

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of April 8, 2024  
FINAL MINUTES**

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

**PRESENT:** Chair Electra Alessio; Vice Chair Glenn Coppelman, Charles Hart, Laureen Szwed, Peter Bakie, Select Board Members

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to adjourn public session and enter non-public session at 6:01 PM, per RSA 91-A:3, II, (a) and (b) to discuss personnel.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Szwed

**All in favor via roll call vote**

**The Board returned to public session at 6:32 PM.**

**Discussed in non-public session: Personnel/Employment contracts**

**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**

**APPOINTMENTS: None**

**Public Comment 1:**

Fire Chief Graham Pellerin reported on response to the weather event on Thursday, saying it went as smoothly as possible. Chief Pellerin also spoke briefly about the Seabrook drill which took place last week; he said he has heard positive feedback but does not have a formal evaluation yet.

Chief Pellerin then took the opportunity to explain the revised Facilities Use application for the Brewfest set for June 29, 2024, saying they would like to expand it to a 3-day event that will be similar to Kingston Days, as Kingston Days itself is not going to happen this year.

There was a discussion of the tentative plans for this event, which will be spearheaded by the Fire Association.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Accept Unanticipated funds/Kingston Days donations**

Finance Director Paula Mahoney said that after the discussion last week about the donations Kingston Days Committee had wanted to give to the Carriage Museum and the Kingston Historical Museum, that would have to involve a check written by the Town,

she had asked for advice from NH Municipal Association (NHMA) about whether the donation from one Town Committee to another was proper, or if donating to the Friends of the Museum was a better option. The answer from NHMA was that the important distinction to make is whether funds have been appropriated by the Town or donated directly to a specific entity by a non-governmental institution. The advice was that the donation from Kingston Days to the Kingston Museum was problematic because that would not serve the purpose of what the Kingston Days account was set up for (to fund the larger, Town anniversary events).

The donation to the Carriage Museum is not a problem because it is in compensation for damage to a carriage used during the event.

Stacy Dion, Chair of the Kingston Days Committee for 2023, came forward to explain that the committee had discussed in September that the museum had not had their flea market at Kingston Days as in the past, and the donation was suggested as a way to “mend the bridge” between Kingston Days and the Museum, give something back to them, and build camaraderie between organizations in the town.

The Board discussed ways to be able to honor the wishes of the Kingston Days Committee.

**MOTION:** by Selectman Coppelman, that the Kingston Days Committee be allowed to donate to the Museum by donating to the Friends of the Museum.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Szwed

**In favor: Bakie, Coppelman, Hart, Szwed; Opposed: Alessio; Motion passes.**

The Finance Director is authorized to write a check for \$300 to the Friends of the Historical Museum.

### **Double Power poles - Discussion of remedies**

DPW Director Phil Coombs said that Eversource is now the owner of Kingston’s utility poles, but there are still 83 double poles in town where Consolidated Communications has left their old apparatus; everyone else has moved to the new pole that either Eversource or Unitil has installed. He said there are some problems with this; first that there is a fee associated with a new pole license and essentially, they are putting up two poles and only paying for one. He said he had talked with Attorney Ratigan at DTC Lawyers several years ago and had been advised that a new policy was needed for the right of way and the fines and fees should be adjusted. He said that he has done all he can and at this point board action or a revised policy will be needed.

There was a discussion of pole ownership and the difficulty in getting Consolidated to remove their equipment. Eversource currently owns the poles but recently contacted Mr. Coombs to say that they are identifying all the double poles, but that if Consolidated does not remove their equipment they cannot take down the old poles.

Selectman Coppelman offered to contact Attorney Ratigan to get background to bring back to the Board.

### **Approval of new or revised policies**

Three policies were reviewed for signatures. Selectwoman Szwed said that the Policy Creation and Approval policy had an administrative change that does not impact content; this was to make it so that if a form or template is changed to reflect a new date it doesn’t need to go through the formal review process. The Town Website Policy was

changed to include the Town's Facebook page. Both of these policy revisions were signed by the Board.

The Facilities Maintenance and Service Portal Policy was discussed briefly; one minor change to the language was incorporated after input from Departments was received. Finance Director Paula Mahoney said she had had another question, about response time, follow up, and what constitutes an "emergency" that would allow for a phone call to the DPW rather than entry into the portal. Director Coombs said response time would depend on the request. He also said there is no automatic messaging for when a request is completed, but the person requesting the job is given a code that they can use to check the status. After some discussion it was agreed that Selectwoman Szwed will sit with the departments involved to add some language to the policy to make it more clear in these areas.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Water Sampling Results Report**

The Board received this report via email, on the ongoing water sampling being overseen by Sanborn Head, for PFAS and PFOA contamination in private wells. The report is due to the NH DES by April 15. There was a brief discussion on one point, which was the number of households being supplied with bottled water, and it was acknowledged that a new household was added last year. The Board agreed that Sanborn Head may be authorized to send the report as written.

### **Procedures for weather emergencies**

Selectwoman Szwed said that she had wanted to discuss procedures for a weather emergency, such as who makes the call to close the Town Hall. She said there had been a lot of communication on the fly, and she doesn't understand the process. Chair Alessio said that the decision is made collectively with Police, Fire, Public Works and the Chair of the Board. She said the three departments make the call based on if there is an electrical or heating outage, etc., and then the Chair will notify the rest of the Board and based on the situation, Town Hall personnel will be advised on whether or not to close.

Discussion continued on the events of Thursday and Friday, and Selectwoman Szwed said she felt it was chaotic and there did not seem to be a clear chain of command, that people were expected to come in but some also chose to work from home.

## **BOARD BUSINESS**

### **Volunteer Appreciation**

The Board signed a revised letter for Volunteer Appreciation week and set the date for the Volunteers and Employees' cookout for June 21 at noon.

### **Evaluation Forms**

It was decided to review the new forms provided by the Finance Director at the end of the meeting.

### **2024 Board Initiatives**

The Board members discussed their ideas on what should be on a list of what to accomplish this year.

Chair Alessio's list included;

1. Repair of the front steps
2. Upgrades to the Town Hall
3. Eliminating the audio problems in the meeting room

She said that the Town Hall is definitely going to take more than one year, but the other two items are for 2024.

Selectman Coppelman reviewed four items he had listed last year:

1. Explore getting Kingston onto community power, with the goal of getting better power rates for residents.
2. Complete the marker for Joe Thompson (this is nearly done as the marker was ordered today).
3. Establish a volunteer memorial - start investigating ways to do this.
4. Finish the work the town needs to do to establish a water utility. He said this does not mean putting pipes in the ground, but to get the structure in place so that if and when we need to provide municipal water the corporate infrastructure will be in place. He said the first step, placing a warrant article, was done a few years ago.

Selectwoman Szwed's list included:

1. Put the structure in place for a Town Administrator position. She said this will be a long process, but as a starting point other town administrators could be contacted to learn what their jobs include and start looking at what Kingston needs.
2. Create organizational charts for the Town.
3. Upgrade the website - this is being done.
4. Create and upgrade policies - this is ongoing.
5. Increase community engagement; working with Selectman Bakie to find ways such as holding informational "town halls".

Chair Alessio said she would put together a list, broken down into short- and long-term goals and distribute this to the Board.

### **Inspector Vehicle**

Selectman Bakie reported on the status of the vehicle which will be provided for use by the Building Inspector/Code Officer, saying it is all set and inspected; the costs added up to \$1180. He said gas will come from the fuel budget, and regular maintenance will be done. He confirmed that the vehicle will be for inspection work and other town use only; it will not be used for commuting to home.

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

### **COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS**

Board members briefly went over their committee activities. Selectwoman Szwed said that the Museum committee will be taking over the Boston Cane project; the Museum opening will be on April 13.

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

- **Bob Bean was re-appointed to the Heritage Commission (Motion by G. Coppelman; Second by C. Hart)**

- One solar exemption application was approved.
- One veterans credit application was approved.
- Renewal for the junkyard license for Ken's Auto: the Code Officer will be asked to look at the site for compliance before this is issued.
- An invitation to an Eagle Scout ceremony was received; the Administrative Assistant will prepare a letter for the scout.

#### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** by Selectman Hart, to approve the public and non-public minutes of April 1, as written.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Szwed

**All in favor**

#### **Committee participation in Board meetings**

Selectwoman Szwed had prepared a table for committees or boards to sign up for 10-minute presentations at the first meeting of the month. This will be sent out to all committee and board chairs.

#### **Letter received from resident of Hawks Ridge**

Selectman Bakie said that he feels bad for the residents of this neighborhood, as many things were not done correctly or completed. He asked how this can be addressed.

Selectman Hart suggested getting Planner Glenn Greenwood involved to find out where the Planning Board left off, and if the drainage was signed off on, among other things. If Mr. Greenwood would prepare a list and work with the Building Inspector on this, they could then report to the Board. Selectman Bakie will talk with the Planner and Building Inspector on this.

#### **Employee evaluation forms**

The Board reviewed three different forms proposed by the Finance Director. It was determined that these will be used for this year, and they will be reviewed and revised going forward. This process will include a working group with the Finance Director looking into best practices and input from the Wage Matrix Committee.

#### **Meeting Adjourned at 7:55 PM**

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board