

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Matt Burdick, Lorrie Carey, Bill Bevans, Katie Phelps, Kellee Easler, Kate Merrill, Dean Hollins, Jason Killary & Tim Kenney

Guests: None

Roll Call: completed and guests introduced.

Chairman Matt Burdick called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Chairman Burdick inquired about Check #46711, amounting to \$18,008, for asphalt sealing and paving listed on the Check Manifest. He noted that at the last meeting, it was decided to further discuss it before payment due to issues with the crack sealing. Finance Director Kate Merrill clarified that Facilities Director Gary Moore confirmed it was fixed before submitting the bill. Chief of Police Jason Killary witnessed a representative from the company scraping and painting new sealing on the parking lot. Selectman Bill Bevans noted that the 'blob' was gone, but where the police vehicles come in and turn, a lot of the sealing was ripped up already. Chairman Burdick asked for FD Moore to contact the company to address the additional issues. Finance Director Merrill clarified that the checks won't be mailed until the Select Board approves. Chairman Burdick suggested holding the check until the issues are fixed. All concurred. Town Administrator Katie Phelps will get in touch with FD Moore to contact the company.

Consent Agenda Items:

- P&L, Balance Sheet, Check Manifest & Payroll (2 Weeks)
- Nonpublic/Public Minutes for Approval—09.07.2023
- MS-535—Signatures Required
- August Treasurer's Reports

The Board amended the Consent Agenda to remove Check #46711, in the amount of \$18,008, from the Check Manifest for further review.

Selectwoman Lorrie Carey noted grammatical changes to the 09.07.23 public minutes.

Selectman Bevans motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.

Department Head Updates: Chairman Burdick stated he will not be attending the December 7, 2023, Select Board meeting. He noted it will be budget season but left it up to the other Select Board members to decide whether they would like to hold the meeting or postpone it. Discussion ensued. Selectwoman Carey recommended holding the meeting and reviewing simple budgets so

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that they can continue to move forward in the budget process. She suggested reviewing the Parks and Recreation budget, as well as the Emergency Management budget. All concurred.

Public Works Director Dean Hollins presented a Sole Source Justification for approval to purchase a new 2023 Ford F350 with a Fisher snowplow from Grappone. PWD Hollins stated that the justification was because Grappone had the State bid pricing.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the Sole Source Justification for the Public Works Department in the amount of \$58,710, including a reduction of \$7,000 for the trade-in, for their new 2023 Ford F350 with a Fisher snowplow from Grappone Ford. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief of Police Killary deferred his Sole Source Justification for a new police cruiser until next week. He noted that the reason for the justification was the difficulty in finding a new cruiser. Selectwoman Carey asked which vehicle the new cruiser would be replacing. It would be replacing vehicle 7 which has been deemed out of commission and will be transferred to the Fire Department. Selectwoman Carey asked about the age of vehicle 7 and the miles it had on it. Chief of Police Killary was unsure about the miles but estimated the vehicle to be about 8 years old. No further discussion.

TA Phelps presented a Solar Exemption for Map 94, Lot 5 for approval.

Chairman Burdick motioned to approve the \$8,000 Solar Exemption for Map 94, Lot 5. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief of Fire Tim Kenney requested approval to research further on the potential to sell their military vehicle and use the profits to buy a UTV for both fire and police use. The UTV would replace the current gators the Fire Department has, which do not have the clearance or ability to go through snow. The military vehicle has not been in use due to minimal indoor storage space. They cannot turn it into a tank truck because it would freeze in the wintertime. Chief Kenney would like to research further about the possibility of selling the military vehicle and buying a UTV. Chairman Burdick questioned whether they had the ability to sell the military vehicle. Chief Kenney noted when the Police Department initially received the vehicle, they had the ability to sell it and make profit. He said they would need to research further in this case because the Police Department donated the vehicle to the Fire Department. Chief Kenney said they were trying to figure out how they would receive the money without it going to the town for approval to re-spend. Selectwoman Carey said it may go back into the General Fund and the Select Board would decide where it is allocated. Chief of Police Killary mentioned the proceeds of sale may have to go back to the Police Department, but they could use the money to purchase the UTV. Chief Kenney said they plan to use all the profits from the sale to purchase the UTV. Chairman Burdick suggested moving forward with researching further. All concurred.

TA Phelps mentioned that the Boscawen Elementary School PTA will be hosting a National Walk to School Day on October 4th. They will begin at the Municipal Office and walk the kids

to Boscawen Elementary School. Parents will come back to get their vehicles around 9:00AM. Chief Killary spoke with Alicia Kulacz from the PTA and was in favor of the walk. He suggested Public Works mowing the sidewalk areas and removing debris. Discussion ensued about traffic issues.

TA Phelps asked for permission to sign a Special Use Permit for the Economic Development Committee's Fall event. The EDC is hosting their first annual pumpkin ride and walk on October 14th at the Boscawen Town Park. It requires a Special Use Permit to be submitted to the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NHDNCR) in order to use the rail trail for a portion of the event. TA Phelps noted the Special Use Permit needs to be mailed next week with a \$100 fee for submitting it too close to the event date. Selectwoman Carey asked what budget the \$100 fee would come out of. Discussion ensued. Selectwoman Carey suggested taking it out of the Parks and Recreation budget.

Chairman Burdick motioned to authorize Town Administrator Katie Phelps to sign the Special Use Permit and pay the \$100 fee from the Parks and Recreation budget for the Economic Development Committee's Pumpkin Ride and Walk. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief of Police Killary requested Chairman Burdick's signature for the State Highway Safety Enforcement grant funding that they were approved for, for FY24. Chief Killary explained that the grant was broken down into speed and directed patrols. He noted people will see signs for 'Click it or Ticket' or 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' which are targeted at certain times of the year. On specific days, recipients of the Highway Safety grant will all be doing those particular patrols. Chief Killary mentioned the speed portion of the grant will be up to the department. He can choose when they target speed patrols. Selectwoman Carey clarified the grant total was for \$6,600. Selectwoman Carey asked how much the grant would cover in terms of labor hours. Police Chief Killary did not have an estimate.

Chairman Burdick motioned to approve Police Chief Jason Killary to apply and accept the Office of Highway Safety grant agreement in the amount of \$6,600. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectwoman Carey asked for clarification on the MS-535 that required signatures in the Consent Agenda. She inquired about what was in the special revenues fund for \$10,879. FD Merrill said it was most likely the building inspector account that offsets another account, but she will look into it tomorrow to get the exact account. Selectwoman Carey asked in reference to functions 1260, 1310 and 1400, what types of things would be due from other governments, other funds, or other current assets. FD Merrill noted for other governments, it would be a lot of PILOT agreements that are for the previous year but don't come in until January. Some examples would be Community Bridges or Briar Hydro. TA Phelps clarified for other funds, some examples would be Sewer Users Fund or Police Special Detail. FD Merrill said she will research further into examples of current assets. Selectwoman Carey asked about other funds due under current liabilities. FD Merrill will research further.

Selectwoman Carey made an observation on the town's all accounts reconciliation. She noted that the current investments have been performing very well. FD Merrill stated that earlier in the year, they noticed two of their accounts were getting 4% interest but not all accounts were. They mentioned the concern to Town Treasurer Tama Tillman, and she was able to move all the accounts over to the new product type. Right now, the interest is a little more than 4% but it will fluctuate. Selectwoman Carey asked if funds stay in the account if the account is performing well. FD Merrill clarified that the General Fund goes to offset but all other funds stay in their accounts.

Police Chief Killary presented his Sole Source Justification for a new police cruiser in the amount of \$45,845.95. The reason behind the justification was that police vehicles are no longer an on the lot purchase and after calling several dealerships, it was the only one with a vehicle in route. Selectwoman Carey mentioned the new cruiser would replace a 2015 vehicle that will be donated to the Fire Department.

Chairman Burdick motioned to approve the Sole Source Justification in the amount of \$45,845.95 for Police Chief Jason Killary to purchase a new cruiser for patrol, a 2023 Ford Police Intruder Utility and Hybrid. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.

Finance Director Merrill presented the Wage Schedule proposal. For background knowledge, the Select Board asked the Department Heads to come up with the wage schedule for budget efficiency and to have a reasoning for their scales. Department Heads began the process by going off of the wage schedule Chairman Burdick sent earlier this year. FD Merrill noted that if discussions about a specific employee or position are brought up at any time during discussion of the proposal, they must move into a nonpublic session. FD Merrill presented what the Department Head Committee came up with in the proposal. They proposed a 2.9% annual step increase that would go into effect the first Monday following Town Meeting. Annual step increases would be adjusted based on experience and the experience an employee has gained throughout the year. Pursuant to the current employee manual, in the employee's 5th year, the longevity would go into effect at 5%. In the wage schedule, the committee proposed a minimum and maximum amount for each position. A cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) would be an annual discussion. FD Merrill noted that it does not mean COLA would be an annual increase, but it was still relevant in the wage schedule because if they don't consider it, the scale will be off in future years. The proposal included a retention bonus for salaried employees who are exempt from overtime. FD Merrill noted the proposal listed each employee's length of service. The reasoning was because annual step increases would benefit hourly employees and would go directly into their overtime whereas salaried employees would not receive that. In the proposal, the committee notated certain points that would still need to go to Town Meeting for approval. They also noted once the Board accepts a proposal, it can be used during Budget season to defend a vote with the reasoning they approved. FD Merrill noted part-time employees fall into the scope, but temporary employees do not. Another notation was that the town of Boscawen firefighters, excluding the Chief, do not fall under the scope. The firefighters fall under their own

salary planning within the Fire Department Personnel Manual. For 2023 estimated turnover, the town of Boscawen will hire 8 new employees out of 29 existing employees which is about 28%. The cost of turnover for employees who have left this year, excluding non-financial costs, was estimated around \$29,000. Based on the employees who have left and their estimated cost by department, new hires will cost between \$89,000 to \$111,000 depending on if Public Works hires someone with CDL experience. The total estimated turnover cost for the year was between \$119,000 to \$140,000. FD Merrill noted they listed the need for budgeting efficiency, employee retention and salary planning. Finance Director Merrill pointed out the breakdown of estimated cost from 2023 to 2024 as well as the estimated cost to replace employees. They also had a breakdown by hours, taking the cost of an employee by department and dividing by the regular hours in a year (2080 hrs.). FD Merrill pointed out the employee testimony. On the last page of the proposal was a breakdown of each position with the minimum and maximum salary determined by supervisor research. Chairman Burdick asked for clarification on the minimum and maximum salaries determined for each position. FD Merrill clarified that the ranges are for their overall existence of their career, not including longevity. In the town's manual, longevity is 5% on the 5th year so it would be maxed until their 5th year. Police Chief Killary explained that the numbers on the right would represent the max steps so whatever the max is, there would be no more increases for step but on the 5th year, they would receive longevity. Fire Chief Kenney asked for clarification on his salaried position. FD Merrill noted the Chief's position was not broken down hourly because he is a part-time salaried employee. It displayed the weekly salary rate. TA Phelps clarified for the 2.9% annual step increase, on the 5th year, employees would only receive the 5% longevity, with no step increase. Chairman Burdick clarified that for the retention bonus salary, salaried employees would receive a \$500 bonus each year from year 5 through 9. FD Merrill noted not all salaried employees qualify for the retention bonus but the total that do qualify right now amounts in \$8,000. Chairman Burdick said in his suggested wage schedule, he put a recommended bonus for year 5 and year 10, not for each year. Selectwoman Carey asked if the bonus was merit based or automated. TA Phelps clarified the bonus was longevity based. FD Merrill said the wage schedule will be very beneficial in order to look at future years. She noted department heads will be able to have personnel amounts included in their budget when they are creating them each year. Police Chief Killary asked if the wage schedule was available for public review. FD Merrill said the wage schedule has not been posted. Selectman Bevans mentioned wages are included in the town report. Selectwoman Carey asked FD Merrill to create a spreadsheet, applying the formula to current positions in order to see the projected cost for next year. Chairman Burdick suggested creating a cost analysis for the next 3 years. FD Merrill will create a cost analysis based on current employee positions for the next 3 years. Discussion ensued. Chairman Burdick noted when they previously discussed the ability to give a break on assessed property values, the Board could authorize it immediately but next year the Board could decide differently. He asked if this would pertain to the wage schedule as well. Selectwoman Carey said it could happen, referencing how it happened to the current wage schedule. She explained that the town hired the NH Municipal Association to create the current wage schedule, but it turned political when new board members were involved. Police Chief Killary felt that it was about having the Select Board's confidence in the wage schedule. He noted as different members come onto the board, it is important that existing members can explain the schedule and be confident in it. FD Merrill asked the Board if they would like the

Committee to review or edit anything before the schedule is presented again. Chairman Burdick was in favor of his initial suggestion for the retention bonus, which gave bonuses on the 5-year anniversaries (year 5 and 10). He suggested they could look at awarding additional vacation time instead of cash for longevity, or doing bonuses on their anniversary, up to year 20, instead of every year. Chairman Burdick asked for a breakdown of the \$29,000 cost of employees leaving. FD Merrill said she took the total time that each employee had left in which the town had to payout. Police Chief Killary said the Police Department lost a lot of officers this year and he had to work with FD Merrill to figure out when he could hire someone. When someone leaves, they have to payout leftover vacation time which comes out of the position line item. Police Chief Killary noted it cost around \$30,000 to get the equipment and train a new officer. Discussion ensued. Selectman Bevans asked what the average turnover rate is for the Police Department. Police Chief Killary will bring a list next week for the Board to review. FD Merrill said it was important to consider with the numbers, even though they are aimed at retention, not everyone will stay so the numbers will most likely be higher than the actuals. Selectwoman Carey said it will also give them an idea of the overall cost and the projection moving forward on anticipated increase. No further discussion.

Chairman Burdick opened public comment at 6:55 PM.

Chairman Burdick closed public comment at 6:56 PM.

Non-Public Sessions:

Chairman Burdick motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 6:56 PM under RSA 91-A:3 II(c). Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairman Burdick motioned to close the nonpublic session at 7:53 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II(c). Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairman Burdick motioned to seal the nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) as it would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the board. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to adjourn at 7:54 PM. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner