

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Select Board
November 8, 2021
FINAL MINUTES**

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

PRESENT: Phillip Coombs, Chair; Richard Wilson, Vice Chair; Electra Alessio, Donald W. Briggs, Kevin St. James Select Board Members.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

MOTION: by Selectwoman Alessio, to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely harm the reputation of any person not on this Board

SECOND: by Selectman St. James

All in favor

Meeting adjourned to non-public session at 6:31 PM.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to return to public session at **7:03 PM**

SECOND: by Selectwoman Alessio

All in favor

Motion made to seal these minutes: Motion made by Selectwoman Alessio, seconded by Selectman Wilson, 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.

Roll Call Vote to Seal Minutes:

Phillip Coombs	Y	Richard Wilson	Y
Kevin St. James	Y	Electra Alessio	Y
Donald Briggs	Y		

Motion: PASSED

Discussed in non-public session: Compensation of personnel

APPOINTMENTS:

Finn Blomberg, Troop 93 - Eagle Scout project

Finn Blomberg introduced himself as a senior at Sanborn Regional High School and a Scout since first grade. He then presented his proposed project to the Board, saying he had discussed the project with Highway Agent Rich St. Hilaire and Recreation Director Paul Butler. He said that it will be at the Richard St. Hilaire Recreation area, in the wooded area near the shed that was a recent Scout project. He described the components of the plan:

- Do some cleanup at the lower wooded area
- Build a campfire pit in the lower wooded area
- Build and install 3 benches by the campfire pit.
- Build and install a Gaga Ball pit on the upper field.

Mr. Blomberg said that his project will not only provide some new additions to the Recreation Center that will benefit the entire community, but will also lay the groundwork for many more things to come in the future.

Mr. Butler was present and said the project has his full approval. He said he is glad to see more being done to develop the area, which he said will be a good place to bring kids in the summer when it's hot, as it will be shady. He also envisioned community activities taking place there.

There was a discussion of details and timing; Mr. Blomberg said he expects to complete the project by June 15, 2022. Chairman Coombs said this is a great project, and that Mr. Blomberg should contact the Board if the Town can help with anything. He said to contact the Selectmen's Administrative Assistant for any required paperwork.

MOTION: by Selectman St. James, to approve the Eagle Scout project proposed by Finn Blomberg for the Richard St. Hilaire Recreation Center

SECOND: by Selectwoman Alessio

All in favor

PUBLIC COMMENT I: None heard

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS:

Selectwoman Alessio reported that a committee is being formed to work on a request for proposals for a landfill solar project. There was a discussion of who has expressed an interest and who might also be a good resource for the committee. Chairman Coombs said he thinks this should be put out to the public to find interested volunteers.

Chairman Coombs said a committee should also be formed to begin exploring a Town recycling program. He said that the contract with Waste Management is going to be ending, and other options need to be looked at to avoid a large budget increase. Selectwoman Alessio said she will write articles for the newspaper on both of these committees, to be placed also on Facebook and the Town's website.

Selectwoman Alessio said that the **Historic District Commission** will be reviewing conceptual plans for the Seminary project at this week's meeting. The ZBA will also meet this week, on Wednesday rather than Thursday due to the Veterans' Day holiday. With regard to **personnel**, Selectwoman Alessio reported that the committee reviewing the Personnel Policy met today; they tweaked a few things and it will be sent to the attorney. She asked for Board input on vacation time, saying the committee had proposed a schedule of adding a week of vacation each year, offering one week for the first year, two weeks for the second, three for the third, and then adding a fourth week after 6 years. Chairman Coombs said he would like to see what the State and County policy for vacation time is; Selectman St. James will get this information. Selectwoman Alessio then brought up the subject of credit cards for the use of Department Heads and the debate over which bank to use. After a brief discussion it was agreed to invite a representative of Partner's Bank to the Department Heads meeting on Nov. 29. The Credit Card policy which has been under review will be voted on at the next meeting.

Selectman St. James said that the **Budget Committee** had to cancel its Wednesday meeting, but will hold a double session on Sunday November 14.
Selectman Wilson said that he had met with the Museum Committee, and asked them to share their minutes, which they have.

OLD BUSINESS:

Scanning/digitizing proposals

A preliminary review of these proposals by the Administrative Assistant and Selectman Wilson was discussed. Questions remain on the number of users for the Records Management systems offered, who should have access, and how they would work. There was a discussion of pricing and what is included. The Board members were leaning toward Ricoh, especially given that they had been to the Town to offer an estimate in the past and had a comprehensive proposal. However, questions remained on the costs of the management systems and how they will be set up. Ricoh will be contacted for more information, and other companies may also be asked for clarification on some points. Block 5 will be asked about how the new system will impact the Town's server.

Perambulations of bounds

Due to the lack of surveyors available to do this work, as well as budget concerns, the Board was in agreement that scheduling perambulations of the town boundaries will have to be put off until 2023.

Employee Evaluation forms

Selectwoman Alessio said that the new forms are done, and a final copy will be brought to the next meeting for approval.

Consolidated Communications settlement

Correspondence with the tax department at Consolidated was shared by the Administrative Assistant. There was a discussion of double poles, new pole licenses, and poles that may not be new, but changing ownership. There was a question about the white boxes going up for fiber optic cable, and if they are required to have a license. The Chairman said there needs to be follow-up on the double poles.

NEW BUSINESS:

BOARD BUSINESS:

ARPA funding

It has been brought to the attention of the Board that the decision to accept the American Rescue Plan Act funds as unanticipated revenue needed to include the total allotted to the Town, not just the first tranche payment. A second hearing will be scheduled, but it was decided to also vote on this tonight:

MOTION: by Selectwoman Alessio, to accept ARPA funding in the amount of \$674,829 as unanticipated revenue

SECOND: by Selectman St. James

All in favor

There was a discussion of expenditures that are being earmarked for these funds, including a town-wide phone system, work on the meeting room to improve sound for meetings, ventilation and UV lights, and the digitization of records. Chairman Coombs said that items should be prioritized and put forward for the Capital Improvement plan. Selectman St. James said an architectural design for Town offices should be considered for the CIP.

Budget

Selectman St. James noted that the budget line for Consulting Services is at \$100,000 for the purpose of dealing with PFAS in the water, but now that federal money is available to combat that problem, the town's budget line might be reduced. He suggested bringing it down to \$60,000. The Board was receptive to this. Selectman St. James also brought up the proposal for LED lighting in Town buildings put forward by Affinity. He said the savings being realized by the streetlight change to LED lights might be used in part to add more streetlights; there was a discussion of dark skies vs. safety. Selectman St. James said that the line item for streetlights can be reduced per the savings, but with \$5,000 retained for new lights. Chairman Coombs said he felt the savings should be used for further conservation efforts. The actual amount of the savings realized by the streetlights will be obtained from the Finance Director.

Tax rate

Selectman St. James said that the Board had met this afternoon to set the tax rate. The Administrative Assistant said that in consulting with the DRA on the utilities assessment, it was recommended that the Town get more information from the assessor before finalizing the tax warrant. Selectwoman Alessio explained for the public that there was a large drop in the assessed value of two utilities, which the Board has questioned. The final tax rate will be set once an explanation is received. It was agreed that in future, a better schedule needs to be met to avoid last minute problems.

PUBLIC COMMENT II: None

CORRESPONDENCE, APPLICATIONS, PURCHASE ORDERS:

- Application for an elderly tax exemption was approved.
- An intent to cut submitted by the Conservation Commission for the Acorn Forest
- School facilities use applications to use the Swasey gym for 2022 elections were signed by the Chairman

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION: By Selectwoman Alessio, to approve the meeting minutes of October 25, 2021, Public and Non-public, as written.

SECOND: By Selectman Wilson

All were in favor

Adjournment:

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted, Susan Ayer, Administrative Assistant