

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 6, 2022 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Lorrie Carey, Matt Burdick, Paul Dickey, Katie Phelps, Kearsten O'Brien, Kate Merrill, Kellee Easler, Nicole Hoyt, Sarah Gerlack, Dean Hollins, Jason Killary, Tim Kenney, and Kevin Wyman

Guests: Jacob Martin and Barbara Randall

Roll Call: completed and guests introduced.

Chairwoman Carey opened the public meeting at 6:00 P.M.

Town Administrator Katie Phelps removed the 09.29.22 Nonpublic Minutes for approval on the Consent Agenda.

Chairwoman Lorrie Carey noted grammatical changes to the 09.29.22 minutes.

Selectman Paul Dickey motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Selectman Matt Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

TA Phelps said the final version of the Emergency Lane Policy was available for signatures.

New Business: Ms. Barbara Randall, Member of the Economic Development Committee (EDC), recommended Mr. Jacob Martin to become a member of the Committee. Mr. Martin would like to offer insight and ideas that are beneficial to Boscawen as well as see growth within the town. Chairwoman Carey stated EDC member Mr. John Porter also recommended Mr. Martin on behalf of the EDC.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Mr. Jacob Martin as a member of the Economic Development Committee. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Department Head Updates: Finance Director Kate Merrill asked the Board when they expect budgets for each department to be completed. A lot of department heads are still waiting on vendors. Chairwoman Carey asked department heads where they were in terms of their budget process. She also stated they asked department heads to build their budgets from \$0 and if anything is deferred, it will be a cost for the following year. Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler anticipated a 3% increase in their budget, but won't be certain until December. Chairwoman Carey said they can preliminarily approve estimated budgets so when actual numbers are finalized, they can be adjusted. Public Works Director Dean Hollins said he only has a salt quote included in his budget so far. Discussion ensued. Police Chief Kevin Wyman said their costs have increased but they are adjusting the budget as needed. Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt said they may not know increases in their budget until the end of the year. The department's biggest variables are supplies, overtime, meeting, and travel. Facilities

Director Gary Moore is waiting on vendors but will have his budget ready in a couple weeks. Emergency Management Director Jason Killary said his budget is small and will be ready. TA Phelps is halfway through her budget, but she is waiting on salary information and vendors. Deputy PCD Director Kearsten O'Brien is working on changes in the Parks and Rec budget. Chief Tim Kenney said the ARPA funding helped the Fire Department tremendously with equipment they needed. He anticipated a minimum increase on the budget. No further discussion.

FD Merrill said they are waiting on final cost of living information to do salary budgeting. It will be finalized by Social Security Administration in October. Last year, the Select Board preliminary approved a COLA % based on the Social Security Administration's estimate. Community Services Director Sarah Gerlack presented the outlook on expenses in Merrimack County for next year. CS Director Gerlack said prices are rising. There will be a 33% increase for basic needs expenses throughout the year for a single person living in a 1 bedroom. The protected expenses don't include a vehicle. The cost is going up \$500 a month for necessities such as rent, groceries, utilities, and health insurance. CS Director Gerlack said the middle class will struggle this year, not just low-income. FD Merrill presented three COLA scenarios for consideration. Scenario 1 was based on what social security estimates their increase will be at 8.7%. Scenario 2 was based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics in the Northeast region for 2021 Year to Date (YTD), a 7.4% increase. Scenario 3 was based on U.S. Consumer Price Index for the year which is 8.3%. The presentation showed what was budgeted for salaries in 2022, what changes would be made, and the tax impact. FD Merrill suggested reducing the tax impact amount by what they will save in the bond payment that retired this year totaling \$63,000. She recommended Scenario 1 because it consisted of actuaries that estimate the following year. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey suggested making preliminary approvals of department head budgets with final approvals after Thanksgiving. All concurred.

Selectman Burdick preliminarily approved an 8% COLA increase for 2023. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief Tim Kenney asked the Board if the Fire Department was required to obtain driving records and background checks for part time employees and if so, how frequently. It costs \$225 for driving records and \$475 for background checks. Currently in the personnel budget there is only \$225 allotted for background checks. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey stated for new hires both records must be obtained. In the Employee Manual, it should indicate if there is a change in status to notify the supervisor or they will be at risk of termination.

Chief Kenney said they will be receiving State of NH Locality Equipment Program money in the amount of \$904 within the next two weeks.

Chief Kenney and Penacook Rescue Chief Shawn Bartell are holding an informational night at the Fire Station on October 26. It has not been advertised yet. It will help inform the public about what they do, including their capabilities and limitations. Chief Kenney will also be meeting with a grant writer to discuss what grants are available.

CS Director Gerlack asked the Board for approval to get quotes to use the old Police Station as a warming shelter in the winter. CS Director Gerlack worked with Merrimack County and City of

Concord Human Services. The county applied for a RFA application through DHHS funding for the cold weather shelter program. The grant is \$140,000 and Boscawen was included in the grant as a possible project. Shelters are only open at night so this would help the homeless residents during the day. It would be open a few days a week during winter months. They would have resources such as food, washer, dryer, personal care, and mental health care. Selectman Dickey was told the building needs a lot of work. EMD Killary said it is not in the condition for public right now but by moving forward with a quote, they could make it accessible. CS Director Gerlack noted it would not be taxpayer money. Discussion ensued.

Selectman Burdick motioned to allow Community Services Director Gerlack to get quotes to renovate the old Police Station. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

CS Director Gerlack updated the Board on the Community Services department. She informed the public of an energy efficient money back rebate program for home new appliances through NHSAVES.com. The Backpack Program has 43 children enrolled. They will be advertising for more donations, the Amazon Wish list has been updates and is on the Community Services section on the town of Boscawen website. There is a Winter Clothes drive for the month of October. People can donate new or used snow pants, boots, jackets, and mittens for both children and adults. There is a bucket in the lobby. If there is an overabundance of donations, they may hold a night for residents to 'shop' for items they are in need of. CS Director Gerlack will be attending a training on October 18th for the Holiday Food Basket Program. It will be a voucher program with a \$50 minimum and \$150 maximum. They are not allowed to keep left over vouchers but can apply to get them back for the Backpack Program.

Chief Kevin Wyman presented a draft Parking Ordinance to address some problem corners in town. He amended the ordinance to ensure that money collected from fines comes to the town, not the state. The officers will educate residents about the new ordinance and then enforce it starting January 1, 2023. TA Phelps will schedule an Administrative Fees hearing to incorporate the new fines.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve the Parking Ordinance effective as of January 1, 2023. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief Wyman stated the Police Department is holding Gate Night at the Dorval House on October 30 from 5:30 to 8pm. The event has been advertised on their Facebook page.

PCD Director Easler gave an update on the Board of Health. There has been legal interaction with lawyers regarding the property on High St, but they are waiting to hear back from the other party's lawyer.

PCD Director Easler presented the ERZ District Application for approval.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve the ERZ District application. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to authorize Town Administrator Phelps to sign the ERZ application on behalf of Select Board. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

PCD Director Easler said the Planning Board recommended the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Select Board would need to approve. PCD Director Easler said there will be a public hearing in November. Chairwoman Carey suggested waiting on approval until public input. All concurred.

TA Phelps asked the Board for their decision regarding the Sewer Rate Study presentation two weeks ago. TA Phelps reviewed the scenarios again. Underwood Engineer's recommendation was Scenario 2 which would change the General Fund contribution from \$48,000 to \$85,920 in 2023 and proportionally increase based on Concord's costs thereafter. User rates would increase 10% in 2023, 5% in 2024, and 5% in 2025. The user rates are already above the state average so the recommendation was to have a higher General Fund contribution. Discussion ensued. TA Phelps will schedule a public hearing on the Sewer Rate Study and the Select Board's recommendation.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Underwood Engineer's Scenario 2 recommendation to increase the General Fund contribution to \$85,920 in 2023 and proportionately thereafter per Concord's costs. Additionally, to increase sewer user rates 10% in 2023, 5% in 2024, and 5% in 2025. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

TA Phelps presented the UMG natural gas renewal pricing. The current contract amount is \$1.02 per therm which ends November 30, 2022. TA Phelps said Mr. Ed Cherian of the Energy Committee suggested a 24-36 month agreement.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve the UMG renewal contract for 24 months at 1.609 per therm. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Town Clerk Hoyt presented an abatement request for a jeopardy assessment that was entered incorrectly into the tax collect system.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Tax Collector Hoyt to abate \$331 from Supplemental Warrant 2022PO1, Map 83 Lot 88 Sub T28. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

PWD Dean Hollins gave an update on the Public Works Department. They are starting to mow on Queen St. All of their trucks have been inspected. There were minimal issues. The old truck is at the auction. PWD Hollins is working on his budget numbers. No further discussion.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the Hocus Pocus movie night will be on October 14th. They are selling apple cider donuts and drinks left over donated Coca-Cola drinks from the Parks and Recreation Police vs Fire game.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien asked the Board about their recommendations on the Summer Parks and Recreation Handbook. Selectman Dickey asked about the late fee for pickup, \$10 for 1 minute late and \$5 for every 10 minutes. He suggested \$15 for 10 minutes late and \$10 for every 10 minutes after. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will update the fee structure when they look at the admin fees. Discussion ensued on possible fee updates. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will bring recommendations to Lori Cronan.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the Primex P3 is due on October 18th but will be finished next week. It will indicate in the letter that Town Hall will not be opening.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented a Timber Intent for approval for Map 94, Lot 27.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Timber Intent to Cut for Map 94, Lot 27. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said Conservation Commission is having a Hawk Watch on October 8th. Times are posted on the website and Facebook. The Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee made recommendations to add the \$5 Municipal Transportation Tax to the Town Warrant this year. Every car that is registered in the Town of Boscawen, except exempt vehicles, would be charged a \$5 fee in their car registration. It would help the town get more funds for transportation, paving, sidewalks etc. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will be speaking with other committees to make sure everyone is on the same page. Previously, some committees weren't in favor of the fee because of agriculture vehicles being affected. Discussion ensued. It is up to voters whether to approve the fee at Town Meeting.

TA Phelps said Old Home Day is having a Yard Sale and Craft Fair on Saturday, October 8th from 9am to 2pm. There is a map posted on the town website and Facebook page.

TA Phelps said there was an incident on Commercial St involving a fall and head injury. The individual was able to go home today. No further discussion.

TA Phelps discussed bringing clean Commercial Street debris, including timbers, bricks, and granite to the transfer station to be weighed as construction debris to make their \$100,000 match. It could then be stored, and they will try to sell items in the future. TA Phelps said they are looking to secure the site for the winter and start in the spring. Discussion ensued on concerns for the Commercial St project including fencing and security.

PCD Director Easler noted Planning Board is interested in doing a visioning session for Commercial St. She spoke with Mike Tardiff, Executive Director of Central NH Regional Planning Commission who said it may fall under the NH Invest Grant in the spring. She will update the Board with more information as it comes.

No public comment.

Selectman Burdick motioned to enter a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to close the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C). Seconded by Selectman Dickey All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C) for three years. Seconded by Selectman Burdick All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to enter a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (L). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to close the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (L). Seconded by Selectman Dickey All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (L) for three years. Seconded by Selectman Burdick All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to enter a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to close the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C). Seconded by Selectman Dickey All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A, 3 II (C) for three years. Seconded by Selectman Burdick All in favor. None opposed.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner