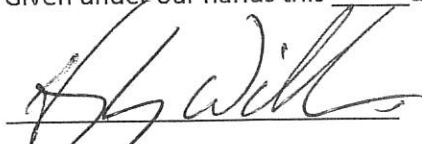
3. Mr. Williams – 2024 will be the state mandated town reevaluation. The cost for 2,718 parcels will be \$105,792. He will get the deadlines from Sue and help determine how this all fits into the budget.

Mr. Williams provided an update on the Town Administrator. The BOS has had general discussion over a complaint. They have met with the Attorney and have guidance for the BOS to follow. There has been no decision made yet nor decision on how they will proceed forward.

14.) Adjournment:

Mr. Rawson motioned to adjourn the public meeting. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

Given under our hands this 6 day of ^{November}~~October~~, 2023.


Humphrey Williams – Chairman BOS


Claudine Burnham - Board Member

ABSENT - H&J
Andrew Rawson - Board Member

END OF MINUTES – October 16, 2023

