

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of September 12, 2022  
FINAL MINUTES**

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

**PRESENT:** Chairman Richard Wilson; Kevin St. James, Vice Chair; Charles Hart, Electra Alessio, Chris Bashaw, Select Board Members

**APPOINTMENTS:**

**Conservation Commission: Evy Nathan, Greg Senko**

Ms. Nathan began by reporting that after receiving complaints, the shooting range at 2 Beaver Pond Road was investigated. From her written report: "After walking the site with the Police Department, it was determined that the shooting range posed significant risk to users of the Frye Town Forest, so the trails were closed by posting signs. The Trails committee and the Police Department met with the homeowners and an agreement was reached that the shooting range would be shut down. The trails have been opened." Ms. Nathan said that even though this matter has been resolved, she and Mr. Senko are taking the opportunity to bring the Board up to date on Conservation activities.

Mr. Senko reported on work that has been done at the various conservation trails. He said a lot of work was done in preparation for a guided walk for National Trails Day at Valley Lane. He also said that the Highway Department did a fantastic job of clearing the cartop boat launch site, grading the drive, and installing signs marking the area. A game camera has been installed. He said that the site is ready to use, and several boaters have already used it; it is the only public access to Country Pond in Kingston. It was noted that some neighbors are not happy about the project, and one posted a no trespassing sign to discourage anyone accessing the road going in. This has been removed.

Mr. Senko went on to list other work that has been done, to repair bridges and move those back in place that had been disturbed by ATV riders, building and installing sitting benches, and designing and constructing kiosks.

The Trails Committee is planning to map the trails in the Currier Wildlife Management area and surrounding conserved areas which total over 200 square miles. The Alessio property purchase is expected to close before the end of the year, and the Committee will map that area's existing trails and plan how to integrate them with the Valley Lane Town Forest.

Ms. Nathan commented that Conservation is interested in a 13-acre Town parcel off Rowell Road.

Ms. Nathan also reported on Pollinator Pathways New Hampshire events and public education that had taken place over the summer, and the slate of events planned for the

fall. Included will be the annual seed exchange, which will take place at the Kingston Recreation building on October 29.

**Ellen Faulconer, Town Moderator: Elections information**

Ms. Faulconer informed the Board that the parking lot of the Swasey Gymnasium will be a no electioneering zone, as the people would be blocking traffic and causing a dangerous situation. She said that the area used during prior elections is still available, and she is setting aside an additional area on the grass; electioneering will just not be allowed where cars are driving. The area will be posted.

Ms. Faulconer also described a new aspect of the ballots; the voting machine will reject overvotes and then the voter will have to put the ballot in the side of the machine to be counted at the end of the night. She said the elections workers can't look at the ballot to check it, and that while the voter can request a new ballot, the workers can't suggest that. She said that because of these and other changes, it may take a little longer to get to a final count.

Training for the back-up Moderator and Town Clerk will take place at the primary election.

**PUBLIC COMMENT 1: None heard**

**COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:**

Selectman St. James said that he was in contact with Executive Counselor Janet Stevens for help in expediting the grant for the Fire Station generator. He reported that the grant has been received and the generator has been installed. Selectwoman Alessio suggested that Counselor Stevens should be sent a thank you letter.

Selectman Hart said that the first Budget Committee meeting will take place in mid-October, and they plan to meet at the Fire Station if possible. Trish Tidd, the Committee Chair, will come in to meet with Finance Director Paula Mahoney.

Selectman Hart reported on the Highway Department, saying the salt supply was filled in April. Paving is completed. The oil pricing has been locked in.

Selectwoman Alessio said she spoke with the Finance Director and learned that the money from the Kingston Days carnival has still not been received.

Chairman Wilson said that the Stained-Glass Window Committee has received commitments for funding for five windows so far. Donations to sponsor a window are \$2,500, \$3,500, and \$4,500.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Tax Map Update and Conversion bids**

The Board reviewed the breakdown of the bids received; the Administrative Assistant said that after meeting with Town Planner Glenn Greenwood and Assessing Clerk Tori Dobrowolski, there was agreement that only three of the six bids are viable, and recommended the most local company, CAI Technologies, as the best choice. She said that CAI works with local towns and knows exactly what Kingston needs. Selectman St. James said that he thinks each of the top three companies should be interviewed. It was

agreed that Ms. Ayer will contact them and set up zoom meetings that at least one Select Board member will attend.

#### **Employee Benefits update**

This matter will be put on the next meeting's agenda as the information on cost of living increases was not distributed.

#### **Sale of Town- owned land**

The two parcels still under consideration for sale were discussed. It was agreed that the small Hooke Avenue parcel is not a problem, but the process still needs to be followed. Selectman Hart pointed out that the abutter who would like to buy it needs it for a septic system; the lot is very small.

The other lot discussed, off Rowell Road, was briefly discussed regarding its proximity to Ash Drive and the possibility it may someday be needed to connect roadways. Selectman St. James said that it is of too much value to give up. Given this, the access to Ash Drive, and interest expressed by the Conservation Commission, it was agreed that this parcel will not be offered for sale this year.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

(None)

#### **BOARD BUSINESS:**

##### **Accept unanticipated funds**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to accept as unanticipated revenue \$35,000 received from the Congregational Church for the sprinkler system water piping. The money will be deposited into the Building capital reserve fund.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

DPW Director Phil Coombs was present and said that \$73,000 was spent to put in the water piping, so this would offset that expense and the expense of tying the church in to the piping. Selectman St. James asked about the building fund; Mr. Coombs said that it has a balance of over \$200,000, and that it is meant to be used for unforeseen repairs, such as roof repair, damage from a falling tree, etc.

**All in favor**

#### **MS-1**

The Board signed the MS-1 Summary Inventory of Valuation for 2022.

#### **FEMA grant commitment**

The Board signed a letter committing to the Town's 10% share of this grant which is to be used to replace the Main Street bridge.

#### **Employment Contracts and letters**

The Board reviewed the revised contract for the Fire Chief and the employment contract and letter for the Code Enforcement Officer.

Selectman St. James voiced his opposition to paying the CEO \$20,000 more than the voters had approved, wondering if that can be done. In addition, he said the committee

assigned to interview candidates was not invited to interview the one that was hired. He said there was no resume, and no questions were asked. He said that he was the only dissenting vote, and can't reopen the question as he voted against, but questioned how this was done.

Selectwoman Alessio said that the Town went through two other hires that did not last long, one less than two weeks, and that this Board does not know enough to micromanage the position. She said the CEO hired has 40 years of experience in the building trades, and that the eventual combination of the Code and Building Inspector positions reflects the larger salary. She apologized for the hasty way this was done, but also said an inordinate amount of time has been spent trying to fill this position.

Selectwoman Alessio said that the Town has hired several very good people and now has a good management team to move the Town forward; she said that a lot of changes and large projects are coming to town that the Board does not have the technical skills to manage. She also said that the market has changed since the position was approved.

Selectman Bashaw said that he had none of the background to the situation, as it was his first meeting at a Select Board member. He asked why none of this information was brought up during the August 29<sup>th</sup> discussion. He said he had nothing to process and did not have the information necessary to make an informed decision. Selectman St. James said it was brought forward in non-public as a fact that an interview had happened, and this was the best candidate. He said he doesn't think that fast on his feet to have been able to process questions, and that this is why the wheels of government turn slowly.

Chairman Wilson said that he called several other towns, and they are paying \$50 to \$70 per hour for Code and Building Officers. He said the town needs to be competitive.

**PUBLIC COMMENT 2: None**

**CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS:**

- An application for use of the playing field at the old Fairgrounds was approved.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** By Selectman St. James, to approve the meeting minutes of August 29, 2022, public and non-public, as written, and to unseal the portion of the second non-public session that pertained to the hiring of a Code Enforcement Officer.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Bashaw

**All in favor**

**The unsealed portion is as follows:**

**Code Enforcement Officer/ Building Inspector**

Chairman Wilson said that he, Selectwoman Alessio and Assessing/Permitting Clerk Tori Dobrowolski had met with a candidate for Code Enforcement Officer that had been recommended by Tammy Bakie. He has been a contractor for 40 years. In discussion he said that he could not take the job for less than \$50 per hour.

There was a discussion of activity in Town such as the Seminary project and the large warehouse project, which will increase the need for a Code Officer and full time Building Inspector (these positions are planned to eventually be combined).

**MOTION:** by Chairman Wilson, to hire this individual at \$50 per hour full time.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**In favor: Alessio, Bashaw, Hart, Wilson; Opposed: St. James; passes**

A contract similar to Department Head contracts will be prepared.

### **Miscellaneous**

The Board discussed with Mr. Coombs the status of hiring an architect to look at the Town Hall. He said he will have two bids, but it may not be necessary to spend the money for a full plan, but rather to hire a draftsman and mechanical engineer to look at options for the stage area. There was a more general discussion of the configuration of the offices, and that personnel can be rotated in the meantime without any changes to the physical building.

Selectwoman Alessio commented on the flag display in front of the building, which was placed by Heidi Carlson of Down to Earth florist. It was agreed that a letter of appreciation should be sent.

The list of ARPA expenditures was briefly reviewed.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to allow the library to expend \$3,900 to purchase a 3-D printer and laptops, to be paid through ARPA funding

**SECOND:** Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor**

Mr. Coombs informed the Board of some issues at the museum building. It needs a switch installed for internet access. He also said that there is no intention to turn off the heat for the winter, but the thermostat will be kept low and turned up prior to it being open for staff or the public. He said heating the old stone building is expensive.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a)  
Personnel

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**Meeting adjourned to non-public session at 7:45 PM.**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to return to public session at 7:58 PM

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor**

**Discussed in non-public session: Compensation of a public employee**

**Motion made to seal minutes of non-public sessions?**

Motion made by Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectman St. James, because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would...

☐XX 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:**

Richard Wilson            Y  
Kevin St. James           Y  
Chris Bashaw             Y

Charles Hart              Y  
Electra Alessio           Y

**Motion: PASSED**

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:59 PM**

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board