

Town of Milton
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
March 6, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

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

Staff: Chris Jacobs -Town Administrator, Chief Richard Krauss- Police Department

Public: Kym Libby, Larry Brown, Ruth Gutman, Anne Nute, Jon Nute, Nancy Drew, Miranda Myhre, Jeff LeClair, Walter Cheney, Ryan Poulson, John Delsignore.

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.

Larry Brown: 1.) War games and how they are played; 2.) Present town budget is \$5M – the town can collect ambulance fees – how much fees are currently uncollected? What is being done to collect them?

3.) Announcements and Community Calendar:

1. The Town and School Board have put together a Voter's Guide for use during the Town Deliberative Session. Copies of it were mailed to Milton and Milton Mills addresses. Copies can be obtained on the Town website, Town Hall and on Voting Day.
2. Town and School Candidate's night was held on February 12, 2023, at 3PM. It was video recorded and can be viewed by going to the town's website under the Social Media tab.
3. Town Offices will be closed Tuesday, March 14, 2023, as most of the Town Hall staff will be working the election.
4. You do not need to wait until spring to register your dogs. The Town Clerk's office has the tags for this year and the deadline is April 30th.

5. The Annual Report has been delivered to the printers. We expect the reports to arrive prior to the election. When they arrive, they will be available at the Town Hall, the Milton Free Public Library and on voting day.

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

a.) **Milton Free Public Library – 2022 Expenditures:** Ms. Anne Nute from the Milton Free Public Library was in attendance to discuss the 2022 Expenditures and appreciates the opportunity for discussion. The MFPL annually serves over 2,000 patrons with many services with printed books, DVDs and digital materials.

Digital Materials: currently comes from two sources – NH Downloadable Books – Libby (service is paid to the state). This service was used over 3,000 times; Hoopla (paid in advance) – service used 881 times.

Printed Books: circulate many books which are primarily purchased through Amazon. The library is charged by Amazon upon shipment of the product. If the purchased items are shipped separately, one order could reflect more than one bill. This large number is reflected on the expenditure lines. The MFPL falls under RSA 202-A:1 – only Library Trustees make decisions on budget line allocation; they can move monies between line-items at their discretion (within the allocated funds). On 9/19/2022, they received an expenditure report which indicated their remaining balance was ~\$5,000. The Trustees believed they could then spend \$3,000; they placed a final book order with Amazon, and they paid ahead for the Hoopla service. However, they did not receive notice of fuel deliveries in December (Irving Energy); these bills were not posted to the fuel line until January, 2023. The Library Trustees asked for better communication regarding financial status information. Ms. Nute addressed questions submitted to the Trustees from Mr. Williams regarding expenditure reports. The report indicated they are ~\$750 over their budget of ~\$76,000. To address this, the Trustees proposed moving the Hoopla bill from 2022 to 2023.

Heat: Since the budget number did not change from previous years (during the pandemic when the Library was closed), they were not surprised they went over the budget.

Program Supplies: Amazon accounts are mainly books. Also, Amazon recently changed their billing process. A reminder that purchasing books is what the Library does to serve their patrons' needs.

Printer Equipment: This is used often by Patrons. They did purchase a new printer, along with toners. She pointed out an error in this line-item – a payment to Home Depot was for a humidifier in 2021.

The Trustees continue to do their best with information received. Going forward they will request monthly expenditure reports. Unexpected (or unannounced) utility bills will make this difficult. Advanced communication is key.

Mr. Williams – the spreadsheet comes from the Financial Director and was received late. The BOS has asked all Department Heads with over-expended budgets to answer questions and provide information; they are not trying to beat anyone up! The BOS would like the Trustees to come in more frequently for discussions. Ms. Nute agreed with the need for more communication and requested monthly expenditure reports; Mr. Jacobs will check with Brittanie.

Mr. Morrill asked why the Library is responsible for their own printers since other departments

are on the same plan as the Town like the Fire and Police Departments? Mr. Jacobs – the Library has a separate budget from the Town; however, he will look into the possibility of this. Ms. Burnham thanked them and welcomed them to give more updates.

b.) Presentation by Community Power:

Mr. Ryan Poulson from Standard Power (Energy consultants). John Delsignore has previously talked with Mr. Jacobs about presenting to the BOS. Community Power does not currently work with the town or school.

In October, 2022, final approval was given to the a bill allowing towns to bid for energy plan. This is a new program to NH.

Community Power would help the town develop a plan. The process would be for the town to select a committee to help determine a program which would provide options for residents. Any resident can currently go out and select their own provider. A benefit of going with Community Power is to protect residents from predatory companies. By grouping residents together it increases their overall buying power (purchasing power at lower prices). Mr. Jacobs asked if residents would need to first sign up which would help the town to know how many were interested in participating? Mr. Poulson – each resident would have the option to opt out and not participate. Steps to getting started include sending surveys to residents and determine what they want. Most will want the cheapest along with options for extra-greenness. Ms. Burnham asked if the end user would continue to get their statements from Eversource? Yes, they would. The only change to the statement would be an indication of which entity is supplying the power. The earliest this program could get started would be 2024. A committee would help develop a plan, having public sessions and to be at the elections where the town would vote. There is no cost to the town to start this process. Standard Power would work with the committee throughout the entire process. Mr. Williams asked who would serve as the point of contact for residents? Would the committee stay active? Mr. Poulson said there is a portal on Standard Power’s website. They would also work with the committee as little or as much as they needed and continue to provide them with resources and education. The BOS thanked the representatives from Standard Power for their presentation and information.

c.) Appointment of Sarah Rogers, Chris Jacobs and Erika Robichaud to the Recreation Commission:

Mr. Morrill motioned to appoint Sarah Rogers, Chris Jacobs and Erika Robichaud to the Recreation Commission. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams thanked Mr. Mark Main for his work with the Recreation Commission.

d.) Appointment of Jeff LeClair to the Conservation Commission:

Mr. Morrill motioned to appoint Jeff LeClair to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

e.) Request from Walter Cheney to come before the Board:

Mr. Cheney asked for information regarding the new zoning ordinances and their purpose, and

for BOS thoughts about them. He believes they will have a major impact and provide less funds to the town. Mr. Cheney – elderly housing is typically a top priority for towns; he is confused about the new zoning and believes this will cost the town a lot of money. He requested clarification on multi-elderly housing. Mr. Williams asked for clarification from Mr. Cheney to help with his confusion. The Zoning Ordinances are through the Planning Board and do not run through the BOS for their approval. They are separate entities, and Planning has full authority on all Zoning ordinances. Larry Brown: the Planning Board only exists when they are in meeting. In general, the long-standing problem with Milton is the downtown area, due to constraints from the railroad, river, mountain and Route 125. He believes the zoning the town has focused on will bring vitality and a sense of New England community. There is, however, a continued resistance to defining affordable housing. He does not see Zoning as restrictive.

Mr. Williams does not know of any changes to the ordinances that would restrict elderly housing. Mr. Cheney – the ordinances would restrict multi-family, elderly housing in the current proposal. Mr. Jacobs said as there currently is litigation in process, he advised the BOS not to discuss. For clarification, Mr. Cheney is not attending the meeting to discuss his project; Mr. Williams said regarding elderly housing he does not know of any restrictions. Mr. Cheney – the proposed zoning outlaws multi-family housing which could bring \$1M tax revenue into the town of Milton. He thought the BOS would care about \$1M. He stressed it's important to understand what is going on in the town in regards to zoning.

Ms. Burnham – Zoning and Planning Board are elected positions. Mr. Williams said the BOS is responsible for the financial aspects. Mr. Cheney hopes for the best for the town.

5.) EVENT PERMITS

a.) No event permits received.

6.) OLD BUSINESS

a.) **2023.01.26 – Personnel Policy Review:** Ms. Burnham agreed with the changes, and it does look much better. Mr. Jacobs said he knows he will be asked for clarifications about DPW going to a work week of 4 10-hour days. The handbook said the BOS approved that decision; he is not aware that the BOS did in fact approve that. As the Fire, Police and Wastewater departments all work/function 24/7, Mr. Jacobs does see an issue with just one department being able to pick their own work hours. Under some instances because of holidays, this could mean a 3-day work week. He could get asked if others could also have just a 3 or 4-day work week during the summer. Mr. Williams said the need is to cover a normal work week; a 5-day work week. Mr. Jacobs would hope the BOS would recognize the special circumstances. Mr. Jacobs said it's OK for the BOS to approve the policy, but recognize it will need to be flushed out a little as there is still work needed. There should be language in the policy that recognizes work weeks for Police, Fire, DPW, etc. Mr. Williams said this can be revised again. Chief Krauss – regarding setting schedules (FD, PD) there is an RSA which gives those department heads authorization to set their schedules. Mr. Jacobs – having this codified makes the administrator's job easier and protects the town from liability. Mr. Morrill said maybe just add that the department head has the authority to set the work week? Mr. Jacobs does like the existing formatted language in the document.

Mr. Williams motioned to approve the changes to the Personnel Policy. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

7.) Communications Received:

a.) There were no communications received.

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

There was none.

9.) Approval of Minutes:

Public Minutes:

February 27, 2023 - Mr. Williams motioned to accept **2/27/2023 public minutes**. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was accepted.

10.) Public Comments Relative to Topics Previously Discussed:

Larry Brown thanked Matt Morrill for his years of service.

11.) Expenditure Reports:

This was provided to the BOS.

12.) Town Administrator:

1. The next meeting of the board will occur on March 20, 2023.
2. They received the paperwork from the state indicating bridge aid has been expanded by \$90M and added an additional 62 bridges one of which is the Winding Road Bridge - ~\$1.4M.
3. The state also submitted a letter for the Church Street project asking if the town wants to proceed and accepting state aid with a 20% match of \$297,000. This will be on next meeting agenda. Also noted, the project is not expected to start until 2027 or later.
4. Town House Road Bridge – last September, met with ME & NH DOT, along with BOS from Lebanon. At that time they had selected a consultant and anticipated having a conceptual plan by February; this has not yet happened. They are having issues with the height variances and are still working on the design to address boat clearance.

13.) Selectmen Comments:

1. Mr. Morrill – this is his last meeting. This was great and a very good experience.
2. Ms. Burnham thanked Matt for his service.
3. Mr. Williams asked if the annual town report could be added to the website? Mr. Jacobs will take care of this.
4. Ms. Burnham – reminder the town elections are March 14th.
5. Mr. Jacobs received a request from a group promoting ranked-choice voting. They would like to be inside the school building at the upcoming elections. Mr. Jacobs believes this issue to be of a political nature and all political discourse must be located outside the building where the vote is taking place. He did discuss this with the current town moderator who agreed.

14.) Adjournment:

Mr. Williams motioned to adjourn the public meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 7:47PM.

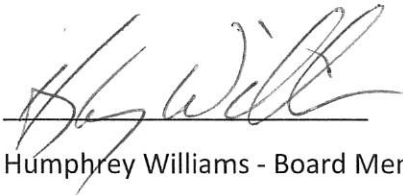
Given under our hands this 20th day of March 2023.



Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS



Matthew Morrill - Board Member



Humphrey Williams - Board Member

END OF MINUTES – March 6, 2023