

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

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

Guests: Alek Ladd, Bill Bevans & Charlie Niebling

Roll Call: completed and guests introduced.

Chairwoman Carey called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Corporal Alek Ladd, the new Police Officer in Boscawen, introduced himself to the Select Board and staff. Corporal Ladd started his career in Loudon and has 13 years of experience. He is excited and grateful to grow his career in Boscawen.

Chairwoman Lorrie Carey noted grammatical changes to the 01.05.23 minutes.

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

Scheduled Guests and Hearings: Moderator Charlie Niebling gave an update on location options for town voting. The school district was firm on not using the facility during school hours when the students are there. The options that are available and ADA compliant are the Municipal Building 4th floor meeting room and Boscawen Public Library. Town Administrator Katie Phelps noted the Library Trustees said they would allow use of the library. The Select Board agreed to hold voting at the Boscawen Public Library. Town Meeting will follow at 7:30pm at the Boscawen Elementary School. Selectman Dickey suggested using Code Red to announce the changes. Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt will post the changes on Facebook, the website and in the Newsvine. Deputy Planning and Community Development Director Kearsten O'Brien will put together a 15-minute slide show to play at Town Meeting to show the public what is happening in Boscawen. TA Phelps requested that Town Clerk Hoyt and Moderator Niebling involve Library Director Bonny John in the discussion about set-up of the tables and booths for voting.

Chairwoman Carey opened the public hearing on Unanticipated Revenue at 6:15pm.

'The Town of Boscawen Select Board will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, January 12, 2023, after 6pm to take public testimony regarding a one-time State of New Hampshire bridge payment in the amount of \$58,164.08. Senate Bill 401 states that the payment can be used for maintenance, construction, and reconstruction of municipality owned bridges. This creates unanticipated revenue in excess of \$10,000 and the need for a public hearing according to the provisions of RSA 31:95-b.'

Mr. Bill Bevans, resident of Boscawen, asked what bridges we are repairing or building. Public Works Director Dean Hollins said there are two bridges in town, one on Corn Hill Rd, shared with Webster and a culvert bridge on Raymond Rd. Both bridges always pass inspection but every year they need repairs. PWD Hollins noted both bridges have guard rail issues that need repairs. If they repaired the bridge on Cornhill Road, it would have to be decided on by both Webster and Boscawen.

Chairwoman Carey closed the public hearing at 6:17pm.

Selectman Dickey motioned to accept a one-time bridge payment in the amount of \$58,164.08 for maintenance, construction or reconstruction of Boscawen owned bridges. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Department Head Updates: Finance Director Kate Merrill said the town looks at mileage reimbursement rates annually because the IRS rate changes at the beginning of the year. Historically, the town has adopted the IRS rate. This year the rate increased from 62.5 cents a mile to 65.5 cents a mile effective January 1, 2023. FD Merrill suggested changing to a metric so the Board could approve going with the IRS mileage rate instead of having to update it yearly.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve the Federal Mileage Reimbursement rates and to index the rate in the future per the adjustments made at the Federal level. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

FD Merrill presented updates to the 2023 Personnel Budget. The unemployment and workers compensation lines were decreased to reflect the credit received through Primex. The Health and Dental insurance lines decreased due to an employee opting for a buyout in lieu of a family plan. Overall, the changes decreased the Personnel Budget by 4%.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the amended 2023 Personnel Budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve sending the amended 2023 Working Budget to include the updated Personnel Budget to the Advisory Budget Committee. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief Tim Kenney gave an update on the Fire Department. He will be applying for the FEMA grant for Firefighting Assistance. It is a health and safety grant that provides a washer and dryer for members turn out gear. Chief Kenney noted there is a 5% match. The Select Board will provide letters of recommendation from the State Representative, Senator, and Board. Chief Kenney noted the State needs to have the Wardens reappointed with their Deputy Wardens and issuing agents. He requested signatures from the Select Board.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Chief Kenney applying for the FEMA grant for Firefighting Assistance. Furthermore, the Board understands there is a 5% match. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Town Clerk Hoyt presented the DMV Audit results. There was one observation that involved several instances where the town transferred the state's money more than 1 business day after the transaction took place. Town Clerk Hoyt explained that they waited for the money to be in the bank before making the transfer. They acknowledged it was not acceptable and have fixed the problem. Now they complete the transfer on the same day of the transaction. Town Clerk Hoyt gave an update on Town Report. Deputy Town Clerk Karyn Chagnon has been learning how to edit the Town Report. They are waiting on the Select Board report. At next week's meeting, Town Clerk Hoyt will present the Town Report cover. Town Clerk Hoyt asked if Department Heads were required to attend next week's Budget meeting. Chairwoman Carey said Department Heads should attend the Budget meeting in order to answer any questions pertaining to their budgets. Town Clerk Hoyt asked the Board to use the meeting room in order to hold an Education Committee meeting. The Board agreed as long as it does not conflict with other meetings.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien clarified prior discussion about the Town ice rink. The plastic liner was purchased out of the 2022 Parks and Recreation budget. The Board was emailed this information prior to last week's meeting. The labor, lumber, lighting, pins, and water were donated for the rink. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted there is extra plastic they could store for future years or try to sell. Selectman Dickey suggested storing the plastic for future years.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will present the elderly exemption at next week's meeting. The resident will sign tomorrow.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien received a resignation letter from Mr. Jeff Abbe from the Beautification Committee. Mr. Abbe will continue to work on the watering trough and maintenance of the circle. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will write a thank you letter to Mr. Abbe for all his dedication and hard work for the Town. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the Beautification Committee discussed allowing volunteers to adopt a spot as an alternative way to help. Volunteers would work on beautifying a spot in town. The Committee would come up with a list of spots and then advertise them on Facebook and the town website. The Beautification Committee is also creating a Work Plan to include projects they have done thus far, maintenance information and a list of contacts for emergencies. The Work Plan would be used as a guide for all current and future members.

Selectman Burdick motioned to accept Mr. Jeff Abbe's resignation from the Beautification Committee with regrets. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

TA Phelps noted the Bond Counsel discussion will be deferred until next week's meeting as she is waiting on one more quote for service.

TA Phelps presented the revised Bond Article on the Warrant for recommendation. Chairwoman Carey noted the portion that changed was the language of the Sewer Replacement Project 3 and 4.

Selectman Dickey motioned to add the revised article to the warrant and recommend the revised Bond Article with the new language. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

TA Phelps noted the Board needed to recommend the optional Veteran's credit and All Veteran's Tax Credit. This was previously one warrant article but has been separated into two articles per DRA's recommendation.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to add the revised article for the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit to the warrant and to recommend it with the new language. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to add the revised article for the All Veterans Tax Credit to the warrant and recommend it with the new language. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to adopt the 2023 Warrant with the adjusted language in the 3 recommended articles. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

PCD Director Kellee Easler and Finance Director Merrill will be attending a meeting at Merrimack County on Tuesday, January 17 to speak with the grant writer. Specifically, they will discuss information about the boat launch. There is a matching fund grant they would like to look into. PCD Director Easler said they will explore other grants as well.

PCD Director Easler noted there will be a public hearing on Thursday, January 19, 2023 for the public health issue.

Chairwoman Carey attended the Agricultural Commission meeting on Tuesday. The Committee gave constructive advice regarding public hearing notices. They suggested posting them on the front page of the website and having notations. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said TA Phelps updated the public hearings on the website.

Chairwoman Carey attended the annual Collaborative meeting between Select Boards and the Merrimack County School District. The Concord TIF District is doing better than anticipated in terms of revenue. They are getting a total of \$51,000 in tax revenue. Merrimack Valley will get \$28,500. Chairwoman Carey said because the land came out of current use, some of the current use will come back. The Special Education area of the school budget is up about \$1,000,000 with 80% of the net increase of the budget coming from that department. There were questions regarding funding that would offset the cost. Chairwoman Carey said there are mandates that school districts must follow. The Federal Government agreed to pay 40% and are only paying 15% now. There were increases across the personnel budgets due to Primex. There is still one contract outstanding that is in negotiation. Overall, the budget increased 2%. The new school mission is 'Inspire, Educate and Empower'.

No public comment.

Next Meeting: Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

Selectman Burdick motioned to adjourn at 6:47pm. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner