

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of May 8, 2023  
FINAL MINUTES**

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

**PRESENT:** Acting Chair Chris Bashaw; Glenn Coppelman, Charles Hart, Kevin St. James, Select Board Members

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Anne Sheehan and Stephen Zembo, Sanborn, Head & Associates: Kingston PFAS Site Investigation Report:**

Ms. Sheehan had prepared a Power Point presentation to summarize the ongoing PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) investigation and to recommend next steps and options for permanent solutions. The investigation involves PFAS contamination in private drinking water wells in the vicinity of the fire station; Sanborn Head has prepared the draft Site Investigation Report which is required to be submitted to NH DES; input from the Board is needed to complete it. Three options for a permanent solution were given, along with estimated costs associated: Point of entry treatment systems (POET); a water line extension from an existing water system in a neighboring town (Exeter or Plaistow); or development of a new water supply.

There was a discussion of the appearance of higher concentrations or different types of PFAS substances in wells near the fire station as opposed to farther away, and patterns shown. Ms. Sheehan said that, for example, the well at the property next door to the Town Hall stands out as one where the source was likely on site and not from the fire station. She said the Town could tell the state basically that this is not related, and they can figure it out themselves, but the question is where to draw the line. There was a discussion of direction of water flow, which is indicated by the results but could be clarified by placing monitoring wells.

Selectman St. James asked if drilled wells are better than dug wells, and Ms. Sheehan said that the contamination is seen in both. Selectman Coppelman asked about the likelihood that the chemical would be found everywhere. Mr. Zemba said that septic systems are often the source of PFAS. He added that groundwater moves very slowly, and contaminants take a long time to go away, between 20 and 50 years.

Selectman Coppelman asked about funding, saying he did not see any money available from NHDES to cover treatment systems or connection to a municipal water supply. Selectman Bashaw said that he had found a one-time rebate for installation of water treatment systems on the DES website, but it is not applicable because the Town already is supplying drinking water to the affected households. Ms. Sheehan affirmed that the state will not fund the systems where a known source has been identified. She said the Town would have to apply as an entity. She said there are 26 total systems needed; six are already installed.

Selectman Coppelman said that the Board needs to do some homework on funding, and he is happy to contact NHDES about this, and the other members agreed to this.

Selectman St. James said that the bottled water supply is not a real solution, and something needs to be done. Selectman Bashaw said after talking to other towns about putting in water systems, he would not be in favor of pursuing that due to escalating and unanticipated costs. He said he feels that the installation and maintenance of POET systems would be the most feasible. Selectman St. James said that the installation of a Town water system is also not going to be quick; it could be 10 years down the road before it's completed. He said that at the very least the POET systems should be put in place as a temporary solution.

Selectman Bashaw said that systems should be installed as soon as possible for affected homes, and a source of funding needs to be found. Questions from the public have included whether or not it is safe to bathe in the water and whether the water is safe for livestock. Mr. Zemba said that bathing is safe, the chemicals would need to be ingested, and the question of the effects on animals is still being researched.

Discussion turned to the possibility of finding that the fire station is not the sole source of contamination. Ms. Sheehan said that this is why more monitoring wells would be a good idea, to see if the water may be pulling to the east or north. There was also a discussion of the maintenance of the filters; they are sampled once per year and the carbon cylinders are replaced twice per year. The Town currently contracts with a company to do this work; it may need to be put out for bids.

Selectman Bashaw said that there are two decisions to be made, first to vote on the direction to take, most likely installation of POET systems. Second, funding options need to be researched. He said ARPA funding will probably be used.

The Board agreed to bring back ideas for further discussion on whether or not to investigate contamination sources via placement of wells, as well as on funding sources. A Groundwater Management Zone will not be pursued until the current investigation is completed, as more information will be needed to define the area.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT 1:**

Tom Mulyca of 12 Rockrimmon Road asked if the Power Point slides will be available to the public. The Board agreed that they will be made available on the Town's website. The Site Investigation Report is still in draft form, so that will not be available until issued to the NHDES. Mr. Mulyca also asked if there is any movement to name more than the four subcategories of PFAS. Mr. Zemba said that the EPA is proposing new standards for drinking water and are also proposing a couple of more categories of PFAS to be included. He said that this still would have to go through rulemaking in New Hampshire; if it becomes federal law New Hampshire would have to adopt it.

Rick Russman of 18 Beach Drive said that he serves on the Drinking Water Commission and wondered if the consultants would ultimately recommend that the Town look into a water source. He said it seems that installing POET systems rather than identifying and

testing a water source and planning for the infrastructure, is putting a bandaid on the situation and “kicking the can down the road”. He asked Ms. Sheehan and Mr. Zemba what they would recommend to the Board for a long-range solution if it was their town. Ms. Sheehan said that the POET systems are obviously the cheapest solution, and asked the Board members if there are other reasons they would not want to develop a Town water supply. Selectman Coppelman said that there are larger issues than this that will eventually necessitate development of a water system, notably in Great Pond Park, where what used to be seasonal camps are now year-round homes, all on septic systems. He said even though the technology has improved, stuff still gets into the lake. He said this is a larger issue than just a small group of homes affected by this issue.

Chairman Bashaw closed the comment period.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT #1:**

Fire Chief Graham Pellerin said he has some good news, that the \$64,000 grant reimbursement for the fire station’s generator has been received. This represents a 50% reimbursement of the cost.

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to accept the \$64,000 payment as unanticipated revenue, and to apply it to the general fund.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**All in favor**

Chief Pellerin then said that there are issues with Ambulance #1 which has turned out to be a rear end problem that Durham Bus is not comfortable repairing; the estimate for replacing the rear end is \$7,312. He questioned where this money should come from. The ambulance fund was suggested if repairs can be covered with that money.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman, to repair Ambulance #1 as recommended by Chief Pellerin, with the source of funding to be identified at the next meeting.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**All in favor**

#### **LIAISON REPORTS**

Selectman Coppelman said that the Finance Director and DPW Director were looking into the issue of the phone problems at the museum. Director Coombs had recommended that the system be added to Block 5; Director Mahoney will contact Block 5 about this.

Selectman Hart said that the Budget Committee has 9 members and can have up to 12. They plan to meet twice before the actual budget season to have a better idea of where things stand. They would also like to work with the Department Heads a little sooner. Selectman Hart said the Budget Committee would like to move their meetings to the Town Hall from the Fire Station.

There was a brief discussion of the formation of the salary study committee, which so far is comprised of Selectmen Bashaw and St. James, the Finance Director, the Fire Chief and DPW Director. Two Budget Committee members need to be chosen, and then there will be a meeting at which two members of the public will be chosen.

Selectman Bashaw said that both the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment had to post meetings to address the matter of Regional Impact for a current application before them.

The two new police officers have completed training and are on the job.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **DPW Director: preliminary report on Town Hall meeting room upgrades:**

The DPW Director could not be present at this meeting, but the Board discussed a memo he had sent on the status of the meeting room sound issues. Mr. Coombs wrote that the problem is the surfaces present are very hard which bounces sound and creates an echo. He suggested a three-step process to address this issue: First, installation of carpet runners throughout the room and skirting around the tables. He said these items are already owned by the town, so this step is free.

Second, Mr. Coombs said he would affix panels to the walls and ceiling, and gave specific sizes and types he suggested. He estimated approximately \$3800 in materials to do the whole room. Scaffolding will also be needed to reach the high areas, which will cost \$1250 for three sections and can be used in the fire station bays as well.

Finally, Mr. Coombs said he would get curtains for the windows and find other places to store items currently being stored in the meeting room.

Mr. Coombs said that he hoped to use ARPA funds for this project, as this was the intent for Town Hall projects previously. He pointed out to the Board as a frame of reference that a warrant article in 2020 for purchase of acoustical panels at a cost of \$29,106 was defeated by the voters.

Selectman St. James noted that the first part of the plan has already been implemented. He said that while the voters had voted against the acoustical panels, these fixes are within budget and simple enough, but will help. Selectman Coppelman said this is a fraction of the cost of the warrant article, and that panels on the walls can make a huge difference, and also commented that rather than adding curtains, it might help to just pull down the window shades that are already there.

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to proceed with the steps recommended by the DPW Director, at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**All in favor**

### **Vendor Insurance/indemnification policy**

Stacy Dion said she had revised the forms after listening to suggestions of the Board and getting further recommendations from Primex. Selectman Hart questioned the process for a small crafter, not a registered company; they will only need to sign the indemnification form. Selectman Bashaw pointed out that the heading of "Kingston Days" needs to be changed.

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to approve the insurance requirement and indemnity agreement documents with changes discussed.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Coppelman

**All in favor**

This policy will be shared with the Museum Committee to be used for their upcoming events.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Steering Committee for Lakes Association**

Selectman Coppelman read an email he had received from Muriel Ingalls of the Kingston Lakes Association. They have received a grant from NH DES in the amount of \$100,000 which is to be used to create a watershed management plan and would like him to serve on their steering committee due to his past experience on the Planning Board. He said he had replied to Ms. Ingalls that he will ask the Board first; all agreed Selectman Coppelman should serve on this committee.

### **Signature authorization**

Planner Glenn Greenwood had requested that the Board vote on signature authority for paperwork related to the demolition grant which the Town has secured on behalf of Chinburg Properties:

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to authorize the Select Board Chair to sign paperwork related to all aspects of administration of the demolition grant for the Seminary project through the NH Department of Economic Affairs

**SECOND:** by Selectman Coppelman

**All in favor**

## **BOARD BUSINESS**

### **Vacancy on the Board: Review candidates, vote**

Selectman Bashaw named the candidates for the open Board seat, noting there are three new since the search was reopened: Michael Matayabas, Peter Broderick and Russell Prescott. In addition, he noted that Laurie Szwed, who had withdrawn, had resubmitted her letter of interest.

Selectman Bashaw asked how the Board would like to proceed, and if they wanted to reconsider the candidates discussed at the last meeting or if they should move on to new candidates. There were no comments.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Bashaw, to appoint Russell Prescott to serve on the Board for the remainder of the term ending in March, filling the seat vacated by Richard Wilson

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

Selectman Hart asked if there was any information on Michael Matayabas. There was none as the email had gone to junk mail, so once discovered it was too late to reach out to him for further information. The Administrative Assistant asked if the Board would like her to contact Mr. Matayabas before they make a decision; Selectman Bashaw said that would mean waiting a week, and it seemed clear that the public wants the board to come to a decision without further delay.

Selectman Bashaw then said that he has seen the work Mr. Prescott has done at the state level, and that he is also a successful businessman and so has experience with budgeting and human resources. He mentioned that Mr. Prescott and his family are involved in the Town in various ways. He cited Mr. Prescott's legislative experience, tenure in town and understanding of the community. He added that the public can see that the board is fractured right now, and this subject is known for his impartiality and would be a great stabilizing force on the board right now.

Selectman Coppelman said he knows Mr. Prescott and would be comfortable with him, but that the two candidates considered at the last meeting have considerably more town

and board-level experience and would be a better option. He said his vote would still go toward Ellen Faulconer.

Selectman St. James said there needs to be a balance on the board. He recognized Mr. Prescott's various activities on behalf of the Town but said he would also still support Ms. Faulconer as a better fit because of how much she would bring to the table.

Selectman Bashaw said that the board is split on this decision, and he thought Mr. Prescott would be a stabilizing influence. He said that his choice had been Electra Alessio and gave his reasons why he saw her as the better candidate with town experience. He said he had asked at the top of the discussion whether anyone wanted to reconsider their position on the candidates already discussed, but hearing none he felt this is the right thing to do although he still thinks Ms. Alessio would be the best candidate.

**In favor: Bashaw, Hart; Opposed: Coppelman, St. James; Motion fails**

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman to appoint Ellen Faulconer to the empty seat on the Board through March 2024.

**SECOND:** by Selectman St. James

Selectman St. James said that Ms. Faulconer has been in every town position, and also is independent of anyone. Selectman Bashaw said that he would not bring forward concerns he had voiced at the last meeting because it is not for a public meeting; Selectman St. James said it should not have been brought up at either meeting, and Selectman Bashaw commented that that was why he had suggested a non-public session.

**In favor: Coppelman, St. James; Opposed: Bashaw, Hart; Motion fails**

Selectman Hart suggested that the Board continue with four members until the election. Selectman Bashaw said that maybe the other candidates should be considered first. Remaining are Andrew Berridge, Dustin Hewett, Peter Broderick, Michael Matayabas and Laurie Szwed.

Selectman Hart said that Mr. Broderick has experience as a Selectman and Health Officer.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to appoint Peter Broderick to the empty seat on the Board through March 2024.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Bashaw

Selectman Bashaw said that this individual had to be told by Board members not to use Town facilities for personal things, and he felt this was a disqualifying factor, that he should not have to be told this. Selectman Coppelman said he was glad Mr. Broderick had put his name in, but that he had just been voted onto the ZBA for a 3-year term, and if he had to leave it would deplete that board.

**In favor: Hart; Opposed: Bashaw, Coppelman, St. James; Motion fails**

Selectman Bashaw then said that although there are there more experienced candidates who had lived in town longer, there has also been discussion on social media about the need for a female presence on the Board. For this reason, he would like to suggest Laurie Szwed for the position.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Bashaw to appoint Laurie Szwed to the empty seat on the Board through March 2024.

**SECOND:** by Selectman St. James

Selectman Bashaw read Ms. Szwed's letter of interest to the board. Selectman St. James said Ms. Szwed and her husband had joined the Kingston Days committee, and although she is new to Town, she is very involved. Selectman Coppelman applauded her interest in serving and said she had written a great letter and clearly has a lot of experience. However, he said that the lack of Town and Board experience, when there are others who could step right in on day one, is still a concern for him.

Selectman St. James said that he is disappointed about that same aspect but that the board needs to move forward. He said he feels that with so many important issues coming up it would be best to have a full 5-member board. Selectman Bashaw agreed, saying that while no one is getting exactly what they wanted, the Board is better with five members.

**In favor: Bashaw, Hart, St. James; Opposed: Coppelman; Motion carries.**

Selectman Bashaw asked Ms. Szwed to come in as soon as possible to be sworn in and get started. He then thanked all the candidates, adding that the board did not make it easy on anyone. Selectman Coppelman followed up by commenting that this board had functioned well with four members, that work had gotten done cooperatively. However, he said it will be good to have five.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT 2:**

Ellen Faulconer said based on all that has happened, she felt the board had made a very good choice. However she said she also wanted to point out that earlier, Selectman Bashaw had made some comments detrimental to her character, and then did not follow up on it citing it's a non-public issue, which made matters worse. She said that if he had heard things about her, he could ask, and said that just today Selectman Hart had been told she only gave 2 weeks' notice when she retired, which was a lie, that she had given 4 weeks. She said that if he had information that he thought should be discussed in non-public he could have called her to ask about it, and she might have told him she did not care if it was public. Selectman Bashaw apologized to Ms. Faulconer.

Tammy Bakie, Town Clerk, asked if the Board was going to reorganize and if her department would be getting a liaison. Selectman Bashaw said this will be done next week.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS:**

- Correspondence received from the Rockingham Planning Commission gave the date of their next quarterly municipal forum as May 10.
- An application by Hurricanes softball to use Comeau Field was reviewed. It was agreed that they need to pay the fee of \$600 before starting.
- An appointment form for Craig Barlow to be added to the Recreation Commission is ready for signatures. The Board indicated that they would like Mr. Barlow to attend a board meeting.
- A memo was received from Adam Faulconer explaining the reason the streaming of the last meeting had failed. He asked if the Board wanted to post the video

without audio for transparency; it was decided that instead of that, some sort of narrative could be placed on YouTube.

- An abutter notice was received for the Summit Distributing hearing on regional impact by the ZBA on May 11.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** By Selectman St. James, to approve the public and non-public meeting minutes of May 2, as submitted.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**All in favor**

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman, to adjourn public session and enter non-public session at 8:28 PM, to discuss personnel.

**SECOND:** by Selectman St. James

**All in favor via roll call vote**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to adjourn non-public session and return to public session at 9:45 PM

**SECOND:** by Selectman Coppelman

**All in favor**

**Discussed in non-public session: Personnel**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to approve all employee raises as discussed in non-public session

**SECOND:** by Selectman Coppelman

**All in favor**

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:47 PM**

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board