



Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
August 14, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

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

Staff: Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, Chief Richard Krauss- Police Department, Pat Smith- Public Works

Public: Renata Gamache, Glenn Bailey, +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: 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.

Renata Gamache: Ms. Gamache asked if the town has ever performed an energy audit to the town-owned buildings? Have the buildings, including the new Town Hall, current Town Hall, Police & Fire Departments ever been evaluated for energy efficiency? Eversource provides a study that could possibly free up tax dollars – this is especially concerning the rising energy costs. Mr. Williams said they have already had energy evaluations of the new & current Town Hall Buildings. Mr. Rawson said all the streetlights and buildings are outfitted for LED as well as the school project is just finishing up converting all lighting to LED.

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

1. The NH Farm Museum will hold a Truck & Tractor Day on August 19, 2023, from 10-4PM. For additional information see their website.
2. The Planning Board will be meeting August 15 at the Town Hall.
3. The Budget Committee will meet August 22 6:00PM at the Town Hall

4. The CIP Committee will be holding a Public Hearing on Wednesday, September 20, starting at 6:30PM at the Town Hall
5. August 19th, MCC will hold a guided walk to learn about turtles.

4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:

- a.) **Loon Lane – street renaming:** This item has been postponed.
- b.) **Sam Plummer Road Culvert Replacement – grant documents:** Pat Smith suggested the BOS review the documents, along with the scope of work to be done. The grant amount is \$145,000. Mr. Williams said he understands about the Finance Director being in charge of the funding, but asked why she would also be listed as the Project Manager. Mr. Jacobs said he and Mr. Smith have discussed this; he cannot be running the project. Trout Unlimited agreed; however, because there are matching funds, etc. Trout Unlimited does not have the ability to work this through their financial systems. The sub-agreement would have invoices and revenues coming to Milton to ensure good accounting, especially important for potential future auditing. Mr. Smith added that the town should take the lead on everything. TU does need to be involved in the day-to-day aspects of the job. A compromise was reached to allow Milton to take advantage of the grant.

Mr. Williams – Milton will be responsible for \$25,000 upfront. Mr. Jacobs said due to a request from Virginia Long, MCC, \$50,000 of ARPA funds have been earmarked for this project. Mr. Smith explained, if approved by the BOS, RFP would be drawn up and the contractor selected by this Fall, for work to happen over the summer, 2024. Mr. Rawson asked if the grant would allow for the work to wait until next summer? Mr. Williams said the contract is in effect until June 2024. Mr. Smith said there are other monies and additional funding available – close to \$300,000. The contractor would be selected by Trout Unlimited in conjunction with the town of Milton. As Milton was awarded the money, the town is required to oversee the money. Mr. Jacobs said he will contact the town's attorney for review.

Mr. Williams explained for public understanding this project is to help restore fish passage for the native Brook Trout; the Lyman Brook culvert is currently too small. The project will replace and enlarge the culvert to allow the trout to more easily move upstream; this will also help reduce future flooding situations. Mr. Rawson said the culvert would have to be replaced whether using the grant monies or not. Mr. Williams -It also helps meet conservation goals. Mr. Smith said Virginia Long, MCC had much to do with getting this project going.

- c.) **2024 Town Operating Budget directions (2% cap):** Mr. Williams said the 2024 Town Operating Budget template will be sent out with a 2% cap requirement. The goal is to have Department Heads put their presentations together in advance of the September 14th meeting with the Budget & BOS committees.
- d.) **Department Head Budget Presentations – September 14, 2023:** Joint Department Head presentations with Budget & BOS committees.

- e.) **CIP At-Large Member Assignment:** Ms. Burnham explained due to Lisa Gautreau's recent resignation from the CIP, there is now an opening. The committee has decided to put forward Renata Gamache to join the committee.

Mr. Williams motioned to assign Renata Gamache as the alternate for the Capital Improvement Committee. Seconded by Ms. Burnham. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

- f.) **Boat Ramp Status Update:** Mr. Jacobs put together a bid document; the plan is to advertise the award in late August for opening of received proposals by the 2nd meeting in September. The timeline allows for 30 days to put together a contract; the state approval indicates if wanting this project to be completed, it has to be done between the approximate time period of Columbus Day and November 15th. It is a five-year permit; however, he would like this to be completed sooner rather than at a later time. Mr. Jacobs will post to move forward. It is anticipated the project to cost ~\$120,000 (\$93,000 grant + existing \$25,000 to put toward the project).
- g.) **Resignation submitted from Highway Department Admin:** They received a resignation from Jennie at the Highway Department. It's important to note this position performs the administrative responsibilities for the cemetery. Mr. Jacobs said the open position will be advertised. Mr. Rawson said it is exhausting to keep refilling all of the positions and asked if exit interviews are performed to help the town understand why people are leaving their positions. It is good information to have. Mr. Jacobs agreed to having exit interviews and will try to have a conversation with Jennie to get helpful information. Ms. Burnham said she can help out in the interim with cemetery administrative tasks.

5.) EVENT PERMITS

- a.) No permits.

6.) OLD BUSINESS

- a.) 2022.02.04.00- 549 White Mountain Highway – status of building: Mr. Jacobs – Jennifer Conti recently spoke to the demolition contractor; they are waiting for the owners to sign the contract before proceeding. Mr. Jacobs said he will write another letter if there is no demolition date by September 1st; the letter will inform the owner the Fire Department will post the building and order the demolition. The owners will also be fined \$275 per day. He said the town has really tried to work with the owners and not be heavy-handed; however, to date there has been little cooperation from the owners. Mr. Rawson asked if perhaps the letter should come from the town's attorney?

Mr. Williams motioned to move forward and have the town attorney send the building owner's a letter. Seconded by Mr. Rawson. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

- b.) 2023.05.22 Townhouse Road Bridge Update: Mr. Jacobs – on August 2nd, a state rep said there are changes to the proposed construction costs – they will be slightly increasing in construction costs; however because additional land from property owners will not be needed, money dedicated to right-of-way, land acquisitions, etc., will now be put back into

the pool to be used for construction. Mr. Jacobs had also questioned when the public hearing was going to occur as the original discussion was to hold a public hearing during the summer. He has received questions and concerns from residents about this as well and how long this has been dragged out. The rep requested another month for preparations. When the public meeting is scheduled, they will plan on holding it at the school to allow for larger attendance.

- c.) 2022.03.20.7 – Community Power Action Committee – seeks committee members: Members are still needed for this important committee. More information will be put onto the website.
- d.) Long-Term Goal – website functionality improvements: postponed until after the move to the new Town Hall.
- e.) 2023.06.5.03 Fire Chief – to review budget and expenses.

7.) Communications Received:

- a.) No communications.

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

- a) Mr. Rawson said Pat Smith has investigated the possible purchase of an excavator. This is recommended since they have been renting an excavator because of all the storm damage. If purchased, construction funds would come out of Mr. Smith's budget. Mr. Smith did get a quote from the company currently renting an excavator. The cost would be ~\$83,000 (the company would apply 2.5 months - ~\$10,000 - of rental to the overall purchase price). Maintaining the infrastructure is vital to the town. Mr. Smith will get additional quotes and will bring them to a future meeting for discussion and decision. Mr. Rawson said the funds would come from the Road Construction Warrant Article.
- b) Mr. Rawson asked how much money was left in ARPA funds from the original \$424,000? Mr. Jacobs said ~\$20,000 has not been spent (uncommitted). \$50,000 is earmarked for Sam Plummer Culvert (unspent) and \$200,000 for the Dawson Phase II project (unspent).

Mr. Rawson said he has recently spoken with Karen Brown concerning the wall at the new Town Hall. Karen will be using specific rooms for after-care programs and senior programs. She is concerned with seniors who attend the senior's program, and they will not be happy with the wall between them. The senior population made up 40% of the town in taxes and it's important to provide programs for seniors. Mr. Jacobs said the architect will not be ready to present building use/ plans until late September. Mr. Williams said they had already agreed on first understanding how compatible the building is before spending major construction money. Ms. Burnham – there is currently more than enough space to provide accommodation for seniors and we really need to live in it first before making any decision to spend monies on any construction costs. Mr. Rawson said he will always advocate for the senior and young folks and the potential to expand programs. Ms. Burnham said it's important to understand the associated costs first before making any decisions.

Mr. Jacobs said he has also talked with Karen Brown and suggested recreation funds could be

used for improvements as it is not just used for seniors, but all recreation-based programs. Mr. Williams said the plan is to move into the building as it currently is with the two large spaces to see how it first works before deciding to remove a wall.

- c) Mr. Williams said he forwarded the NH Clean Diesel Grant Program information to Pat Smith. This could be an opportunity to finally get rid of the 2016 dump trucks. This fund can be used to replace any aged diesel vehicle.

9.) Approval of Minutes:

Non-Public Minutes:

None

Public Minutes:

July 24, 2023 – Mr. Rawson motioned to accept 7/24/2023 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 previously sent the report. He continues to have similar concerns as before, especially over Fire Department overages. His biggest concern is the total net budget overage is projected to be \$36,000 (without Warrant Articles and encumbered funds, etc.). That projected amount also includes the Police Department budget which is currently projected to come in under \$300,000. Major discussions regarding overages – particularly Highway and Fire Departments – need to occur. Mr. Jacobs recommended freezing the budget; there are only four months left in the fiscal year.

Chief Krauss: He expressed his frustration over the idea of freezing his budget as he works to manage his budget every year, helping to ensure the town does not go over their budget. Freezing his budget to keep other departments in line annoys him. In going through the overall town budget, he noted the health insurance and retirement lines in the report are incorrect or possibly was under budgeted. Other line items throughout the budget need a much closer look as there are overages where the line should not be over. He has held back on purchases for his department to help keep the town budget in check. This is a disservice to his employees for him to continue looking at the overall town budget and now have his department's budget frozen.

Another future discussion item he will be bringing back to the BOS is getting the AC unit at the Police building fixed. There has been no approval yet to fix it – he understands this will cost ~\$10,000. He has worked through frozen budgets before; however, this time it is not fair to all departments if the decision is made to freeze all budgets.

Mr. Williams said looking at the YTD expenditures the FT line-item (Fire Dept – two paid firefighters) indicates ~\$59,000 remaining in the budget which works out to \$2,691/weekly for the remainder of this fiscal year – this would include 48 hours/week and holiday pay. This would come

in under the remaining budget. Mr. Williams said he is not suggesting freezing the entire budget, but to look at specific line items. Mr. Jacobs agreed with only freezing those line items that are currently bleeding. He also recommended lowering the spending limit from the current \$2,000 down to \$1,000.

12.) Town Administrator:

1. The next public meeting of the Board will be August 28, 2023.
2. Highway Block Grant Funds: Received information from the state – this year the state is offering \$126,948 to be split into 4 payments; have received July’s payment already. Brittanie found the town only received three out of the four payments for the prior year. This was found through the audit. The state has already turned over to the Claim for Abandoned Properties through the state.

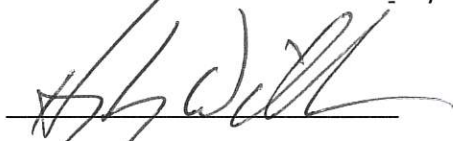
13.) Selectmen Comments:

1. Ms. Burnham – the CIP will meet one final time before the public hearing in September.
2. Mr. Rawson – a reminder that the school year begins soon – it is important to pay attention to buses and students.

14.) Adjournment:

Ms. Burnham motioned to adjourn the public meeting and enter into the non-public meeting. Mr. Rawson seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.


Given under our hands this 28th day of August 2023.



Humphrey Williams – Chairman BOS



Claudine Burnham - Board Member



Andrew Rawson - Board Member

END OF MINUTES – August 14, 2023