



**Town of Milton**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**  
**January 26, 2023**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Claudine Burnham (Chair), Humphrey Williams, Matt Morrill

**Staff:** Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, John Gagner –Town Clerk, Chief Richard Krauss – Police Department, Chief Nick Marique- Fire Department, Officer Brandon Hanscom

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:** Ms. Burnham 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 was no public comment.

**3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:**

1. The filing period for open elected town positions starts January 25<sup>th</sup> and will close February 3, 2023.
2. The Town and School Deliberative Sessions will be held on February 11<sup>th</sup> at the Nute High/ Middle School Cafeteria. The Town starts at 9:00AM and the school portion starts at 1:00PM.

**4.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:**

**a.) Department Head Reports:**

**Chief Marique – Fire Department:** In 2022, the fire department responded to 905 calls which is a slight increase over the previous year. EMS calls remained the same. They have seen an increase in the number of transports to Wentworth Douglas Hospital. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, both full-time positions are now filled. *Capital* Jason Behrens has been promoted to Deputy Chief. They have applied for two federal assistant grants: an \$80,000 grant to replace the aging cascade system and a vehicle grant - ~\$800,000. Both are 5% matching grants. Chief Marique is working with FEMA and Pat Smith regarding soliciting reimbursements for the December storm. However, with the initial damage assessments, he is unsure if they will qualify. Chief Marique thanked the BOS for working with him and the Fire *Captain*

Department with the budget process and believes they are making steps in the right direction.

**Recreation Department (submitted by Karen Brown):** Kid's Night out is scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>. On 1/28, at Nute they will be hosting games for various age groups. January 31<sup>st</sup> will be the Senior Dinner.

**John Gagner – Town Clerk/Tax Collector:**

For month of December, 2022 – collected \$71,112.25 motor vehicle revenue and paid \$23,426.29 to NH.

**Tax Collector:** For month of December, 2022 - since tax bills were due, the town received \$4,991,045 from incoming tax revenue.

**General Announcements:** The filing period for positions to be listed on the upcoming March ballot is now open and runs to February 3<sup>rd</sup>. For those considering running for a position, it can be very rewarding.

April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for new dog tags.

For town clerk/tax collector office closure due to winter weather, residents should check the town clerk portion of the town website. A reminder that most services may be completed online; there is also a secure drop-box and checked daily located outside the Town Hall doors and available at all times. For committees – please make sure to submit meeting minutes for proper filing. Working with the Milton PD, a notice to landlords – according to NH state law – owners of restricted properties must file a statement with the Town Clerk with appropriate information. For restricted property owners, there is a specific form to file with the office. All forms are available on the website.

**Chief Krauss – Police Department:** As we start 2023, we are finding some of the same old issues troubling the community. Identity theft issues are starting to become even more sophisticated and will require residents to watch their text messages, emails, email attachments, phone calls and even your credit report to make sure that no one has stolen your identity or gained access to your accounts, or started an account in your name. Please be vigilant on all phone calls and on all text messages and emails to make sure they are real, if they don't look real or you did not request that type of service from your bank, please don't give the caller any of your personal information. A reminder that banks will never ask you for the pin number.

As the winter months are here and the snow is falling, please remember that Jessica's Law (Negligent Driving) is being strongly enforced. All snow and ice need to be removed from your vehicle prior to driving upon any roadway. This violation is a \$310 fine for the first offense and it doubles for the second and subsequent offenses.

I would also like to bring attention to the Milton Town Ordinance against Disposal of Snow in a Public Way. This ordinance makes it a violation for residents and plow drivers to dispose of snow into the roadway. You also can not push snow

across the road and into the ditch on the other side of the road. This violation will result in a fine. This ordinance is in place for safety reasons. A freshly plowed road with shoveled snow or plowed snow in the roadway can cause spot icing or can cause accidents when vehicles strike the piles of snow left in the roadway. We are happy to report that through a collaboration with Milton Police Department, New Hampshire State Police, New Hampshire National Guard, and Milton Elementary School, we have a National Guard member teaching DARE for our agency this year. Due to the staffing issues of the Police Department, we no longer have a DARE instructor. The New Hampshire National Guard has two DARE certified instructors and was willing to assist in teaching the 5th grade classes this school year so that we did not miss a year of this program at our schools. We will work towards getting one of our current officers DARE Instructor trained for the next school year.

In 2022, they responded to 7819 calls - with only two officers. Compared to 2021, there were 8568 – this was covered by 7 officers.

Currently staffing is at four. We are hoping to be as close to full-staff by year-end. Throughout 2022, even with just a department of two, all services have continued – no services were cut. Thanks to all the town residents for their understanding.

**Public Works (submitted by Pat Smith):** Major time during December responding to the recent weather events. Truck #1 is down; they are using pickup trucks to help maintain the roads. They are working overtime to clear all the sidewalks. Mr. Williams responded to the recent Facebook posts regarding sidewalks not cleared, especially near the schools. This is a safety concern especially for students walking to and from the schools. Sidewalks must be a priority and they will work to get areas cleaned ASAP.

**b.) Nominations for Dedication of the Annual Report:**

Mr. Williams nominated Rob Bridges who recently passed away. As a former BOS, he did a lot of work for the town. Mr. Jacobs said there are multiple positions within the report and said he has heard from multiple residents who suggested Bob Srncac – he was involved with the Fire Department and Ambulance Corp, served on the Budget Committee and was also with the BOS. Mr. Jacobs will reach out to both families.

**c.) Records Retention Policy for Milton – Review and Approval:** Mr. Jacobs – the NH State Auditors have been closely monitoring ARPA funds and have asked towns, including Milton, for their records retention policies. The Milton PD does have their own policy. The Milton attorney sent an example from another town. He provided an edited document for the BOS to review. Once this has been approved, he will inform the state. Mr. Williams has some suggested edits and recommended bringing this forward to the February 6<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting for final approval.

**d.) NH Broadband Mapping Request for E911 Information:** Mr. Jacobs received a request from Carol Miller of NH Broadband Mapping. They are working to determine where additional broadband services are needed throughout the state. As they do not have a

database of information, they have requested to use Milton's E911 system (basically a list of streets and addresses). Working with service providers, they want to see what areas are not being serviced.

Mr. Williams made a motion to move forward with the request of E911 info to help support broadband mapping. Seconded by Mr. Morrill. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Chief Krauss explained at the PD they are working to update their records management systems. Currently it is not strong enough in the system speed. He is looking to have direct fiber into the PD building. Maybe Breezeline could provide this option for both the PD and the new Town Hall building (or Comcast if Breezeline is unable to provide).

## 5.) EVENT PERMITS

a.) No event permits received.

## 6.) OLD BUSINESS

a.) **Review and Approval of the FY2023 Proposed Operating Budget:** Mr. Williams explained they are still working through the budget specifically around Government Buildings. The new numbers will impact the default which will be higher than what was originally added on the Warrant Article. The new Default is \$4,983,847; there is no impact on the Proposed Operating Budget.

b.) **2022.12.05 Continued Review of FY2023 Town Warrant Articles:** Mr. Jacobs submitted the Warrant Articles to the DRA. Once they are ready, the BOS will need to sign. These will be posted in the Town Hall and on the town's website by January 30<sup>th</sup>.

c.) **2023.01.02 American Security Contract for the 55 Industrial Way Building:** Mr. Jacobs received an e-document for BOS signature. A minor revision to the contract is needed – adding the full amount for the full year. He is requesting the BOS authorize Mr. Jacobs to sign the document once the corrected contract is received.

Mr. Williams made a motion authorizing the Town Administrator to sign the contract. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

d.) **Sight and Sound Contract Approval for the 55 Industrial Way Building:** Mr. Jacobs explained Steve Gagnon of Back Bay recommended Sight & Sound as a vendor. The contract covers installation of a new system in one room and the removal of the system from the current Town Hall and installation at the new building. This also includes an upgrade of technology enhancements including wireless apps, flexible mics, wireless handheld mic, speakers around the room and other robust upgrades. The cost for the total project is \$45,000. Mr. Williams said this seemed to be a very reasonable price for the amount of work.

Mr. Williams made a motion to move forward with the Stimuli Sight & Sound proposal. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

e.) **2023.12.19 Sexton Job Description – Review and Comment:** Ms. Burnham explained there are two areas of responsibilities in the description. Administrative responsibilities are

handled by Jenny at the Public Works. The labor side is all non-administrative responsibilities. Mr. Williams said the presented job description will give the BOS what they need to get started. Money was added to the Cemetery Contract Services line-item; \$25.00/hour, 15 hours/week. Mr. Jacobs will reach out to the various service providers and give them updated contact information for services.

Mr. Williams made a motion to move forward with the job description. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

f.) **Personnel Policy Review:** Ms. Burnham explained they have not been able to review all of the policy. Mr. Jacobs will continue to look through and update. Mr. Williams suggested the area to really focus on concerns sick leave for part-time employees and other work schedules. Mr. Jacobs will also forward this to legal for their review. It's important to understand employee rights and personnel policy law. Mr. Williams suggested having a workshop with the department heads to review and finalize prior sending to legal.

Ms. Burnham recommended having a handbook available for newly elected positions. This will help get them prepared for their position and where to find things and get necessary information.

Mr. Morrill suggested an update to the employee handbook as it pertains to exit interviews for leaving employees. The process currently is, when an employee leaves, an exit interview is conducted and includes the employee, department head and Town Administrator. He recommended adding that an employee can instead, for whatever reason, choose to meet with the BOS and Town Administrator (outside of meeting with the department head). Both Mr. Williams and Ms. Burnham said this is a good suggestion.

#### **7.) Communications Received:**

a.) There were none.

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

#### **9.) Approval of Minutes:**

##### Non-Public Minutes:

##### Public Minutes:

**January 2, 2023** - Mr. Williams motioned to accept 1/2/2023 public minutes. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

#### **10.) Public Comments Relative to Topics Previously Discussed:**

Mr. Williams – to help public clarification regarding 'topics previously discussed' references, these should be items discussed during the current meeting and not from previous meetings.

#### **11.) Expenditure Reports:**

Mr. Williams – there is no report yet for review.

## **12.) Town Administrator:**

1. The next meeting of the board will occur on February 6, 2023.
2. Property Encroachment on Micah Terrace. Mr. Jacobs sent the owners a letter informing them there was an encroachment found on their property. This was found when a monitor through the Conservation Commission walked the Ball Property which adjoins their property. It was noted there was no monumentation. The CC Commissioner wants to know how this situation is going to be pursued and that the owners will take care of the issue.
3. Updates to the Town's website. The meeting with Clear Civic Plus had been cancelled due to recent weather. This will be rescheduled. They are looking to make the website more search-based and user-friendly.
4. The deadline for department reports and other information to be included in the Annual Report is January 27, 2023. All but one department has submitted their information. Mr. Jacobs will put it together after the upcoming Deliberative Session on February 11<sup>th</sup>. He also received information from all outside service providers (except for one). This is their opportunity to explain how funds received were utilized and benefited town residents.
5. Mr. Jacobs – Ms. Burnham suggested putting together a voter's guide to the upcoming Deliberative Session. This could really be used to increase participation and voter understanding. Mr. Morrill suggested this should be sent out ASAP as he received a concern from a resident around Article #8 – Veteran's Exemption. Mr. Williams said this will help prepare for the Deliberative Session. Ms. Burnham said to make sure to have this available on the website.

## **13.) Selectmen Comments:**

1. Mr. Morrill acknowledged the Public Works Department and the great job they did keeping the roads as clear as they could during the last 3 storms. This helps Fire & Police Departments respond to any calls.
2. Mr. Williams – two meetings ago, there was a discussion about a budget item specifically dealing with a travel line-item for finance. It was important for this information to be discussed publicly and was not addressed to any specific individual. It's important for the BOS to be able to talk about processes and budgets in public portion of the meetings. He was sorry for any possible hurt feelings but this was not a discussion about any individuals.

The Budget Committee is finishing up the 2022 Budget and final adjustments for Default.

3. Mr. Jacobs – the County did send out their package outlining what their budget will be. It is projected to be ~\$80,000 increase over last year (2022). Mr. Williams said the county always focuses on how they are saving Rochester, Somersworth and Dover and keeping them under the cap; however, they appear to be dismissive of the smaller communities who also have tax caps, but do not have revenue streams like the larger cities do. Ms. Burnham will be attending the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Mr. Williams believes they should be more critical of what they are cutting and understand the impact of their budgets.

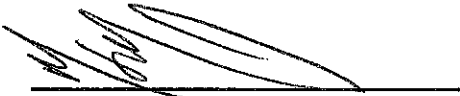
**14.) Adjournment:**

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

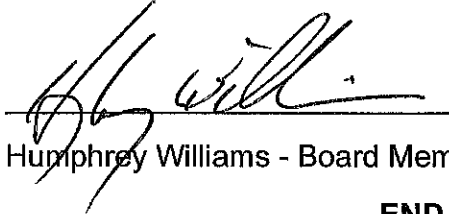
Given under our hands this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2023.

Handwritten signature of Claudine Burnham in cursive, dated 2/6/2023.

Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS

Handwritten signature of Matthew Morrill in cursive.

Matthew Morrill – Board Member

Handwritten signature of Humphrey Williams in cursive.

Humphrey Williams - Board Member

**END OF MINUTES – January 26, 2023**