

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Select Board
Meeting of January 29, 2024
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by the Chairman.

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

DEPARTMENTS: Information and Discussion
Human Services - Marissa Federico, Director

Director Federico said that her volume has been down a little bit since the holidays but is starting to increase again. She also said she is revamping her website.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Tammy Bakie

Ms. Bakie thanked the Public Works Director and Police Chief for their help on Primary day. She said turnout was very good and everything went pretty smoothly.

With regard to the upcoming Town election, Ms. Bakie said that the filing period for candidates to be on the ballot for an elected position is now through February 2. She said a Candidates night is planned, and hoped an organization might be interested in facilitating that.

Ms. Bakie said that she would like it to be policy that the Clerk's office opens at noon the day after an election, as the extra sleep is very helpful after a late night.

She also said that no one used the lobby during the election, and anyone wanting permission to set up a table or post information should check with the Moderator.

Ms. Bakie asked if the collection point would be open this Saturday, as everyone will be at Deliberative Session. Selectwoman Szwed said that 3 or 4 volunteers are available and it will be open from 9 am to noon; she added that they can use extra volunteers if anyone is interested.

The Clerk said that she will be sending out delinquency notices for unpaid taxes on Thursday. She also said that dog licensing will be starting, and that she will post the date of the Rabies clinic at the Fire Station when that becomes available.

Finance and Human Resources - Director Paula Mahoney

Ms. Mahoney said she is finishing up budget work and also financial pages for the annual report.

Building Inspection and Code Enforcement

Pedro Avila introduced himself as the new Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer and said he has worked in the building inspection field for 6 years, is certified, and has a degree in architecture. He said it's been a busy first week, and he is working on getting some documents to the Board for their consideration. He said he is here to assist in any way possible with issues that arise. He said he will be in the office from 7 am to 9 am daily, and then after going out on inspections or site visits, will come back between noon and 2 pm, and be available to the public for the balance of the afternoon.

Fire Department - Chief Graham Pellerin

Chief Pellerin said that calls are up about 30%.

He thanked the Board for their support of his two warrant articles, one for \$75,000 to be added to the apparatus replacement fund, and the other for creation of a revolving fund. He encouraged all to attend Deliberative session, where warrant articles can be changed.

Recreation - Director Paul Butler

The Director shared a schedule of upcoming events, and said that summer camp is nearly full. He said he needs one more counselor.

Mr. Butler said that they are doing some work at the Rec Building, to clear and brighten it up; he said the Liberty group that comes every year to help will be coming out to help paint.

Chairman Bashaw asked how long the day camp has been held at the Recreation Center; Mr. Butler said that it was held in the past at Bakie school and also at the high school; he has been at the Rec center for 7 years and it was there for a few years previous to that. He said he believes it's been operating for at least 23 years. Chairman Bashaw said that it is a very beneficial program for parents who have to work in the summer.

Library - Director Melissa Mannon

Director Mannon asked about Town events taking place in the summer and will touch base with the Museum Committee as they may be planning to use the same date in August for their event as last year. As for Kingston Days, Selectwoman Szwed said that their meeting was postponed until February 11, and if there is no more volunteer interest by then, they will probably cancel the event as it will be too late to plan. Director Mannon asked if she could have a flier for the library to advertise this, and it was agreed this should also be shared on social media and at Deliberative Session.

Ms. Mannon said that she and Selectwoman Szwed had been working on creating forms for transportation, and there will be transportation forums held on Feb 22 at 11:30 and on February 27 at 6:00. They are looking for community input, and people that may be willing to volunteer.

Ms. Mannon said they will be repeating their Blind Date with a Book program on Valentines Day, where they offer a free book, tea and cookies. On February 10, they will hold a program about medicinal plants. She said they are trying to increase their Saturday programs, and a ukulele program this past Saturday was well attended and fun, and there will be an adult class on craft jewelry. The Older Adult seminar this month will be about telling family stories.

The library foundation has filed for 501 (c) 3 status, has bylaws and a mission statement; five people are working on this foundation as a means to raise money for future building projects.

Ms. Mannon distributed copies of the library's strategic plan and pointed out the 4 main areas of focus for the next 5 years: Collections, Programs, Grounds (a unique goal area, which will be a major focus as they hope to build the outdoor spaces project), and Partnerships with local businesses and organizations. Ms. Mannon said a meeting with the Exeter Chamber of Commerce was very productive.

Department of Public Works, Director Phil Coombs

Director Coombs said that the DPW is rolling out their IWorqs software, and part of this is a portal for end-users to submit requests or complaints. He gave a brief demonstration of the software. He said that Department Heads and other appropriate personnel will receive an email with access to the portal. He said this is better than reporting a problem in person, as there is a record of the request, and it can be used for tracking of work.

Mr. Coombs then said the waste oil grant will be reviewed at the next Governor and Council session. He said before sending the HVAC work out for bids, more information is needed. He said his crew will be looking at the HVAC systems currently in the Town Hall to understand better what is needed, and then bringing contractors through.

For work on the front steps, Mr. Coombs said that he has one quote and another on its way but would like to have three.

Mr. Coombs said that the LED lighting upgrades are complete for all buildings. He said before applying for a generator grant for the Town Hall, they will wait 2 or 3 months so that the energy usage is known, which will make a difference in the cost of the generator.

Mr. Coombs said that because of the amount of rain the Town has received, he will need to start ditching the roads again. He said the stormwater system can't keep up with the rain and it's too much of a drain on resources to keep going out to scoop up gravel. He said there will likely be complaints when this work starts, as people perceive the Town is digging in their yard, but that they will not go beyond the 18' right of way (or whatever is the posted ROW for a given road). Information will be posted on the website before the work begins.

Police Department: Chief Joel Johnson

Chief Johnson told Mr. Avila that if he encounters any issues during Code Enforcement visits, he should call the police department and they will be happy to come out and do stand-by.

The Chief then reported that he has received his new 2023 cruiser and is getting the electronics installed. He said this will be a half-build, as he is over on his cruiser line by \$3,000 right now, and this will be an issue if the budget is voted down.

He then said that on Thursday there was an incident when the midnight officer was pulling someone over and was rear-ended; apparently the person behind him was not paying attention. He said there is \$13,000 worth of damage, covered by insurance, but no injuries.

Select Board Administrative Assistant - Susan Ayer

Ms. Ayer reminded all departments that if she doesn't have their annual report pages, they are due. She also requested that anyone with photographs of volunteer activity in town should submit them to be included in the cover collage.

Ms. Ayer also said she is still collecting information on the website upgrades and will have more information next week.

Board Comments

Chairman Bashaw said that the Department Heads will be receiving an email instructing them to send out an email when they know they will be out of the office, informing the

Board's Admin the dates they will be away, and supplying a point of contact. The Admin can then send a group email to all that need to know in case of an urgent situation. The Chair also said that he is anticipating a long and possibly difficult day on Saturday (Deliberative Session), but that everyone is doing a fantastic job and should not take any criticism personally.

Selectwoman Szwed said that a couple of weeks ago there was a discussion about how to increase community participation. She said that there are a lot of open seats on various committees and boards, and it would be a good idea if each Chair would submit to the Admin a short blurb for the Town to post, about what they do and an estimate of the time commitment. She said people may be hesitant to volunteer for something when they don't know what it involves.

Selectwoman Alessio said, in regard to Candidates Night, that Ellen Faulconer has said she would be happy to moderate. Ms. Bakie said two people will also be needed to time, and it was decided that those not on the ballot could do this.

Selectman Coppelman noted that the Carriage Towne News will no longer be published after the next edition, and that a lot of people get their information about what different committees and boards are up to from that. He suggested that at upcoming meetings, such as the Deliberative Session, a flyer or poster should be available, alerting people to the fact that they can sign up to receive emails through the town website, which will automatically inform them of whatever meeting agendas and minutes, and news items, that they sign up to receive.

The date and time were set for Candidates night: February 21 at 6:30, with a snow date of February 28.

PUBLIC COMMENT 1:

Rick Russman, 18 Beach Drive, commented that the last edition of the Carriage Towne News should be saved, as the paper has been a part of the Town's history.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Land Purchase

It was decided that this discussion may include some sensitive information and so will be conducted in non-public session.

Poet system project - Update

The Administrative Assistant informed the Board that as of last week, Verdantas was still on track to submit the Request for Proposals form to the Town by January 31, but as of this morning she still does not have it. Selectman Coppelman reminded everyone that once received, the RFP needs to be approved by the NH DES before posting, and then needs to be posted for a minimum of 14 days before bids can be opened and the work awarded.

NEW BUSINESS - none

PUBLIC COMMENT 2:

Mr. Coombs asked if the town were to transition to a new website company, would all data, including email addresses, be captured. In discussion it was shared that while they will migrate all information, the internal email addresses, such as for the Subscribe to options, would have to be located in the system and individually put in. Selectwoman Szwed said that this question was asked and answered during the last demonstration. The emails are intentionally kept private and kept in an inaccessible area of the site. If the Town goes with a new company, people may need to be asked to "Subscribe to" all over again.

BOARD BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION: By Selectman Coppelman, to approve the meeting minutes of January 22, 2024, as amended by the Admin to correct attribution of comments.

SECOND: by Selectman Hart

In favor: All

APPLICATIONS, CORRESPONDANCE

- The Commitment letter for Kingston to participate in the Household Hazardous Waste day to be held in Danville in October, was signed.
- A facilities use request, by the School's Key Club, to use the Recreation parking lot and bathrooms during an ice fishing event sponsored by NH Fish and Game, was approved.

MOTION: by Selectwoman Alessio, to adjourn public session and enter non-public session at 9:50 AM, per RSA 91-A:3, II, (c) to discuss matters which, if discussed in public, may affect adversely the reputation of a person other than this board, and (d), acquisition, sale or lease of Town property.

SECOND: by Selectman Coppelman

All in favor via roll call vote

The Board returned to public session at 10:08 AM and voted to seal the non-public session minutes:

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
Laureen Szwed	Y	Glenn Coppelman	Y
Electra Alessio	Y		

Motion: PASSED

Meeting Adjourned at 10:08 AM

Respectfully submitted:
Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

Meeting Adjourned at 10:37 AM

Respectfully submitted:
Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board