



**Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
June 19, 2023**

ATTENDANCE:

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

Staff: Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, Chief Richard Krauss- Police Department, Brian Leclerc- Town Clerk, Stephen Duchesneau- Cemetery Sexton, +1

Public: Ann Nute – Milton Free Public Library, Laura Turgeon, Kimberly Wischnewski and Stephanie Mills from the Budget Committee.

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: Mr. Williams announced guidance for public comment and public comment pertaining to topics previously discussed: during the allowed time for public comments, those wanting to speak should be at the podium to talk into the mic. This will give those unable to attend the meeting in-person with improved listening.

There were no public comments.

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

1. The mid-year tax bills have been mailed in June with an anticipated due date of July 7th.
2. Saturday, July 1st, the NH Farm Museum will host Fourth on the July between 10AM and 4PM. This day will give both children and adults the time to reflect on the meaning of our American freedoms, our responsibility to our continued independence and remember those who fought and paid the ultimate price. Witness horseback riders as they deliver the Declaration of Independence, hear it read and use a quill pen to sign your own John Hancock!

4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:

a.) **Department Head Reports:**

Police Department – Chief Krauss: Officers participated in the recent summer kick-off before it was cancelled. Seeing an increase in aggressive drivers on all roads; this is a huge problem throughout the entire state. Speed trailer will be out on various roads; currently is on St. James Avenue. The speed limit on the road is 30MPH – speed trailer stats indicate most people are driving between 20-25MPH. They are seeing an increase in property crimes – tool thefts and work-related items. If you see something or someone suspicious, please report it to the PD. They have received reports of people driving up long driveways and saying they are lost and asking for directions. Chief Krauss said if someone is lost it is best to contact the PD.

Chief Krauss reported ~70% of their calls include a mental health component. In the past two weeks alone, five calls in a row were all mental health related. Officers are receiving training in Critical Response. This will help officers respond to residents and/or visitors who are experiencing some sort of mental health issues. If you or someone you know are experiencing some sort of mental health related crisis, please contact the Police Department and they will help you get the resources and help you need.

This meeting's focus is RSA265:54 Overtaking and Passing a School Bus: They are starting to see an increase in the occurrences of a driver passing a school bus when the stop sign is out. When someone does this, they may not see a child crossing in front of the bus. If this happens, the Police will investigate, and drivers can receive citations. They will also ask a Judge for the maximum allowed sentence which includes a fine of at least \$150 (for a first offense). Suspended licenses may also occur. RSA says when a school bus stops with flashing red lights and stop sign out, vehicles must stop at least 25 feet away from the school bus and not move until the school bus moves or until the flashing red lights stop. It was also noted the school buses do not currently have cameras on the bus with a recommendation to the school look into possible grants to help cover the costs.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector – Brian Leclerc: They are now up to full operating staff of two so customers will no longer have to wait for services. Mr. Leclerc thanked the town for their support during his recent training. He still needs to take DMV training. Regarding dog licenses – the report will need approval to begin the process. Currently sales of beach passes are down by 42% - probably weather-related.

Library- Ann Nute: Ms. Nute reported on a couple of issues – Radiators: They are not heating properly (especially in the bathroom). They experienced water freezing in the toilet this past winter. The radiator is very old. Mr. Williams recommended if this happens to call the Building & Grounds department. Last December they received three heating invoices which created havoc on their budget (they budgeted for two invoices). They do not receive any notice of oil or fuel when delivered and she stressed how important it is to the Trustees and staff to be able to plan their budget. She asked for an invoice or notice on the day of delivery. Mr. Jacobs recommended they contact the Building & Grounds department for this as well.

Cemetery- Stephen Duchesneau: He thanked the volunteers for their recent help planting flowers and said it was very successful. The second round of mowing just started. First burial just occurred in the past month. He was informed the Wentworth Cemetery, located between

Teneriffe and Mason Roads, is falling apart. He will walk-through and check it out.

Parks & Recreation- Karen Brown: Thanks to all the vendors who participated in the Summer Kick-off, with a special thanks to South Shore Outboard Association for their continued participation. Senior Bingo & Luncheon – Senior bingo will continue during the summer (June 20th, July 11th, 18th & 25th); Senior Luncheon is on break until the fall. May's Kids Night Out was at the beach with a great turnout. This is on break until the fall. Zumba class is going very strong with much thanks to Nancy Coyne who continues to offer this class for free. Camp 3 Ponds starts June 26th. Staff training just began. There are 133 registered campers with a waiting list. Friday afternoon Farmer's Market: Any interested vendors who would like to participate in a weekly farmer's market beginning in July. This would be held at the ballfield on Fridays from 4:30-7:30PM.

- b.) **Nitrogen Reduction Grant – Certificate of Vote to authorize signature and request to by-pass QBS for this project:** Mr. Jacobs – this is for the grant of \$100,000 that was recently approved by the voters for acceptance (Warrant Article #7).

Mr. Williams motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to be the individual filing the application. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams motioned to authorize Ms. Burnham, Mr. Rawson and Mr. Williams as the three individuals in their current respective positions the authority to disperse funds. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams motioned to authorize the Chairman (currently Mr. Williams), Vice-Chairman (currently Ms. Burnham) and Selectmen (currently Andy Rawson) for loan execution. Seconded by Ms. Burnham. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams motioned to bypass the QBS (Quality Based Selection) process and utilize the 3rd party consultant already being utilized by SRPG. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

- c.) **Eastern Materials, LLC request to release the bond:** Mr. Jacobs –Map 17 Lot 22. This bond had been held by the town.

Mr. Williams motioned to release Eastern Materials, LLC, from the need for the bond to cover the cost to reclamation of the gravel extraction on the property owned by Jones Brook LLP Map 17, Lot 22. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

- d.) **Request to contract with JS Marine and Vinyl Works:** This is for signs at the new Town Hall. It is an all-weather, permanent sign. One will be located on Rt. 125. Mr. Jacobs requested permission from NHDOT to place the sign on Rt. 125 until at least October 2024. After that there will be discussion for permanent signage.

Mr. Rawson motioned to approve the contract with JS Marine & Vinyl Works for two signs at the new Town Hall at a cost of \$2,885. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor;

the motion was approved.

- e.) **Request to refund vehicle registration fees:** Mr. Darling had requested a refund of \$428. The Town Clerk's office does not have the authority to refund monies.

Ms. Burnham motioned to refund \$428 to Mr. Darling. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

- f.) **Juneteenth Holiday memorandum review:** Mr. Jacobs said while it is now a Federal Holiday and adopted by most cities, the towns have been more resistant to granting another holiday; some towns have suggested making it a floating holiday instead. Mr. Williams said this should go to the voters to determine if they want to add another paid holiday. Ms. Burnham said New Hampshire has not adopted it as a state holiday. She agreed with putting this to the voters and that it does cost a lot to have paid holidays. Mr. Rawson agreed to let the voters decide.
- g.) **American Flag Committee – charge policy and committee approval:** Mr. Williams thanked Chris Jacobs and his father for their work on putting up the first three flags in downtown Milton. Thanks to Paul Steer for the flags in Milton Mills which he started last year. Thanks to Mike Taatjes at Milton Hardware for giving ~70% reduced price for flagpole kits. Thanks to Mike Nie at China Pond for taking care of the flags in front of his establishment. With all of the donations, there are enough flags to take care of all of downtown Milton and at the Town Beach with future expansions. The policies will be reviewed and updated including only allowing the American Flag to be flown. Mr. Jacobs recommended having flags up by Memorial Day and down by mid-October. Donations have been received for flag purchases. Mr. Williams said according to RSA 31:19 – allows donations for towns – they will probably need to have a trust fund to put any donated monies. If there is anyone interested in being part of the American Flag Committee they should contact Chris Jacobs.
- h.) **Laura Turgeon – Budget Committee Chairman:** Ms. Turgeon said Chief Marique had attended a recent Budget Committee meeting to help address questions/concerns from the committee. Ms. Turgeon said there were a few talking points raised from the meeting that she wanted to address with the BOS.
- Chief Marique indicated he is using the Ambulance Revolving Fund to purchase diesel fuel in town vs. using the state contract pricing which would help keep prices down. According to the Chief, the BOS had given him permission to use the Revolving Fund and why not use the state contract pricing? Mr. Jacobs said the purchase of fuel is an operational process; departments get to decide how to use their budget. It also might be the case that even if fuel is purchased in the town, he is still using a WEX card to help keep costs down as it can be used at any gas distributor. This gives a bulk/group price with no state tax charges. Mr. Williams said that it was news to him that the Ambulance Revolving Fund was being used to buy diesel fuel. A past BOS board did authorize six line-items for use of funds, which included purchase of diesel fuel for the ambulance only, from the Revolving Fund. Mr. Williams said further review is needed.
 - Chief Marique had sent information on fees collections for ambulance transportation. According to his provided data, just ~11% of transports billed are submitted to insurance companies. Collections are only projected to bring in ~\$139,000. Is there enough money in the account to buy an ambulance? The Ambulance Revolving Fund is slowly going into the hole with

limited monies going into it. Frisbee Hospital is now charging towns to run their ambulance out to the towns. There is no more free access to their ambulance services. Ms. Turgeon asked if it might be time to look into private ambulance services and see what associated costs might be? Many towns, including large municipalities are going the private route.

- Responses to Middleton – We are only getting \$500/call when responding to Middleton. According to data provided by Chief Marique, the average ambulance call revenue is \$483. Currently we are in the red. There has not been enough information provided by Chief Marique yet on Middleton calls.

Mr. Williams thanked Ms. Turgeon and Renata Gamache for their valid questions and concerns. The ambulance data provided indicates the average call collection is down by ~\$200 per call (from two years ago). The majority of calls are EMS type calls. Ms. Turgeon said she does not believe the Revolving Fund can be sustained. Ms. Burnham asked if she had any information on vendors? According to Ms. Turgeon there are a lot of different ambulance vendors who provide services including Stuarts in Dover. Ms. Burnham said it's important for the public to understand that currently services are not being paid. Ms. Turgeon said to also understand the cost of maintenance and paying collection agencies, etc. Mr. Williams agreed and said revenues are dropping – in 2020 revenue average per call was \$640/trip, while today it is down to \$483/trip with increased related costs. Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements continue to decrease. Self-pay has increased to 23%. Everyone agreed this is all very concerning. Chief Marique is scheduled to attend the July 10th meeting to discuss expenditures. Mr. Williams noted the part-time line is already at 104% expended (1/2 way through the year). Mr. Rawson agreed there are a lot of unanswered valid questions that need further discussion. Research into private services should happen and then put this to the voters and see what they would like to happen.

Chief Krauss provided additional information regarding Wex:

Using April #'s:

Diesel - \$5.25/gallon – with Wex cost was \$4.99/gallon

Regular Gas - \$3.59/gallon – with Wex cost was \$3.29/gallon

Mr. Williams will have Chief Marique discuss the fuel costs.

- i.) **Internet & Phone Services provider decision:** Mr. Jacobs and Mr. Williams worked on the plan. After reviewing all the information, they determined the difference between Breezeline and Consolidated Communication is quite significant – Breezeline would cost \$12,000 more each year (a \$61,000 difference over five years). They also looked at other costs including sewer, highway, etc. Mr. Smith expressed his concern regarding basic speed vs. higher speed rate. They will talk with Chief Marique regarding his added costs. The Beach Revolving Fund is currently being used to pay for additional speed for Recreation Department internet.

Mr. Williams motioned to move forward with Consolidated Communications for Fiber Optic Installation Contract for the Fire Department, Police Department and Town Hall. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Rawson also would like to look into other avenues for cable in addition to Breezeline. One

of the problems is a new company would have to put in all new wiring throughout the town with only ~900 customers. Mr. Rawson said it's important to advocate for the taxpayer.

5.) EVENT PERMITS

- a.) **Independence Day Parade:** review parking with Police Department. Mr. Williams talked with Chief Krauss regarding parking. Parking will be along the cemetery area; handicapped parking will be opened up for drop off and pick up.

6.) OLD BUSINESS

- a.) 2023.05.15.02 – Verdantas Contract for services related to Stormwater under the EPA MS4 program: Mr. Jacobs reported the contract was adjusted down to \$4,600 (from the original \$25,000). The contract is only for this year. He requested the 2024 contract by September 2023. This will probably be a default item as it is federally mandated.

Mr. Williams motioned to approve \$4,650 contract with Verdantas. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Rawson said it's important to look for grants or other assistance options. Milton is a struggling small town, and we need help. All agreed on finding assistance help. Mr. Jacobs cautioned that the day is coming when the federal government considers stormwaters just like they currently consider wastewaters from sewage plants.

- b.) 2022.02.04.00- 549 White Mountain Highway – status of building: Mr. Williams reported the asbestos assessment has been completed and are waiting to receive the final report. Coordination with Fire and Police Departments will be important when the building is demolished. Mr. Williams said the owners indicated they will rebuild something useful in its place.
- c.) 2022.03.20.7 – Community Power Action Committee – seeks committee members: Mr. Jacobs will add information to the website to help better explain the committee and why it's so important. Town involvement is really needed for this. The committee will help draft a Warrant Article for the March vote. The state requires a committee. The BOS should not be the Power Committee.
- d.) 2023.04.17 – Dawson Street sidewalk repairs: Mr. Williams sent a thanks to Pat Smith and his crew. They have patched the sidewalks and is now much safer. Mr. Rawson has met with Pat Smith, and they will be pursuing a sidewalk grant which will be quite substantial. Mr. Williams said the sidewalk repairs will also be part of the next phase of the Dawson/Silver Street project.
- e.) Long-Term Goal – website functionality improvements: vendor solicitation. Select date for workshop – to occur after the move to the new Town Hall.
- f.) 2023.06.5.03 Fire Chief – to review budget and expenses: Rescheduled to next BOS meeting.

7.) Communications Received:

- a.) Several wetlands' permits were received.

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

Mr. Rawson discussed with Pat Smith the purchase of sand for the upcoming winter season. Mr. Smith anticipates needing 1,500 tons at a cost of \$8.50/ton + \$4.00 shipping for total cost of ~\$19,000. This is in his budget. Mr. Smith is requesting an OK from BOS to move forward. Mr. Jacobs asked about the existing large pile of sand and if he needs that much new sand? Mr. Rawson explained with uncovered sand there is freezing in the top 4-5 feet which requires an adequate pile of sand to help mitigate freeze issues.

Mr. Rawson motioned to authorize Pat Smith to move forward in purchasing sand. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Rawson said some towns are moving away from using sand. All agreed going forward looking at alternatives would be important to do.

9.) Approval of Minutes:

Non-Public Minutes:

None

Public Minutes:

June 5, 2023 – Mr. Rawson motioned to accept 6/5/2023 public minutes. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

10.) Public Comments Relative to Topics Previously Discussed:

There were no public comments.

11.) Expenditure Reports:

Mr. Williams said the next report is expected to be quite big. Discussions on the Fire Department expenditures will need to take place. Mr. Jacobs reported the May legal billing was lower; now at 55% and has really slowed down.

12.) Town Administrator:

1. The next meeting of the board will occur on June 28, 2023 – a workshop with Wright Pierce to present the sewer plan facilities study and then to meet with employees to discuss the future grade and step plan.
2. The next public meeting of the Board will be July 10, 2023.
3. On June 13th, I sent a request to NHDOT for permission to place the new signs along Rt. 125.
4. Mr. Rawson asked for any additional information on movers for the new Town Hall. Mr. Jacobs said movers do not seem to schedule much in advance. Mr. Rawson recommended getting various quotes and talking to the school custodians and Highway personnel to see if they might be interested in making the actual move. Mr. Jacobs said there is a risk of someone getting injured. Mr. Rawson said they have rollers and other needed equipment at the school. Mr. Williams said to get a quote first and determine associated costs. Will

also be important to remember the week of the move could be slightly chaotic; everyone should be prepared for that.

5. Mr. Williams informed Chief Krauss of the board's approval to go with Consolidated for Police, Fire and Town Hall. For the current time, Highway and Beach will stay with Breezeline.

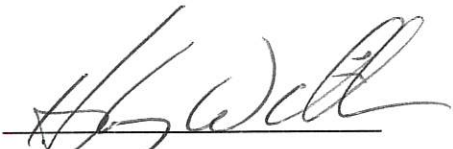
13.) Selectmen Comments:

1. Ms. Burnham reported the CIP is now meeting regularly and will next talk to Chief Krauss and Town Administrator to hear their plans.
2. Mr. Rawson said schools are out for the summer beginning tomorrow. As the kids will be out of school, he reminded drivers to please slow down and pay attention.
3. Mr. Williams reminded residents who have experienced thefts or see suspicious activity to report it to the Police Department

14.) Adjournment:

Mr. Rawson motioned to adjourn the public meeting and enter into the non-public meeting. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

Given under our hands this 10th day of July 2023.



Humphrey Williams – Chairman BOS



Claudine Burnham - Board Member



Andrew Rawson - Board Member

END OF MINUTES – June 19, 2023