

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Matt Burdick, Lorrie Carey, Bill Bevans, Kellee Easler, & Kearsten O'Brien

Guests: Mike Tardiff & Matt Taylor—CNHRPC, Scott Maltzie, Henrietta Kenney, Tim Kenney & Walter Dratner

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
- Public/ Nonpublic Minutes for Approval—06/08/23
- Veteran's Credit Landowner P—\$500
- Veteran's Credit Landowner S—\$500
- Solar Exemption Map 47 Lot 37—\$10,800
- Delegation of Deposit Authority
- Civil Forfeitures Warrant to Tax Collector 2023

Selectwoman Lorrie Carey noted grammatical changes to the 06.08.23 public minutes.

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

Scheduled Guests & Hearings: Deputy Planning and Community Development Director Kearsten O'Brien introduced Mr. Mike Tardiff, Executive Director and Mr. Matt Taylor, Project Planner from Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC), to discuss the Housing Chapter of the Master Plan. Mr. Mike Tardiff spoke specifically about the tax increment finance (TIF) district opportunity as part of the planning process of the Master Plan. He noted if the Select Board decided to move forward, it would need to be voted on at Town Meeting. Mr. Taylor stated the purpose of tonight's meeting was to bring together both the Select Board and Penacook-Boscawen Water Precinct (PBWP) to discuss the potential interest. Mr. Taylor presented a 3-page handout that explained how the TIF district works. He explained that the TIF districts allow towns to fund infrastructure projects without putting the burden on existing taxpayers. A future tax base would be used to pay for the infrastructure. Mr. Taylor said TIF districts have been utilized by both small and larger towns to pay for water and sewer improvements, road improvement, and engineering purposes, etc. The allocation of funds would need to be approved at Town Meeting. Mr. Taylor stated that input from both parties was crucial because the Select Board approves articles on the town warrants, and the PB Water Precinct controls the infrastructure. Mr. Tardiff noted the main goal of the project was to identify an area

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for a TIF district and consider proactive measures such as expanding water resources or addressing Commercial Street infrastructure. Once an area has been identified, the increased tax valuation pays off a note or specific amount of money associated with the Tax Increment Financing. The repayment would be paid over a set number of years. Mr. Tardiff noted an example of a TIF district, the old Page Belting Company building that was used to prime the pump for development. It was paid off early and was considered a positive tool for development. Mr. Taylor explained that it was a tool that towns can use to invest in infrastructure and expand the tax base. He mentioned that once the infrastructure is paid off, the tax revenue will continue to be allocated to the General Fund to offset additional expenses. Mr. Tardiff emphasized there were no guarantees with establishing a TIF district. He noted over the next 6 months, they would discuss priming the pump to attract a level of development and to work towards a proposal for Town Meeting. Managing and administering were the hardest challenges about TIF districts. Mr. Tardiff believed the TIF opportunity would be suitable for Boscawen due to the size of the community and because they have full-time staff to help administer and manage. Londonderry used a TIF district to fund the airport on Perimeter Road. Bedford funded part of their lease's redevelopment, the town of Enfield used funds for bridge improvements and Peterborough used it for downtown improvements and streetscaping. Mr. Tardiff noted his goal with tonight's meeting was to ensure he could keep moving forward with the project. He would continue to discuss further with Planning Board and the Water Precinct to identify a TIF district area, and as part of the CNHRPC agreement, to build a document for Town Meeting. Chairman Burdick inquired about the taxpayers' impact of setting aside the future savings account. Mr. Taylor said the town would establish a baseline. He noted that whatever tax value Boscawen has in the TIF district at the time of its adoption, those taxes would continue to be directed towards the General Fund to cover additional expenses for the town. The town would set aside the increment in increased value. Mr. Taylor explained in his experience with Bow, there was a Tax Finance District established but there wasn't a lot of new developments initially. Due to the increase in value, Bow was able to use funds to start an engineering study to initiate a waterline extension project. Mr. Tardiff clarified that the impact would be the difference between the baseline established and the new valuation. Selectwoman Carey asked for more information on the Bow example. The TIF district was along Route 3A. Mr. Taylor said the town had a Municipal Water System close to the Hooksett border. Bow had been negotiating with Concord to try to get water at the Bow Junction. Mr. Taylor noted all the businesses in the area were on well water and the quality was bad. The negotiation with Concord has helped initiate the engineering. Mr. Tardiff recommended the opportunity to offer engineering funds and make a connection. Bill Murphy noted that the town operates off tax dollars and the Penacook-Boscawen Water Precinct (PBWP) does not. Mr. Tardiff noted that it would be part of the negotiation between the town and PBWP. Mr. Murphy from PBWP said the Water Precinct would need an agreement with the town in order to share the TIF district. Selectwoman Carey noted the Water Precinct does have the authority to tax, but they never have. Discussion ensued. Mr. Murphy from PBWP believed it would be beneficial for the town but was unaware of the benefit for the Water Precinct. Selectwoman Carey noted there would be a potential for more water users if the Commercial St plan was approved. She believed redeveloping that area would bring significant value to the Town of Boscawen. Mr. Murphy from PBWP noted the Commercial Street project would take time to complete. Chairman Burdick inquired about if there were other spots in town that were

identified. Mr. Tardiff noted there may be opportunity in the future to expand if their first plan succeeds. Mr. Tardiff provided more information on TIF districts through their housing toolbox. He will continue to work on the plan and stay in touch with both parties.

Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler requested additional information regarding the \$5 million awarded to the Housing Champions in the budget and an additional \$10 million for the Invest NH program. Mr. Tardiff heard about a push to extend certain investment opportunities further, but there have been various discussions on the matter. No further discussion.

Dr. Scott Maltzie, resident of Boscawen, presented his concern with the fee schedule, to the Select Board. Dr. Maltzie and his wife have lived in town for about 24 years and have been foster parents for a least half the time. During that time, they provided care for about 12 children. Every two years, they are required to renew their fostering license in which this year, Dr. Maltzie discovered there was a new \$100 fee incorporated. Part of the licensing procedure includes a fire inspection. Dr. Maltzie noted foster parents are mandated by the State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to complete a life safety inspection and they're not reimbursed for expenses. Mr. Chuck Bodien completed the inspection in 17 minutes. Dr. Maltzie noticed Mr. Bodien was a salaried employee of the town and assumed it was part of resident's tax base. PCD Director Easler noted Mr. Bodien was paid through inspection fees by both the Building Inspector and Life Safety Officer as part of Chief Tim Kenney's budget. Dr. Maltzie explained the state's fostering situation for a better understanding of the issue. Presently, there were approximately 1,200 children in the foster care system. There are no group homes available. Furthermore, there were 566 homes available for the 1,200 children and only 330 were active. Dr. Maltzie noted the limited housing opportunities cause children to move more frequently and induce more trauma. He stated his youngest foster daughter, who just moved out, was moved to 7 different homes and one group home before she was placed at their residence. Dr. Maltzie emphasized the importance of not disincentivizing people to get involved in the system. Foster parents provide important state service for children and their communities. Dr. Maltzie noted any foster parents in Boscawen that need to renew their license will be impacted by the \$100 fee. He knows of two other foster homes in Boscawen, but he was unaware of the overall total. He mentioned there were also a number of adoptive homes in Boscawen that started as foster homes. Dr. Maltzie proposed that all foster homes in Boscawen receive an exception in the fee schedule. PCD Director Easler noted there were also a lot of inspections completed for adult housing. Dr. Maltzie estimated there were around 120 inspections for life safety. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said those life safety inspections included restaurants, anyone in need of a place for assembly. She stated the foster homes would be a small portion of the 120 inspections. Chairman Burdick said most of the fee schedule should remain as is with the potential for exemptions or exceptions to the rule for certain situations. Discussion ensued. Selectwoman Carey asked Dr. Maltzie if he had contacted the state regarding alternative plans that could better support these licensing requirements. Dr. Maltzie discussed the requirements with Ms. Heather Hall, and she said it was the first occurrence she heard of where people were being charged for relicensing. Selectwoman Carey mentioned that one reason for the inspection fees was to avoid the need to hire an additional full-time employee with benefits. The fees fully cover the operational

expenses, relieving the burden on taxpayers. Chairman Burdick asked if there were fees associated with the licensing itself. There were no fees associated with the licensing, but foster parents must complete a certain number of classes for training and continue to take another 16 hours of continuing education courses each year. The Board will review the number of foster homes in Boscawen and discuss further action at the next meeting.

Public Hearing: Barn Easement

Chairman Burdick read the public notice:

Notice was hereby given in accordance with RSA 79-D:5 I., that: The Boscawen Select Board will meet on Thursday, June 15, 2023, after 6:30PM in the Fourth Floor Meeting Room of the Boscawen Municipal, Complex, 116 North Main Street, to consider the following matter: Application for a Discretionary Preservation Easement submitted by Harold and Henrietta Family Revocable Trust of 174 King St, Boscawen NH 03303, Map 81A Lot 19. The Board may open a public hearing to take testimony after the review.

Chair Burdick opened the public hearing at 6:34PM.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien provided background information on the preservation request. In 2002, State law RSA 79-D was created to encourage the preservation of old New Hampshire Barns and other historic agricultural buildings. RSA 79-D authorized towns and cities to grant property tax relief to barn owners who demonstrate a public benefit of preserving barns or other old farm buildings and agree to maintain their structures through a minimum of a 10-year preservation easement. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien provided the Board with a letter of support from Mr. John Porter.

Ms. Henrietta Kenney gave background knowledge on her family barn. The building started out in 1791 and for many years it ran as a tavern up through the 1930s. At some point in the 90's, Caleb Hall built the big barn. Mr. George Atkinson, Mr. Henry Kenney's father, built a 10-foot granite wall in the basement, back in 1891. At one point in the 1930's, the barn was used as a boarding house called Wall Croft Lodge. Ms. Kenney noted they have done major work on the barn over the years. Mr. Harold Kenney, Henrietta's husband, was a fireman and disconnected the house from the barn. There were many windows in the barn because at one time they raised chickens on the north end side. Ms. Kenney said her children raised their 4H animals in the farm. They also raised broilers for 8-weeks and within 5-weeks the chickens were at 5lbs because they were running nightlights. They put a red aluminum roof on the barn in 2004. Ms. Kenney talked about the bid proposal which included shoring, jacking and new floor areas. Ms. Kenney noted the shoring will cost around \$20,000 and as they do each floor area, it could add up to \$7,200 a bay. On the north end of the barn, there was work that needed to be done underneath the big back door. The cupola was estimated to cost around \$85,000 to repair which did not include the roof. Ms. Kenney noted there was a dry well. On the Main Street of Boscawen, the houses did not have a well. They had water right pipes up on Windy Gould to the granite well. The water was brought down to the street on what was called 'soul' and from there they would send smaller

pipes to various houses. Ms. Kenney said the pipe at the Raymond house went up and out the road to the acre. The whole hillside was springs. When Dr. Graves saw the lead pipes, he went to work on the waterworks. In 1882-83' the first pipe that came down on the southside of King Street was made up of wood, tarp, and wire. In 1940 they replaced the piping with cement which today, was used on the west side of the barn.

Tim Kenney estimated around \$120,000 for all repairs. He noted the Cupola is the biggest expense because they are rare scenic value for barns. They found a local person willing to restore the current cupola. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the total cost of work was \$112,200. Mr. Kenney said they also need to put in drainage around the barn which was not included in the total cost. Ms. Kenney explained that on the street side of the barn, it will need to be dug out and replaced with plastic for better drainage off of the roof. Mr. Kenney noted they have not discussed the house portion which was older than the barn. The well was located under the porch of the house. It was 63-feet deep and 4 to 5 feet wide. Chief Kenney noted from the pictures they have taken; the brick was dry laid. Ms. Kenney said the well never held water. They put a gravel cover over the well and cemented the porch. Selectwoman Carey asked about the inside of the barn. It was multi-story, sectioned off by posts and beams. It was 2-stories tall with flooring and there was a third loft, more than a story high under the cupola that could only be accessed with a ladder. The second floor was a main corridor, opening down the middle with floors on the side. The first floor was sectioned off with walls. Ms. Kenney said the posts were made up of oak trees. Mr. Kenney said as of now, it was being used for storage, but they are in the process of moving things out. Chairman Burdick asked what their goal was once the barn was preserved. Mr. Kenney said they don't have a long-term goal as of now. Ms. Kenney said the main goal was to keep it as an historical aspect to the town. They will attempt to keep it as long as possible. Selectwoman Carey noted her opinion was that the barn was the most significant barn in the town of Boscawen in terms of uniqueness. Ms. Kenney and her husband bought the property in 1963 for \$6,500 at an auction. At the time, they had already bought the pit for \$900 and owned the Dix House and then bought the Raymond House. In between purchases, they built a house that is now the funeral home. The barn has two entry doors on the east and west side and on the backside of the barn, there was another 8-foot door that swings. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Walter Dratner, resident on Commercial St, was in favor of the Barn Easement. There were no abutters.

Chairman Burdick closed the public hearing at 7:00PM.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted if the Board should choose to approve the application, they need to decide on the assessed value. At a reduction by 25%, the assessment for the 96x40 barn, currently assessed at \$29,491, would be reduced to \$22,118. If it was at a 50% reduction, it would go down to \$14,745. At a 75% reduction, it would go to \$7,373. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the assessors noted there was another property in town with an easement, located at 150 King St and approved at a 75% reduction. Selectwoman Carey asked if there were any other easements in town. The only other easements in town were 150 and 151 King St. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said 151 King Street was approved at 50% and the 150 King Street was

approved at 75%. Chairman Burdick inquired about the historical difference. Part of the difference was about the size. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien referred to public meeting minutes for clarification. She said the first easement had more restrictions. PCD Director Easler clarified the easements were for two different structures. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the 12x12 milk house was assessed at a 75% reduction, at 2,640 sq ft. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien found that the sq footage difference in the first barn presented was 1,040 sq ft.

Chairwoman Carey asked who built the barn. Ms. Kenney believed it was Caleb Hall but there was no definite date on when the barn was built. She said Canterbury has glass negatives and she believed Boscawen may have some which could answer the question of who and when it was built. Ms. Kenney said the contractor that will be working on repairs, examined the picture of the barn connected to the house and estimated it to be built in the 1880's. Mr. Kenney said they know when the foundation was built but they don't know if it was before or after the barn was built.

Chairwoman Carey was in favor of reducing the assessed value by 75%. She noted the cost of restoring barns was expensive and a lot of work. Selectman Bevans was in favor of the 75% reduction but noted they don't save that much in taxes. He calculated around \$960 taxed on the barn currently. He estimated the savings to be around \$700 annually.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the Discretionary Preservation Easement in the amount of 75% for 174 King St, Boscawen, NH 03303, Map 81A, Lot 19. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will work with Ms. Kenney and Mr. Kenney on the next steps. The applicant will need to draw up an easement, outlining the specifics.

Department Head Updates: Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted a correction was made to the 05.25.23 public minutes in regard to Avitar receiving the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Selectwoman Carey clarified that Avitar did not receive the MOU, but the County Commissioners did.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the corrections of the 05.25.23 public minutes. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. All in favor. None opposed.

In the previous meeting, Selectwoman Carey suggested donating a plaque to Merrimack County, in honor of their 200th Bicentennial Celebration. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted Town Administrator Katie Phelps sent the Board information on options and pricing for the plaques. She would like to know the Board's decision on whether to move forward. The plaque could be made for less than \$100 with shipping included. Selectwoman Carey noted as part of their event, the Select Board would need to be present in order to award the plaque.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the plaque for Merrimack County for their 200th Bicentennial Celebration. Seconded by Chairman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the 1913 Library legal research would cost approximately \$1,000. She stated TA Phelps would like to know if the Board will authorize the expenditure so they can move forward with research. The Board agreed to move forward.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented the Merrimack Valley Youth Baseball and Softball League proposal to convert the 90ft baseball field into a softball field. Chairman Burdick has not been able to review the proposal, but he was still in favor of the conversion. Selectman Bevans noted that the proposal stated that the town was responsible for mowing a portion of the field. In previous discussion, the Softball Director stated they would be fully responsible for all the maintenance and mowing of the field. Selectman Bevans said it sounded like on the Babe Ruth field, the town maintained the mowing and that MVYBS would only maintain the infield but not the outfield. He suggested that MVYBS be responsible for the maintenance of the entire field in order to move forward with the conversion. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will touch base with TA Phelps and Public Works Director Dean Hollins for clarification on the mowing.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien gave an update on the Parks and Recreation program. She received a call from a parent stating they had unexpected circumstance where they lost their job. The parent requested to pull their child out of the summer program and get a refund. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted in the Parks and Rec handbook there was a policy in regard to providing at least 3-weeks' notice, in handwriting to receive a refund. She has requested a written notice from the parent but has not received anything back. The Parks and Rec program starts on June 26, so she brought the request to the Board proactively because it doesn't meet the 3-week return policy. Selectwoman Carey asked if the parent would like their child to remain in the program. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted the Parks and Rec program raised money for parents that cannot afford the program and she would like to offer the parent that opportunity for their child. She asked the Board for approval to give back the \$155 refund and to award the child a scholarship to stay in the program if they receive written notice from the parent. All concurred. Selectwoman Carey clarified that upon receiving written notice, the Parks and Rec fund must be reimbursed with the scholarship money. Additionally, the parent should be refunded \$155, and a scholarship should be provided to the child.

Chairman Burdick opened public comment at 7:19 PM.

41 Commercial St—Mr. Walter Dratner discussed his vision for the future of Boscawen. He would like to invest in the Flour Mill property that was recently taken down. Mr. Dratner's idea was to turn the property into a Farmer's Market with a craft store. He would invest about \$500,000 to level the place, restore the granite and put a small roof on. He also envisioned a 16-foot-wide stand for the produce market in addition to a room for crafts. Mr. Dratner said Boscawen has been gaining a lot of traffic and he sees a great future in the town's growth. PCD Director Easler would like Mr. Dratner to attend the visioning sessions with the Economic Development Committee and Planning Board to discuss further. Mr. Dratner emphasized that his goal was not to make money, instead, he wanted to contribute something of value to the town in the long run.

Chairman Burdick closed public comment at 7:25 PM.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 6:00 PM.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to adjourn at 7:26PM. Seconded by Selectman Bevens. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner