

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of October 16, 2023  
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by the Chairman.

**PRESENT:** Chair Chris Bashaw; Vice Chair Charles Hart; Glenn Coppelman, Laurie Szwed, Ellie Alessio, Select Board Members

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION:**

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman, to adjourn public session and enter non-public session at 6:00 PM, under RSA 91-A:3, II (a), Personnel and II (c), matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of a person other than a member of this board.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor via roll call vote**

Chairman Bashaw re- opened the public session at 6:34 PM.

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

Motion made by Selectwoman Alessio, seconded by Selectman Hart, 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:**

Chris Bashaw	Y	Charles Hart	Y
Laurie Szwed	Y	Glenn Coppelman	Y
Ellie Alessio	Y		

**Motion: PASSED**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Waste Oil Grant - DPW**

This item was taken out of order.

Following up on a discussion at the October 2 meeting, DPW Director Phil Coombs referred the Board to further information he had provided. He said he is waiting for two more quotes on the replacement for the waste oil burner but provided the balance of the building maintenance fund. He said that the vote needed is basically to agree to go for the grant (the application needs the Chair's signature).

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman, to authorize Chair Chris Bashaw to sign documents related to the Waste Oil Grant.

**SECOND:** By Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor**

Director Coombs then went over some purchase orders he has submitted to explain the details. He said that now that his department has taken over mowing of cemeteries, he would like to purchase a leaf blower to be used in short stretches. Selectwoman Alessio questioned the purchase of more equipment when there are budget concerns. Mr. Coombs said that in the past the Town had paid \$24,000 for a contractor to do the cemetery maintenance, and this machine will cost \$10,000 and allow them to provide the same service.

There was a brief discussion of cemetery funds, some of which can't be used except for perpetual care on specific plots.

**APPOINTMENTS: None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT 1: None**

### **COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS**

Selectwoman Alessio said that Michelle Cole, the Adult Services Librarian at the Kingston Library, has won the READS Award of Excellence for 2023. She will be honored at a reception on November 3 at 12:30. It was agreed that a letter of congratulations from the Board should be prepared and read at an upcoming meeting. Library Director Melissa Mannon is looking into starting a foundation for future building additions and expansion, by saving some money each year. Selectwoman Alessio said she had suggested that the pavilion for which Director Mannon is pursuing grant money should be on the Capital Improvement Plan, but that the Director did not know how to get in touch about that. Selectman Coppelman said that the Town Planner should have sent out CIP request forms in August; Mr. Greenwood will be contacted about the status of the CIP.

Selectwoman Alessio reported that Town Clerk Tammy Bakie is looking into creating a mock election for the purpose of educating election workers on the new regulations that have been put in place. She also reported that the wage study committee should have a report for the Budget Committee by November 1. She said it may not be everything they want but it's a work in progress, and she appreciated all the work the volunteers are putting into it. She said they have gathered good information that shows the different job classifications, and differences in specific positions between towns, but also shows the averages of minimums and maximums in salary ranges as a start for the Budget Committee to look at. She said the hope is that a plan can be formulated that will help to get away from Pay for Performance raises, which were thought to be too subjective. Selectwoman Alessio thanked Finance Director Paula Mahoney for all her extra work pulling the data together.

Lastly, Selectwoman Alessio said that Recreation Director Paul Butler had communicated with her that the new sign at the renovated Stepping Stones playground will recognize Kingston taxpayers who contributed to the cost, as well as Partners Bank, who gave a significant donation.

Selectman Coppelman reported that the Heritage Commission continues to work on plans for the upcoming 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Plains Cemetery. In advance of some possible improvements by the DPW such as a well head, the Commission is training more volunteers for headstone cleaning, which is a specialized process. He said that the Museum Committee just had their Autumn Fest on the Plains which had a good turnout

for the car show and that he heard it was overall a success. Other news on the Museum is the placement of the new propane tank, which they are trying to time with installation of the new furnace. After seeing where the tank would need to go, which would detract from the look of the historic building, it was decided it should be a buried tank rather than above ground. He said he believes October 24 is the date for the tank to be put in. Selectman Coppelman also reported that the work has not yet begun on the Grace Daly barn, but a 40-foot container has been placed next to it for winter storage of the barn's contents. He said that Director Coombs along with Dan Doyle, who had stored the items in his barn until he needed it himself for the winter, had arranged for the container at no cost other than \$500 to transport it. That cost can be covered by the funding already in place for the work.

Selectman Coppelman said that the Historic District Commission had met in a joint meeting with the Planning Board to discuss adjustments to the Historic District zoning ordinance. He said it was a constructive meeting and the changes will be brought forth at a public hearing.

Chairman Bashaw said that also with regard to the Planning Board, Planner Glenn Greenwood has been meeting with the Building Inspector for updates on the Bresnahan property to bring before the Board. He said he was unsure if that information will be ready for this week's meeting.

Chairman Bashaw then said that the Police Chief had spoken to Select Board members Alessio and Hart as they were on the board when the garage project behind the Police Station started, as the project is continuing with remodeling the garage into a training room. The Administrative Assistant said that the building inspector had questioned the need for permits at all as it appears the DPW is doing the work on a Town building.

Chairman Bashaw said that the work still needs to be documented. Selectman Coppelman said that while municipal buildings may be exempt from zoning and fees, they are not exempt from building code and health and safety matters. The work still requires permits and inspections but no fees.

Selectwoman Szwed said that the social services committee met last week. The Library Director is looking at public transportation options, which is a long-term initiative, and New Hampshire is coming up with a digital equity initiative, for which the Director and Selectwoman Szwed plan to work on the Kingston piece.

Selectwoman Szwed also reported that the Solid Waste and Recycling Committee held their third glass and cardboard collection last Saturday and there were 19 vehicles that included a lot of new people. She said this means the word is starting to get out about this collection point.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Health Insurance Options**

Finance Director Paula Mahoney said that she gotten the 2024 rates from Health Trust for employee health insurance. She said these show an increase but there is nothing to be done about it. She also learned that the Town does not have to make the change to the new options until next year.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to authorize the Chairman to sign the Health Trust rates document.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor**

Chairman Bashaw said that it is too late to consider now, but for next year he thought the Town should consider going out to bid for the health insurance contract.

Director Mahoney then said that she had also heard from Primex and their rates had also gone up, but a lot of the increase is due to unemployment and workers' compensation, which are based on salaries, so that is why they went up. She said that the increase in property and liability is partially due to the new fire station. Ms. Mahoney was asked about the budget worksheets from Departments and Committees and said she has almost all of them. She said she will be working together with the Select Board's Administrative Assistant on the executive budget. Ms. Mahoney said that one question she had was whether or not there will be a cost-of-living increase if the new wage matrix is put in place. Chairman Bashaw said that the Board will need to set the rate for cost of living, and each department will put that in their own budget.

#### **Permits: 49 Danville Road**

Chairman Bashaw recused himself from this discussion as it relates to his own property. Selectman Hart said that all permits are ready to be issued and the inspectors have signed off on them; one permit covers electrical work that it was not possible to inspect. Interim Building Inspector Kyle McManus has been asked to set the permit fees and to generate a letter for the file explaining the uninspected work.

#### **POET System grant update**

Selectman Coppelman and Administrative Assistant Susan Ayer informed the Board that the Request for Proposals for this project has been posted and bids are due at the end of October and set to be opened at the October 30 meeting. Ms. Ayer noted that due to the nature of the grant contract documents needed to be submitted with the RFP draft to NHDES for approval, and this was a lengthy process. An informational meeting with bidders may be needed if there are questions about the documents or the specifications.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Land acquisition**

Selectman Coppelman said that in looking through old Town Reports he had come upon Article 14 of 2022, which was passed, voting to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 for the purpose of acquiring land for future use as a source of drinking water. He asked what had happened after the vote. Selectwoman Alessio said that the owner of the property had been elusive and the sale has not gone through. She said that DPW Director Coombs may know more; he will be asked to follow up on this.

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

#### **Open Proposals for 2024-2028 Assessing Contract**

Four proposals had been received by the deadline for this contract work. The Administrative Assistant noted that several companies, including the current contractor, KRT, had chosen not to bid citing lack of manpower.

The proposals were opened, and various component numbers read, which over the 5 year contract totaled as follows:

Granite Hill Municipal Services, Concord: \$285,700

Corcoran Consulting Associates, Inc., Wolfeboro: \$253,000  
Whitney Consulting Group, LLC: \$267,850  
Municipal Resources, Inc.: \$263,750

The proposals were given to the Administrative Assistant to review and compare the ways the numbers were presented by year or task versus the total contract amount. A decision on awarding the contract will be made at the next meeting.

#### **Building and Code Officer: Review Job Description**

The Board discussed the salary range for this position and decided that the last posted range of \$65,000 - \$85,000 is appropriate.

There was a discussion of the job description; it had been revised last spring and a few revisions added this week by the Administrative Assistant were approved by all with one change ("supervise" inspectors changed to "coordinate" inspectors).

The notice is to be posted, to include wording that the position is open until filled and the start date will be after January 1, 2024.

Board members Coppelman and Szwed were tasked with heading up a hiring committee and identifying a Department Head and an inspector to join it. The top three candidates will be brought to the Board.

#### **Unsealing/resealing of non-public minutes**

The Administrative Assistant said that the minutes currently in the process of review need more Select Board members to look at them and have at least three sign off on a decision for each one. This process will continue as board members have time to stop by the office, and at the beginning of the next meeting as time allows.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT 2: None**

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

- A purchase order for payment to Sansoucy Associates for utility assessments was discussed as the contract was entered into after the budget had passed, and options suggested at that time for payment have been exhausted. This will be researched further by the Finance Director.
- A veterans credit application was approved for 2024.
- The MS-535 form was signed for submittal to the NH DRA.
- An abutter notice was received from the ZBA regarding 255 Route 125
- A legal notice was received from the town of Plaistow regarding a wetlands designation hearing.
- Copy of correspondence from the Hawks Ridge homeowners association to the Planning Board was acknowledged.
- A letter from audio/visual technician Adam Faulconer was noted; he is asking that funds be allocated in the budget to replace three cameras in the meeting room.

#### **Consent Agenda:**

It was decided that this format is not a good fit for the Town and is in fact creating more work for the staff, as the town's auditors have indicated that all the payment sheets need to be signed separately anyway.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 PM**

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board