

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of April 26, 2021: Special Meeting with Department Heads
FINAL MINUTES**

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

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

Department heads were present: Highway Agent Richard St. Hilaire; Fire Chief Graham Pellerin; Town Clerk-Tax Collector Tammy Bakie; Finance Director Cindy Kenerson. Also present was Brian Martin of the Highway Department.

Selectman Coombs explained that this meeting is the beginning of regularly scheduled daytime meetings between the Select Board and Department Heads, in order to share information in an open forum. Selectwoman Alessio said it is an opportunity for team building, and to develop better communication.

PUBLIC COMMENT I:

John Trahan of the Kingston Adult Softball League was present to talk to the Board about the league's agreement for using Town fields, which was revoked due to an alcohol use violation. It was pointed out that Mr. Trahan was not on the meeting's agenda; the Board agreed to take Public Comment ahead of the rest of the agenda.

Mr. Trahan said that the league has been playing in Kingston for 35 years and has never had incidents on any Town field. He said that new teams this year were not told all of the Town rules; the players have now been informed and the coach suspended. He said that he would like the league to be given another chance, and that they are willing to purchase trail cameras and make the teams aware they are under surveillance at all times.

Selectman Briggs said he had talked to Mr. Trahan last week and explained his concerns about the incident, especially in light of another incident last year which resulted in an accident and potential liability to the Town. Mr. Trahan said that the person involved in last year's incident is no longer a part of the league.

Mr. Trahan said that the league is composed of eight teams, most of which are from Kingston, with one or two from Massachusetts. He said the out-of- state teams are new and the coaches did not relay Kingston's rules to them.

There was a discussion of different types of cameras and how to monitor them. Selectman Briggs said that he may change his mind about the full season ban based on the remedies Mr. Trahan is offering, but that if there was another violation the league would be banned permanently from the use of Town fields.

Rich St. Hilaire said that the use of alcohol during the league's games is not new, that the Highway Department had picked up the garbage at the fields for years. In further discussion, Selectman St. James suggested that the teams should have to pay a security deposit, which would not be refunded if there is a problem. Mr. Trahan said that he would make sure someone is always present until the end of the day.

It was agreed that the Board will talk with Town Counsel and the insurance company before making any decision, and that Mr. Trahan will research cameras. The topic is on the May 3 meeting agenda. Recreation Director Paul Butler will be asked to attend.

APPOINTMENTS:

Police Department

Selectman Briggs, speaking as Police Chief, said that the Police Department has been inundated with calls and information requests pertaining to the explosion at Torromeo Industries. There was discussion of the details of the blast, which was a planned detonation of a large amount of tannerite explosive material for the purpose of a gender "reveal" celebration. He said the material was placed in the quarry but it was not like the normal blasting at Torromeo; it was an airborne explosion. Some residents have said their foundations were cracked; Selectman Briggs said that an expert will be needed to assess the damage to see if the explosion caused the foundation damage. Mr. St. Hilaire noted that with an airborne explosion, there should be window damage rather than foundation damage, and no windows were broken.

Selectman Wilson said that this is not a Town issue, but a civil matter with the property owner. Selectwoman Alessio said that it is too bad that the people announcing their child's gender apparently did not think about the repercussions of their actions.

- Selectman Briggs reported that a number of his new officers have graduated from the full time academy.
- At a meeting at the new fire station site with the construction manager, it was seen that more checks and balances are needed and oversight procedures have been modified.

Highway Department

Highway Agent Rich St. Hilaire said he is glad these meetings are now taking place, but said more dates may need to be added to the schedule in order to address large topics such as the budget or pay raises in a timely manner. Finance Director Cindy Kenerson added that identifying department needs early in the year will allow for discussion of how to finance them, whether in the budget or in a warrant article.

- Spring clean-up of grounds has been completed.
- Two trucks are being delivered, which will cause \$220,000 in outgoing funds; the Finance Director has been made aware.
- Mr. St. Hilaire asked that if anyone observes driveway work being done, especially on a weekend, to call him on his cell phone.

- Following up on complaints received about the work his department did to cut back brush and clear the road rights of way, Mr. St. Hilaire said that anyone interested should go out and take a look at the results.
- Mr. St. Hilaire said he had attended a webinar about recycling, and feels that Kingston should look into and consider starting a recycling program of its own, as many other towns are starting to do. As one example of the benefits, he cited a statistic on plastic milk jugs; it costs \$65 per ton to dump them, when instead the material could be sold for \$1700. He said the numbers have piqued his interest. In addition, an area could be offered to collect white goods and bulk items. He said changes to recycling would need to involve educating the public, as it is easy now to just put everything in a bin.
- Speaking on the matter of Sands Lane, Mr. St. Hilaire said that he can't put up No Trespassing signs on the Town lot, but is working on wording to the effect that private property will be removed after thirty days.
- Selectman St. James said that the new LED streetlights from Affinity are to be delivered tomorrow and will be stored at the Highway department until Unitil replaces the mast arms.
- On the questions raised about changes to the procedure for driveway permit oversight, Selectman Wilson said that the Highway Agent will attend the next Planning Board meeting to join the discussion.

Fire Department

- Fire Chief Graham Pellerin reported on building activity for the new firehouse; he said that the cistern will be delivered at the end of the summer and concrete work will begin in the beginning of May.
- Speaking to the problem of staffing the department, Chief Pellerin said he has a small group of per diem employees that are all looking for full time work. He will be looking for solutions to bring to the Board.
- There was a discussion of email solutions, and the Finance Director informed all present that Block 5 will be changing all Town accounts over to Microsoft 365, which has better storage for archived emails. The Records Retention policy will be reviewed with regard to email retention.
- The Fire Chief then said he is considering combining Primex training with a cookout as had been done in the past, once physical gatherings are once again allowed for training. Selectwoman Alessio suggested that while tents are still up for Kingston Days they might be used for this purpose.

Town Clerk-Tax Collector

- Town Clerk Tammy Bakie thanked the Selectmen for permission to sell bird houses as a fundraiser; she said she had sold them all.
- There are still two properties eligible to be deeded to the Town due to unpaid taxes.
- 400 dogs remain unlicensed.
- Block 5 will be replacing the printers used for State registrations; they will now have only one printer accessible from all computers rather than each having their own. The Highway department may be able to use one of the old ones.

- TD Bank has been offering courier service to the bank now that they have moved out of the Carriage Towne Plaza. Ms. Bakie said this has worked out well for the interim.
- A project planned for the summer months will be to clean out the storage rooms, shred what is not needed and organize the rest. Committees will need to help with items in the vault that belong to them.

Finance Director

- Finance Director Cindy Kenerson said that she has 6-12 filing cabinets in the storage shed to dispose of. On this topic, the Administrative Assistant advised the Board that three companies have come to the Town Hall to look at the number of records to obtain budget estimates for digitizing them, which would allow for elimination of many filing cabinets. Mr. St. Hilaire said this has to include all the records kept at home by various committee chairs. The process will most likely take place in stages.
- Ms. Kenerson said she is concerned about the Joint Loss Management committee not meeting regularly, as it must meet quarterly per state statute. Ms. Bakie said she thought Caitlyn Milhomme would be a good person to ask to join the committee, which must be made up of both management and employees. Ms. Kenerson added that she would like to step down as Chair. The Board asked Ms. Kenerson to forward all information on the committee to them.

BOARD BUSINESS:

- A letter to the DOT authorizing use of Colonial Road to reroute Route 125 traffic during construction was signed by Chairman Coombs.
- An email from Charlie Zilch of SEC Engineers was received; Mr. Zilch has estimated the cost of surveying one Town-owned lot in Great Pond park at \$1500. Four total lots were prioritized for sale; SEC will be asked to do those surveys. Expenses will be tracked and be reflected in the minimum bid amounts.
- Selectman Briggs has verified with the State that the Kingston Days Raffle is fine, except that no sales can be made online.
- Selectman St. James has spoken with the owner of the Pillsbury Pasture property which had encroached on Town land; he advised the owner that the ZBA may be the proper avenue for solving his driveway issue.
- The Board approved a form prepared by the Finance Director for use of employees requesting paid time off.

PUBLIC COMMENT II: None heard

Adjournment:

Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Ayer, Administrative Assistant