

**Town of Boscawen  
Select Board  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Matt Burdick, Lorrie Carey, Bill Bevans, Katie Phelps, Kate Merrill & Kellee Easler

Guests: Bill Heinz, Tom Laliberte, Joshua Crawford

**Roll Call:** completed and guests introduced.

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

**Consent Agenda Items:**

- P&L, Balance Sheet, Check Manifest & Payroll
- Nonpublic Minutes for Approval—09.07.2023 & 09.14.2023
- Public Minutes for Approval—09.14.2023
- Final Sewer Warrant 38 Oak—Signatures
- 2024 State Education Tax Warrant

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

**Department Head Updates:** Finance Director Kate Merrill presented the draft audit reports from the auditors, reflecting the findings from the 2022 audit. The findings all pertained to the maintenance of the library. There was no petty cash log to track the reimbursement and replenishment of funds. Frequently, checks were entered into the General Ledger with incorrect dates or the wrong check number. Additionally, multiple checks lacked transaction support. Furthermore, interest for the PDIP accounts was not recorded into the General Ledger system for the entire year. When the Library closed their PDIP account, it was only closed out of the Special Program Ledger, not the General Ledger. On the Library's balance sheet, it was noted that there was an inaccurate accounts receivable with a credit balance of \$273,169.11. The general operating reconciliation had an outstanding check for \$60, dating back to May 12, 2021. The auditors provided recommendations for the librarian and the library trustees. Selectwoman Carey confirmed with FD Merrill that the only weakness identified in the town's audit was the library. She inquired about the library's plans to address their issues. FD Merrill will follow up with the library trustees to understand their plan of action. Chairman Burdick asked who was in charge of the accounting for the library. FD Merrill was uncertain but noted they had their own treasurer. She will follow up with them to clarify.

Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler mentioned that the Planning Board has been discussing the Land Development Regulations, Appendix 2. Road Construction Procedures Manual and Appendix 3. Road Acceptance Policy. It was questioned whether the

Select Board or the legislative body approves the roads. PCD Director Easler was under the impression that the legislative body approves roads, but one of the applicants argued that the Select Board approves roads. PCD Director Easler said the information was reviewed and noted that it doesn't matter who approves it, it would still be discretionary. PCD Director Easler said that the Code Enforcement Officer reviewed old town reports and found that in 1994, the town voted on Article XVII. To see if the town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept the dedication of any street shown on a subdivision plat approved by the Planning Board, provided that such street has been constructed to applicable town specifications as determined by the Board of Selectmen or their agent. PCD Director Easler noted that the article was amended to take out "the dedication of". She suggested getting clarification because there have been several times when the legislative body made the approval as well. PCD Director Easler mentioned she was revising the Land Development Regulations and would like everything to be consistent. She has been working with Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) to set up the sequence of how the process will work. PCD Director Easler said a warrant article will be necessary if the Select Board would like the legislative body to accept the dedication of any street shown on a subdivision plat approved by the Planning Board. Selectwoman Carey was in favor of approval going to the legislative body because in the last few years, her experience has been that the legislative body would like to have a sense of control over anything involving costs. PCD Director Easler noted that Public Works Director Dean Hollins is also in favor of roads being approved at the Town Meeting. Discussion ensued. Selectman Bevans agreed that the article should be clarified, stating the roads must be approved by Town Meeting. PCD Director Easler said if the Board was in favor, they could discuss further about drafting a warrant article. She will update the Land Development Regulations and there will be a public hearing on them in December with the Planning Board.

PCD Director Easler presented the MS-1 for approval. TA Phelps noted the Board already signed the MS-1.

**Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the MS-1. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.**

PCD Director Easler presented the NH Association of Assessing Officials ballot. She noted there was a local resident who was on the ballot. She stated the Chairman of the Board would need to sign the ballot, if the Select Board would like to vote. The Board was in favor of voting for Boscawen's local resident. They did not vote on other officials until they have further information.

Town Administrator Katie Phelps stated the first Commercial Street visioning session was held on September 9th. She estimated that there was around 20 people in attendance. TA Phelps presented a list of notes provided by CNHRPC. She stated they could post the notes for the public. PCD Director Easler sent the notes to the owner of the gravel pit since he was unable to make it to the visioning session and was interested in people's ideas. She said overall, it was well attended, and people gave great input. TA Phelps said one of the ideas was to move the road over to give more space by the river. There were ideas about creating a farmers market. Someone

proposed building a local park across from the Hannah Dustin monument and playing music in the park. PCD Director Easler noted Mr. Don Moyer from the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail was very interested in Commercial Street becoming a destination for people on the rail trail. He spoke about the rail trail's upcoming features and the island. PCD Director Easler mentioned there was a lot of funding for water, sewer, and expansion projects. She has been researching in hopes for grant money. PCD Director Easler said the town would be in a better place, if they had all the infrastructure taken care of beforehand because developers don't want to buy until it's site ready. Chairman Burdick was in favor of posting the notes on the website. He suggested creating a poll on social media to receive more feedback from residents. Selectwoman Carey attended the visioning session and found it interesting that people wanted to pay respect to the town's agricultural history as well as develop the town for modern times. She suggested they need to be careful not to undersell the town once they develop the area. She noted it was the most valuable piece of property in Boscawen. Chairman Burdick asked off topic about the parking lot project for the rail trail. TA Phelps noted she will get an update tomorrow during their meeting with Mr. Moyer. Resident of Boscawen, Bill Heinz, stated from his perspective, the emphasis was on the fact that the rail trail would be the main attraction. He noted Commercial St would be halfway of the total distance of the rail trail so it would be a perfect location to stop. No further discussion.

TA Phelps noted Community Power's first information session will be on Saturday, September 23, 2023, at 9:00AM in the meeting room at the Municipal Building. Mr. Henry Herndon from the Community Power Coalition of NH will be in attendance to present. TA Phelps stated anyone was welcome to attend. Selectwoman Carey asked if the session would be live on GoToMeeting. It will only be held in person.

TA Phelps presented a request on behalf of the Economic Development Committee. The committee requested permission to have an alcohol vendor at their 1<sup>st</sup> annual Pumpkin Ride and Walk event. TA Phelps shared information from Primex regarding alcohol at events. She spoke with Police Chief Jason Killary, and he said there would need to be an area of control and it would need to be monitored. Furthermore, there would need to be a limit per person. TA Phelps mentioned that Boscawen has never had an event with alcohol involved so this is new territory. She noted that liability insurance would be required from the vendor and that none of the park recreational ordinances have been updated so there was no enforcement for it. Chairman Burdick said the Old Home Day Committee had discussed having alcohol at OHD and raised the question to Primex before. There was no issue with it but at the time, but the committee decided they did not want to include it. Chairman Burdick was in favor of having alcohol at the event to engage more people if it was controlled correctly. TA Phelps said Police Chief Killary suggested having alcohol from noon to 6:00PM to cover both the Police vs. Fire Game and the Economic Development event. Selectwoman Carey clarified that there would be an area for license checks and individuals would receive a stamp or bracelet. TA Phelps noted they may need a 1-day license from the NH State Liquor Commission. She will look into it further. Selectwoman Carey suggested using the tennis courts as the location. The Board agreed to allow the Economic Development Committee to move forward with both Primex and Police Chief Killary's recommendations.

TA Phelps presented an Intent to Cut for Map 83, Lot 49, for Select Board approval. She said it was for the Town Forest land, specifically the Barnard lot. TA Phelps noted that a member of Conservation could attend the next Select Board meeting to discuss how the proceeds of the cut would be handled. PCD Director Easler mentioned that in the past, the proceeds have gone to the Town Forest account. TA Phelps will reach out to a member of the Conservation Commission to attend the next Select Board meeting to discuss further.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to approve the Intent to Cut for Map 83, Lot 49. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None opposed.**

The Movie Night at the Police Department will be tomorrow night, September 22, 2023, at 6:00PM.

Selectwoman Carey gave an update on the Merrimack County contract. On Monday, the Merrimack County Delegation approved an agreement with the Teamsters regarding wage updates. They removed the first 4 steps and added steps 9-12 for unlicensed individuals, with a 3% increase between steps. The placement was increased to 6% and for licensed individuals, they receive a 2% increase. In addition to this wage schedule update from July 1, 2023, Merrimack County Delegation added a new wage schedule that will begin July 1, 2024, on top of the current updated schedule. Both unlicensed and licensed individuals will get a 2% increase. The shift differentials changed from \$2/hr. to \$2.50/hr. Shift differentials for 3<sup>rd</sup> shift changed from \$2/hr. to \$3/hr. Weekend differential changed from \$1.50/hr. to \$1.60/hr. and they are giving \$200 holiday bonuses for individuals who work Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day. Selectwoman Carey stated individuals can receive up to 60 hours of earned leave per year, while maintaining the minimum balance for annual leave redemption. They also increased the uniform allowance from \$150 to \$300 per year. The contract was set for 18 months in order to get all of their contracts aligned. Selectwoman Carey mentioned that in addition to the wage increases, they are conducting in-house training. For the first time in 20 years, they are offering on site courses for Licensed Nursing Assistant's (LNA's). They are not requiring individuals who take the program, to stay because there is a bigger deficit statewide for Licensed Nursing Assistants. The training program is a month long with a final exam at the end. Individuals gain practical experience by working on the units in the nursing homes. Selectwoman Carey noted 4 trainees have completed the program. In addition, they are also offering a Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program due to the nursing shortage. In this case, individuals are required to stay for at least 2 years after graduating. It is an 11-month diploma program which allows people to apply for licensures and apply to the national licensure exam nation for practical nurses. There have been 5 LNA's that have completed the LNA program and graduated in August. Selectwoman Carey noted the town should see better retention rates with Merrimack County now because with updating the contract, they are now 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the state for wages. She stated the vote of the delegation was unanimous.

Selectman Bevans brought up discussion on Town Hall. He requested to bring in a general contractor, free of charge, to give a rough estimate on what needs to be fixed at Town Hall to bring it up to code. He stated eventually they will need to do something about it due to the

sewage damage and he would like to get an idea of what it would cost for repairs. He noted he would like to look at repairs for the ramp, lights, fire alarm and sprinkler as well. Selectman Bevans said they don't need a kitchen hood because they could put in an electric stove. If the town maintains it, they could block it off to ensure there are no fires above. It has to have a complete sheetrock ceiling suspended down below with a full sprinkler system. The boiler rooms have to be fire rated with a sprinkler system. Selectwoman Carey stated the request should go to Facilities Director Gary Moore. Selectman Bevans does not want to pay for a contractor to come out. He said if FD Moore would like to join with another contractor, free of charge, he would have no issue. He would still like to bring his own contractor, SKS Maintenance, to assess the repairs. Chairman Burdick was concerned that it would give the Church the wrong impression. It was already approved at Town Meeting to transfer the town's interest in the Town Hall.

Selectman Bevans said they will still need to know how much it will cost. Selectwoman Carey said they wouldn't need an estimate if they transfer Town Hall to the Church. It would be the Church's obligation. Selectwoman Carey noted that anyone providing work for the Town of Boscawen, must go through the request for proposal process. Selectman Bevans stated he does not want a proposal. He just wants to bring in a contractor that he knows, to assess what the repairs would cost. TA Phelps asked if the contractor was an engineer. Selectman Bevans said the contractor was not an engineer but works with an engineering firm. Selectwoman Carey was concerned with the fact that the town didn't vote for an engineering study and they don't know where the water is coming from, which is causing the floor to buckle. Selectman Bevans questioned whether there was water on the floor. TA Phelps said Facilities Director Moore has been going to check buildings frequently and has had no issues with any of the buildings. Selectwoman Carey said there is a lot they don't know about the building such as if there was a french drain system. She noted that would be something that an engineer would find versus a contractor. The Select Board has asked the town twice about getting an engineering study and the residents voted against it. TA Phelps clarified that the town voted down the assessment study in 2022. They didn't get to vote on it in 2023 because it was a contingent article. Selectwoman Carey stated they are now looking to transfer the Town Hall so the new owner would be responsible for assessing the repairs to bring it up to code. She noted that Facilities Director Moore brought in a contractor last year. PCD Director Easler mentioned that Fire Chief Tim Kenney and Life Safety Officer Chuck Bodien, both said they did not feel comfortable making a decision and suggested bringing in an engineer. No further discussion.

Selectman Bevans asked about the status of the Torrent Station and whether there has been any word from Penacook Rescue Squad. TA Phelps noted that there has not been any formal update. Selectwoman Carey suggested following up with Penacook Rescue on their interest in the Torrent building.

Finance Director Merrill presented an anonymous donation for approval for the Backpack Program in the amount of \$100.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to accept Check #908, a \$100 donation for the Backpack Program. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.**

PCD Director Easler noted the reevaluation booklet was available and online. They now have the new values for the town. Selectwoman Carey asked how much their value has changed. PCD Director Easler will research further and update the Board next week.

Chairman Burdick opened public comment at 6:41 PM.

Chairman Burdick closed public comment at 6:42 PM.

**Non-Public Sessions:**

**Selectman Bevans motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 6:42pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairman Burdick motioned to exit the nonpublic session at 6:59pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Chairman Burdick noted in the nonpublic session they discussed a performance review.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 6:00 PM.

**Selectman Bevans motioned to adjourn at 7:00pm. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor. None Opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner*