

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of April 15, 2024
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

PRESENT: Chair Electra Alessio; Vice Chair Glenn Coppelman, Charles Hart, Peter Bakie, Select Board Members
(Member Laureen Szwed joined the meeting at 7:05.)

APPOINTMENTS: None

Public Comment 1: None heard

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

The Board reported on various Committee activities. Selectman Hart said that the Conservation Commission will be conducting its spring cleanup of trails. They are seeking two new members.

Selectman Coppelman said that he will be chairing a meeting on Wednesday (April 17) to share information about the Grace Daly barn renovation, and the disposition of the ell.

OLD BUSINESS

Authorize Chair to sign deed for property sold to NH DOT

This deed is related to a small lot taken by NH DOT as part of the preparation for their Route 125 upgrade project. The price had been agreed upon at a prior meeting, and DOT will bring a check and file the deed once signed.

MOTION: by Selectman Hart, to authorize the Chair to sign this deed on behalf of the Town.

SECOND: by Selectman Bakie

All in favor

Power Poles, Unauthorized equipment - update

Selectman Coppelman provided background on this topic, saying that after the discussion last week he had contacted Attorney John Ratigan of DTC Lawyers, who had then reached out to the Board's Administrative Assistant for more information. Ms. Ayer had provided Mr. Ratigan a copy of the Town's Public Rights of Way regulations, which had been drafted by Mr. Ratigan's firm and adopted by the Town in 2021. She said she had asked him whether the section of these regulations that pertains to Abandoned or Unauthorized Property would enable the Town to request removal of old equipment and double power poles at the expense of the utility. Mr. Ratigan has supplied the Town with paperwork to retain him if it so chooses.

Ms. Ayer also brought to the Board's attention that the PROW regulations were adopted by Board vote on May 10, 2021, but there was no signature sheet, so she has created one for this board to sign in affirmation tonight.

The Board discussed the matter and requested that Ms. Ayer would share the proposed agreement with Town Counsel, as suggested by Mr. Ratigan.

Lakes Association - change to sign design

Muriel Ingalls of the Lakes Association has asked to change the design of the sign that the Board had authorized the Building Inspector to approve on Town property. The change is to raise the sign farther from the ground so that the lower part won't be hidden by snow in the winter.

MOTION: by Selectman Bakie to approve the revised design of the Lakes Association sign as proposed

SECOND: by Selectman Hart

All in favor

Employee evaluations: approve form, assign

It was decided to save this discussion for the end of the meeting when Selectwoman Szwed will be present.

NEW BUSINESS

Solar Committee

Selectman Coppelman asked the Board to consider changing the name of the Solar Committee to the Energy Committee. He said that the committee will not have much to do with solar projects for a while now that the Town has signed an up-to 5-year agreement with Revision Energy. He said one of his long-term goals for the board is to pursue community power. He said the renamed Solar Committee could work on that. The Committee will be notified of the change of scope to include exploration of community power options.

MOTION: by Selectman Coppelman, to rename the Solar Committee as the Energy Committee

SECOND: by Selectman Hart

All in favor

Shooting range complaint Little River Road

This was also moved to later in the meeting to include Selectwoman Szwed.

BOARD BUSINESS

Land Use Board Administrative Assistant

It was determined that because of personnel issues involved, this will be discussed in non-public session at the end of the meeting.

Certificate for Eagle Scout

This certificate was signed for presentation to Ryan Mallen at his Eagle Scout Ceremony on May 11.

Volunteers Letter

This letter was signed and will be sent to all Committees and Boards to share with their members. It is to recognize all Town Volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation week, and includes an invitation to a cookout to be held on June 21.

Injury Claim

This matter has been forwarded to Primex, the Town's insurance company.

2024 Board Initiatives

Chair Alessio distributed copies of her synopsis of Board Goals for 2024. After discussion, which included Selectwoman Szwed who joined the meeting at 7:05, the list was finalized as follows:

Short Term Goals:

1. Repair and replace front steps of Town Hall
2. Develop concept, guidelines, and a timeline for a Volunteer Memorial
3. Increase community involvement and engagement in town affairs
4. Update and improve social media communications
5. Continue progress on PFAS remediation

Long Term Goals:

1. Develop and plan for remodeling and updating Town Hall, including HVAC, technical infrastructure, office space, etc.
2. Continue and complete the process to establish a municipal water utility
3. Explore community power options
4. Continue and complete a wage matrix of staff
5. Develop a system and forms for employee evaluations

Developing organizational charts for the Town was left on the list under additional suggestions, as was continuing to create and update town policies.

There was a discussion of whether to include putting in place a structure for a Town Administrator. Selectwoman Szwed said that because voters' appetite for new positions is low, if the board is to push for any it would be for the full-time Land Use Administration position, and the part-time building department clerk, and after that to look at Town Administrator.

Human Resources Director Paula Mahoney said that another committee is not needed for developing evaluations, as she is already doing that as part of her job and working together with the Wage Matrix committee. There was discussion on whether or not working with the Wage Matrix committee was necessary or recommended. Chair Alessio said that right now it is most important to know what form is being used this year.

Ms. Mahoney had presented a form last week but had replaced that with a newer form after talking with Ms. Alessio and Mr. Hart in her office. This newer form is from the Town of Milford and is more to the point and compact, according to Ms. Mahoney. It was decided to review the newer form and decide at the next meeting whether to use it.

There was further discussion of whether to use the "360" form, which is given to employees to evaluate their supervisors. Discussion continued to clear confusion about the different forms and the process by which employee reviews would be conducted and collected. The timeline for getting the forms returned to the board was set at 10 days for the "360" reviews, which will be sent out tomorrow. The timeline to have all evaluations

completed was decided to be May 15. Forms to be used this year will be the newest, shortened form, and the “360” form. Fresh copies will be sent out tomorrow.

The Board then went over the list of liaisons from 2023; that list will be used for assigning evaluations, with the exception of replacing those under Chris Bashaw.

PUBLIC COMMENT 2: None heard

CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS

- Ten solar exemption applications were approved.
- Five veterans credit applications were approved.

OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Kingston Days/Fire Association Brewfest

Selectman Bakie suggested that as there will be no Kingston Days this year, he would like to volunteer to assist the Fire Association with the 3-day Brewfest event.

Finance Director Mahoney said that as this is not a Town Event, it might be a bad precedent to set. Selectman Bakie will simply offer to help at the event without being there as a representative of the Board.

Selectwoman Szwed reported that following up on the Kingston Days Committee offer to purchase equipment for events that could be stored and shared, representatives from several committees met to put together a list of what they could use. They will be getting together with DPW Director Coombs to assess what they already have and prioritize what to purchase; they can spend around \$2,000. She said this should be done sooner rather than later so the 3-day event this year can benefit from it.

Selectman Bakie asked whether the electrical problems on the Plains will be addressed. He said there was a major problem with the electrical system last year and presents a safety issue. Selectwoman Szwed agreed this needs to be addressed, but will be separate from this equipment purchase; it will be a town initiative.

Updated Town Ordinance books

Selectwoman Szwed asked about the status of updating the ordinances on the website, and also said that several groups would like updated pages and two new complete books are needed.

Shooting range complaint Little River Road

Selectman Coppelman gave the background of complaints that have been made about shooting at 74 Little River Road, by the neighbor at 76 Little River Road. He said that last year the neighbor, Melanie Dostie, had complained about the noise level to the previous board and also came to a meeting about it. He said that Chris Bashaw was then the Chair and he took point on the matter and Selectman Coppelman was the backup; Ms. Dostie was told that when the shooting takes place again, if she thinks it is at an unreasonable level she should contact Mr. Bashaw first, and then Selectman Coppelman if needed. They would then get Police Chief Johnson to join them and go out to assess the noise level. He said he had never received a call but Mr. Bashaw was

called once and he believed he and Chief Johnson made a visit. He said he is not sure if there is documentation anywhere, but Mr. Bashaw did come back to the Board and report that it was very loud.

Selectman Coppelman went on to say that Ms. Dostie had reached out this week to him and to Ms. Ayer, indicating that the shooting has continued and that she had called the Police Department several times, and was told the Board would be informed. He said he had not heard anything, so he contacted the Police Chief. The Police Chief said that Lieutenant Garvin had responded to one complaint and advised the complainant that the shooters were not violating any laws. Lieutenant Garvin reported hearing approximately 10 rounds being fired but that the homeowner was within his rights based on being 300 feet from an occupied residence.

Selectman Coppelman said they are apparently within their rights based on the RSA for distance, but the question is whether they meet the noise ordinance. Another response from Chief Johnson was that the ordinance needed to be updated to cover this type of event.

Chair Alessio said she had talked to Chief Johnson this morning about the decibel level and one time it was close to the 60 decibels allowed and one time a little bit over, but only as far as 70 decibels, which she said was not enough to file charges. She said a chainsaw makes more noise.

Ms. Ayer said she had looked for the report that was made last year and had not found it but did recall that the levels were enough over the limit that they talked to the homeowner, and he was supposed to be making some changes; she had not heard anything since then.

Chair Alessio went on to say that the sound needs to be prolonged, or if the decibels were higher, it could be more punishable.

Selectman Bakie said that unfortunately there is a lot of shooting in town, and you can't prosecute someone when they are duck hunting, and this is the same thing.

Discussion continued to include that the sound levels need to be taken by an official, calibrated decimeter and not a cell phone.

Selectman Coppelman said he did not think the ordinance needs to be changed, only enforced. He said it is there and it is clear.

Chair Alessio said she will talk to the Chief of Police on this matter, and the information will be brought back to the board, preferably for the next meeting.

Selectman Coppelman said he thought Ms. Ayer should contact Ms. Dostie and say that the board had discussed the matter and will be discussing further with the Police Chief.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION: by Selectman Hart, to approve the public and non-public minutes of April 8, as written.

SECOND: by Selectwoman Szwed

All in favor

NON PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: by Selectman Hart, to adjourn public session and enter non-public session at 7:59 PM, per RSA 91-A:3, II, (a) and (b) to discuss personnel.

SECOND: by Selectman Coppelman

All in favor via roll call vote

The Board returned to public session at 8:44 PM.

Discussed in non-public session: Personnel

Motion made to seal minutes of non-public sessions.

Motion made by Selectman Hart, seconded by Selectman Coppelman, because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would...

X Affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.

__ Render a proposed action ineffective

__ Pertains to preparation or carrying out of actions regarding terrorism

Roll Call Vote to Seal Minutes:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|---|-------------|---|
| Electra Alessio | Y | Charles Hart | Y | | |
| Laureen Szwed | Y | Glenn Coppelman | Y | Peter Bakie | Y |

Motion: PASSED

Selectman Hart commented that he had talked to Chief Pellerin and he feels that exit interviews need to be done when employees leave. There was a brief discussion of this.

Selectman Bakie said that he had contacted the Public Works Department to see if their mechanic would check out the Inspector's car for what repairs were needed. He said he was told they were too busy. He said he thought it was too bad that the work could not be done in-house, to save money, and there should be better cooperation between Town departments.

Selectman Bakie also mentioned that the online auction of kitchen equipment raised \$1730. This money will go to the General Fund. He said that nobody had been told ahead of time that the kitchen items were being removed and auctioned, and cited the initial cost when it was installed at \$21,000.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board