

**Kingston, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of October 31, 2022  
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM by the Chairman.

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

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

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**Meeting adjourned to non-public session at 8:30 AM.**

**MOTION:** by Selectman Bashaw, to return to public session at 8:50 AM

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**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 Hart, 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	Charles Hart	Y
Kevin St. James	Y	Electra Alessio	Y
Chris Bashaw	Y		

**Motion: PASSED**

**DEPARTMENT INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:**

**Department Heads present:** Police Chief Joel Johnson, Finance Director Paula Mahoney, Town Clerk Tammy Bakie, Library Director Melissa Mannon, Recreation Director Paul Butler, DPW Director Phillip Coombs

**Finance and Personnel**

Finance Director Paula Mahoney said she is working on reconciling Recreation, Police details and Ambulance billing accounts. She said she is keeping the proposed budget up to date as departments bring her their numbers. She also said she had found more information on direct deposit through QuickBooks. This would allow employees to keep track of their deposits through a free app on their phone, eliminating the need for printed pay slips. She said she will send an email out to the departments, as she will need everyone's email to set this up.

## Library

Library Director Melissa Mannon shared with the Board the library's new collection development policy, saying that as there have recently been controversies over library collections across the country, she wanted everyone to be aware of how the Kingston library makes collection decisions.

She said they have been updating the library's policies and programs. She said they have also put together an Emergency Preparedness Guide, which is a 57- page document. She distributed copies of the table of contents for information. She said this has included collecting a lot of supplies to have on hand in case of an emergency.

Ms. Mannon said that the recent Jack o' Lantern Jaunt was a success and drew 125 to 150 participants.

## Recreation

Director Paul Butler reported on recent events hosted by the Recreation Department, including Trunk or Treat, for which there were 27 trunks this year and close to 400 participants, even though it was held on a Monday. He said they had help from the Boy Scouts and the high school's Key Club, as well as the Fire and Police departments. In addition, a disk golf tournament was held earlier in the month.

There was a lunch for Seniors at Rick's restaurant; Mr. Butler said it was nice of Rick to open for lunch for them.

Mr. Butler said that pickle ball continues to thrive; he said that the Rec Center is one of the few indoor courts in the area. He said he hopes to expand into the Swasey Gym at some point.

Mr. Butler said he had attended a conference for Parks and Rec Directors. He then mentioned that he has had issues with using the town credit card, it gets rejected. Ms. Mahoney said she doesn't see any reason why it would; she will talk to the bank and look into the limits on the cards.

Selectman St. James asked Mr. Butler to discuss camp counselor pay. Mr. Butler said that the practice has been to add \$1 per hour to counselors that return and pay new counselors \$10 per hour; he is proposing to increase pay this year to add \$2 for returning counselors and pay \$12 per hour for new hires. He said that money is available in the Recreation revolving fund; they realized a profit this year of between \$15,000 and \$20,000. He would like to use some of it for another trip.

Asked about the camp fees, he said they are currently charging \$200 for out-of-town campers, \$160 for residents, which he said is middle of the road compared to what other towns charge.

Ms. Bakie suggested that payment for Rec events should be nonrefundable as refunds are problematic; there was a discussion in which it was proposed that either the checks

could be held until after the event, or that rather than a refund, the person would be able to apply the money to a future event (ex. Within 6 months).

### **Code/Building/Health**

Chairman Wilson said there is a letter in Board packets regarding a seasonal residence that the owner is residing in past the season end date of October 15. Code Enforcement Officer Jess Nisbet has been out to talk to the owner, who told him they are staying no matter what the town says. Chairman Wilson said the next step will be to have the Town's attorney write a letter.

He said another matter is campers still living at the Boy Scout camp on West Shore Drive. One of them said he had just paid rent for the winter. Per the Town's camping ordinance, the deadline for camping is October 15, and the owner can be fined \$100 per day for violations.

Ms. Bakie suggested that as people are arriving between 8:00 and 9:00 to obtain building permits, she thinks the hours should be changed back. Chairman Wilson said that he and Mr. Nisbet are there to work with anyone that arrives before 9:00; Ms. Bakie said that she often needs to talk to people who are in the hall when the bell to get someone's attention is out of reach.

### **Police**

Chief Johnson said that his department conducted a drug take-back day and collected 5 boxes full, which he said was more than ever before. He also said a State Trooper came out to teach a class on close quarters combat, that was held at the gun range using cars donated by John's Truck and Auto.

Selectwoman Alessio said that the Town had received a nice letter regarding the Police Department; the Chief explained that a member of the Conservation Division of the Library of Congress had been traveling through town and got a flat tire. He said that Officers Garvin and Whitford came by as he had been waiting for AAA for a long time, and Officer Garvin changed the tire for him.

In follow up to discussion at the last meeting regarding police detail rates, Chairman Wilson said that he had learned that no public hearing is necessary for a change to these rates, and since it was already voted on, the increase to \$20 for the cruiser can be put in place. Ms. Bakie asked if there is a break for Town residents. It was agreed that for residential taxpayers only, the cruiser fee can be waived as they already have paid for the equipment with tax money. They officer and administrative fees would still need to be paid.

### **Town Clerk/Tax Collector**

Ms. Bakie said she would like to request that the polling hours be changed, from 8 am to 8 pm, to 8 am to 7 pm, to allow for more time to process the ballots in the evening. She said that the Select Board has the authority to change the Town election timing with a vote, but that for State elections, the change must be decided by the Town's voters.

**MOTION:** by Selectwoman Alessio, to change the polling hours of the Town election to be from 8 am until 7 pm, and to put forward a warrant article to do the same for State elections.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Bashaw

There was a discussion of the reasons for this move, including the changes brought about by more absentee voting. Selectwoman Alessio said that the hours were increased to 8 pm to accommodate commuters, but now absentee ballots are readily available.

Selectwoman Alessio said that there has been an influx of people requesting a hand count, and she would like it understood that this takes a lot more time to tabulate. She said that at the Primary election, there were 19 ballots that the voters requested to be counted by hand; this takes three election workers, and it took an hour and a half. Chairman Wilson said it is a very long day for the workers, and that ending the voting one hour earlier would allow the paperwork to get started sooner.

Selectman St. James said that he is hesitant to make this move that will limit the hours that the voters are able to cast votes. He suggested the Board wait one week to get feedback and think it over.

It was agreed to table the motion and put this topic on the agenda for the meeting after the election (November 14).

Ms. Bakie reminded the Board that her office will close at 5:00 pm on Monday, November 7, and will be closed all day on November 8 for the election. She said that ballot testing has been completed, and that ballot clerk training will take place on Thursday at the fire station.

Ms. Bakie also asked that a snow date for the Deliberative Session (February 4) be set for February 7, instead of waiting until the following Saturday.

On the subject of tax bills, Ms. Bakie said that she is waiting for the tax rate to be set, and then her office will be applying credits and printing the bills.

She asked about having a shredding event, which had been discussed in the past. Mr. Coombs said he is waiting for information from one more vendor. There was a discussion of options and frequency of events.

### **Public Works**

Mr. Coombs reported that the Household Hazardous Waste Day held by the town on Saturday went well. He said that 410 vehicles came through, and he was very impressed with the work that the contractor, Veolia did; they were very efficient, and by 7:00 PM there was no evidence anything had taken place.

Mr. Coombs reported on other DPW activity:

- The department will be doing crack sealing on Old Coach, Mill and Snow Roads, see how much that costs and go on with more if possible.
- Speakers for the meeting room at the Town Hall should be here tomorrow.

- He met with the Heritage Commission about placement of historic markers/plaques. There will be a total of five, including for the Nichols library and the Plains cemetery.
- He spoke with Ernie Landry about work on the trail head off North Road. There is a washout there; the work will cost roughly \$6,000, and as it is the main entrance to the Town forest, he had recommended that Mr. Landry contact the Board about it. He said there is money in his budget to cover this sort of project.
- A quote from the vendor for magnesium chloride to pre-treat roads this winter has been obtained. They will provide a 1,000-gallon tank and spray bar; the cost of the magnesium chloride itself will be \$8,000. Mr. Coombs said that he has \$6,000 in the sand budget that he won't need, and the equipment is free. He said that the state will eventually mandate this, so it makes sense to take the free trial and evaluate the effectiveness. The intention is to use as a pre-treatment to prevent snow melting on warm asphalt and turning to an ice layer, which will allow for better traction over a longer time period.
- The department is short at least one plow driver and possibly a driver with a truck if anyone is interested.
- The department distributed 3,097 trash cans and have done most of the requested swap outs for smaller barrels. Some neighborhoods such as Kings Landing have been getting trash pickup when it was not included in their site plan. He said he is trying to verify this. These and other properties such as commercial buildings or apartments are not receiving trash cans, and this will make a difference in the total collection. One trash can was stolen; the police department assisted in recovering it.

Mr. Coombs informed the Board that the department is organizing a scholarship in Rich St. Hilaire's honor; it will be an annual award, initially \$1,000, to be given to a high School student entering the trades.

#### **BOARD BUSINESS:**

**MOTION:** by Selectwoman Alessio, to increase Brian Martin's salary by \$7.00 per hour, effective in the next pay period.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

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

There was a discussion of the use of social media for such things as Go Fund Me pages. The Board concluded that a policy is needed, and a committee should be formed. Ms. Mannon said that the library has a social media policy and will share it with the Board; she has taught social media usage in the past.

#### **Budget**

Selectman Hart led a discussion of current proposed budget amounts. He said that this was just to keep the Board updated; each department should work with its Budget Committee liaison.

#### **Sale of Town Land**

**MOTION:** by Selectman St. James, to accept the bid received from Joseph Dusvitch of \$1,000 plus expenses, and sell the property at 9 Hooke Avenue to him.

**SECOND:** by Selectwoman Alessio

**All in favor**

### **Alarm system contract**

The Board reviewed renewal agreements for Reinhold Security, which reflect changes to the new phone system and cellular radios. Mr. Coombs said he is waiting for a quote from a second vendor. There was a discussion of the process if Reinhold installs radios that later need to be removed due to a change of vendor. It was agreed to table the agreement until next week.

### **Rockingham Planning Commission**

The annual update for the Town's participation in the RPC has been received. This will also be tabled to next week.

### **Forestry Grant - Fire Department**

Selectwoman Alessio brought the Board's attention to a purchase order for an 85-gallon skid unit with pump for the fire department; this has been awarded on a Forestry grant for \$2499. The Town's matching portion is \$2596, which will be paid from the Fire Department's equipment upgrade fund.

**Selectman St. James left the meeting at 10:10 AM.**

### **Kingston Days**

Selectwoman Alessio asked the department heads present for their input on Kingston Days. She said that the event has become a logistical challenge. She said that she attended the committee's last meeting and came away with four pages of notes; this year a lot fell to the committee chair, and more volunteers are needed. Questions had arisen on many levels, including how the money was handled.

In discussion, it was agreed that while the Town likes the event, nobody wants to volunteer. A leadership team is needed and then organization so that one person is in charge of one thing; it was noted that the cow patty contest was well done with Selectman St. James taking charge of it.

Suggestions included taking a year off or limiting the event to one day, eliminating the carnival, adding more crafters, bringing back events done in the past such as the fiddler's contest and the auction, involving local restaurants, and holding more indoor events or displays so that there are things to do out of the weather if it is extremely hot or rainy.

### **Thank you to Walt Roy**

The Chair said he would like to publicly thank Walt Roy for the photograph of the bandstand that he donated to the Town. He said it will be hung in the hallway near the Clerk's office. Ms. Mannon said that Mr. Roy had also done most of the work for the Jack O'Lantern jaunt.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** by Selectwoman Alessio, to approve the meeting minutes of October 24,2022, Public and Non-public, as written.

**SECOND:** by Selectman Hart

**All in favor**

**Meeting Adjourned at 10:25 AM**

Respectfully submitted:

Susan H. Ayer

Administrative Assistant to the Select Board