

DRAFT



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2024

PRESENT: BENJAMIN D. KNAPP, VICE CHAIRMAN; SALIM R. BLUME, SELECTMAN; DAVID PRATTE, SELECTMAN; JANICE MATHEWS, SELECTMAN; JAMES DRURY, SELECTMAN.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Naomi L. Bolton

GUESTS: Jason Fiske- DPW Director, Logan Bannister, Mark Roarick- Acting Fire Chief, Dani- Jean Stuart, Maria Fossiano, Sherry Burdick, Betty Straw, Shelley O'Donnell, Andy Fulton, Greg White, Dan Wardell, Jackie Pratte, Frank Campana, Kyle Parker, Tom Clow, Tom Flaherty, Neal Kurk.

These minutes were transcribed from the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOH-LkEcrh8>

Vice Chairman Knapp called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

Vice Chairman Knapp motioned to enter into a nonpublic meeting at 6:40 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (b). Selectman Blume seconded. All in favor. 5-0-0

Vice Chairman Knapp motioned to come out of a nonpublic meeting at 6:44 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (b). Selectman Blume seconded. All in favor. 5-0-0

The BOS met with a potential DPW Employee.

Selectman Blume motioned to enter into a nonpublic meeting at 6:44 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (a&c). Vice Chairman Knapp seconded. All in favor. 5-0-0

Selectman Blume motioned to come out of a nonpublic meeting at 7:28 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (a&c). Selectman Mathews seconded. All in favor. 5-0-0

The BOS met with the DPW Director to go over updates at the transfer station and the BOS met with the Acting Chief to go over some personnel matters.

Vice Chair Knapp welcomed the public at 7:30 PM.

Mildred Hall: Besty Straw informed the BOS of the following information from the Mildred Hall Committee; At a meeting of the Mildred Hall Bequest Advisory Committee on March 6, 2024, the Committee voted to recommend to the Board of Select Persons that \$2,500.00 be expended from the Charles and Ethel Eastman Fund for the purpose of mapping the East Weare, Pine Grove, and Johnson cemeteries with a stipulation that the work be completed in two years and payment is made in thirds at the completion of the work on each cemetery. Andy Fulton of Hemlock Drive asked what the mapping shows

the town. Ms. Straw said it shows where people are buried and the records were not kept up and in order to correct that they need to map the cemeteries. Selectman Blume said this has been going on at the Selectmen level for a couple of years. Previous Selectman have been probing and then marking them out by hand.

Public Comment: Neal Kurk of Mount Dearborn Road congratulated the Selectmen recently elected to the board. Mr. Kurk presented suggestions to the BOS. The first is to create a committee to advise the BOS on what and how the department should run. Mr. Kurk said there are many people in the town with the expertise on the matter including a former Selectmen. The second thing that he would like to bring the BOS's attention to is the East Weare lot and the conservation easement that is supposed to go onto the property. Mr. Kurk said that the issue needs to be resolved and that the BOS will do their part as the owners of the land to facilitate whatever decisions are made by the Conservation Commission.

Tom Clow of Concord Stage Road said that he noticed on the agenda that the BOS will be discussing meeting times. Mr. Clow said something that has been lingering in the back of his mind; the only difference during a work session is that there is no public comment. Mr. Clow suggested that all meetings have a public comment session.

Kyle Parker of Old Francestown Road thanked the BOS in advance for the time they would be putting in.

Dan Wandell of Craney Hill Road thanked the BOS and welcomed the new Selectmen. Mr. Wandell said that he would like to echo some of the previous comments made about the East Road Property. Mr. Wandell said that he would urge the Selectmen who play a role in making decisions around the property to provide help, direction, and clarity around the site and what it is proposed to contain. There have been admittedly anecdotal comments and sort of conversations around the property of the term ball field. Mr. Wandell asked the Selectmen to further those in support of developing the land to provide a specific cost analysis and provide specific timelines. The Town deserves to understand what happened in terms of the vote last week and the ramifications and then ultimately what that vote result means tangibly. Mr. Wandell said he does think that there needs to be an expeditious understanding of what the site is and what it is designed to be.

Dani Jean Stuart of Center Brook Lane encouraged the BOS to put in place the Conservation Easement that was intended to be in place back in 2013. Ms. Stuart asked if the other Article the Town voted on tells the BOS to do something, in other words do they need to have a special vote or does that wording need to be worded as a declarative and put on next year's warrant? Ms. Stuart asked about the Article regarding the length of terms for elected officials she could not tell if they voted for a study. If they did vote for the study who will be doing it and who will be paying for it?

Jackie Pratte of Winter Road congratulated the new board members. Ms. Pratte agreed with Mr. Clow, she likes the public comment and hopes the new board will honor that and continue it and does not want someone to go through what she and her husband have gone through in the last three years. Ms. Pratte said they still do not have an answer. As a taxpayer, she does not understand why it takes so long to be answered.

Andy Fulton of Hemlock Drive welcomed Selectman Drury and Selectman Pratte. Mr. Fulton said that there are a lot of things that come from the Conservation Commission that the BOS needs to work on with the commission and think they have a good opportunity to do that going forward.

Tom Flaherty of Sunrise Lane suggested a JIRA board and it is top issues of the things that they are handling as a team so they can keep track and prioritize. Mr. Flaherty said he is not sure if prior boards have done something like this before, but it is a good management practice to not lose track of issues.

Departments/ Committee Items: Vice Chairman Knapp asked Shelby O'Donnell why she was interested in joining the PARC. Ms. O'Donnell said that as of this past fall, she has become an empty nester and has

99 been looking for ways to keep herself busy and give back to the community. Ms. O'Donnell said that she
100 has been coaching first and second-grade soccer, and fifth-grade basketball and is now assistant coaching
101 lacrosse. Ms. O'Donnell said that she likes recreation and there was a need on the committee.
102

103 **Selectman Blume motioned to appoint Shelby O'Donnell to the PARC with a term ending in March**
104 **2025. Seconded by Vice Chairman Knapp. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

105
106 Vice Chairman Knapp swore in Ms. O'Donnell.

107
108 Vice Chairman Knapp wanted to recognize James Drury and David Pratte for being the new Selectmen
109 members and Janice Mathews for re-entering the board.
110

111 **MANIFEST:**

112
113 **Selectman Knapp moved; Selectman Mathews seconded:**

114 **To order the Treasurer to sign the payroll and accounts payables checks dated March 21, 2024, as**
115 **included in the following manifests:**

116
117 Checks Dated March 21, 2024

118 **Payroll Manifest** **\$ 78,543.94** (*Weekly payroll checks*)

119 **Accounts Payable Manifest** **\$ 481,118.99**

120 **John Stark Payable Manifest** **\$ 250,000.00**

121 **Weare School Accounts Payable Manifest** **\$ 600,000.00**

122
123 **TOTAL:** **\$1,409,662.93**

124
125 **Minutes: Selectman Blume motioned to approve the March 11, 2024 minutes as amended. Seconded**
126 **by Selectman Mathews. Motion passed 3-0-2. Abstentions from Pratte and Drury.**

127
128 **Correspondence/ Other Business:**

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130 **Vice Chairman Knapp motioned to hire Logan Bannister effective March 22, 2024, as a truck driver**
131 **for the DPW with a starting rate of \$21.85 per hour. Seconded by Selectman Mathews. Motion passed**
132 **5-0-0.**

133
134 Vice Chairman Knapp said Matt McClain will help fill in at the transfer station until the BOS can fill the
135 vacant role.
136

137 **Motion made by Vice Chairman Knapp to pay Matthew McClain \$30 an hour to be retroactive to**
138 **Tuesday, March 12, 2024, as the interim Transfer Station Foreman until a replacement is found.**
139 **Second by Selectman Mathews. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

140
141 Vice Chairman Knapp said there has been a shortfall in the revolving fund at the transfer station and the
142 board has been aware of it and trying their best to research the reason why. The BOS believes there is a
143 lack of adequate charging for pay items. Vice Chairman Knapp explained the revolving fund. The BOS
144 does not believe the person that was in that role was charging for all the items or enough for the items so
145 the BOS has asked Mr. McLain to fill the role since he has experience and hopefully can train the new
146 person hired into the role. Vice Chairman Knapp said there was no cash stolen it was a deficiency in not
147 charging or charging enough.
148

149 Selectman Blume said he would propose but maybe a logical next step is having the BOS meet with Town
150 Counsel in a non-meeting on the East Road articles, article 24 & 26 as well as article 25 regarding the term

limits. Selectman Mathews agreed with Selectman Blume. Selectman Pratte asked what happens with the balance of the warrant articles and if other actions are going to be set for everything or make sure that they get in place. Selectman Mathews said that is something Ms. Stuart mentioned earlier about the study and the BOS is going to have to figure out something.

TA Bolton gave the BOS a job description sample for the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer. Vice Chairman Knapp asked if everyone was okay with having a Code Enforcement Officer and Building Inspector in one position. Selectman Mathews asked if there was still enough volume of work. TA Bolton said that there were two part-time people before, and they worked 25 hours a week. TA Bolton said when Finance Administrator Rouse put together the Article it was based on \$30 an hour and then a family plan, which could change if the person that is hired does not need the family plan for insurance. Selectman Mathews stated that when they tried to hire Mr. Parker, they told him they wanted him recertified and that should be part of the job description. TA Bolton said there is a certification class on April 8th and 9th and the cost is \$1,100. Discussion ensued regarding working on the job description and working on it. Andy Fulton said that years ago the Conservation Commission sent the Code Enforcement Officer to a wetlands class because they thought it was in the Town's interest. Selectman Pratte asked what the benefit would be of sending them to the class. Mr. Fulton said it would give someone the knowledge regarding building near wetlands. The BOS will work on the job description more at next week's meeting.

Selectman Mathews stated she received a phone call regarding someone wanting to know what the Fire Department's SUV policy is for personal use. Selectman Mathews said that she told the individual that she would bring it to the BOS meeting to discuss. The individual said that they saw the Fire Department SUV in Manchester at a doctor's office on March 6th. Selectman Mathews said that she was also asked how the Town is audited. Selectman Mathews read the letter as follows; "how do we audit the town and make sure the money goes to the right spots and see how much is in the kitty for example in COVID years there were no school buses and electricity for the schools where is that money. Last year the roads were not cleaned or mowed, where is that money? The DPW is down on people working, where is that money? Where is the money from the DPW when the dude stole \$100K worth of fuel. This town needs an audit done with its citizens to prove that the town needs more taxes this is an outrage." Selectman Mathews thinks that some of the questions asked are old and would suggest getting an overview of the audits from the Finance Administrator, maybe she can bring that to a future meeting. Vice Chairman Knapp asked that if anyone has questions to come to the BOS and ask because there were allegations made that are false. There were many conversations regarding the DPW money being returned during the budget meetings. TA Bolton said in the Town Report there is a statement or report from the auditor.

Selectman Pratte asked if the following could be discussed and put into place. Selectman Pratte asked to review the building department's decision-making process in issuing permits. Review zoning changes and court decisions affecting zoning ordinances. Selectman Pratte said reflecting what Mr. Flaherty suggested and kept some sort of action item running so they can keep some type of status on what has been done. A monthly report or bullet items of board business by the Ex-Officio or TA. Succession plans he does not know if there is anything that exists and there are important positions in the town and wants to make sure there is some sort of backup behind that. Is there a list of open positions regarding hiring for the Town and Boards, Committees, and Commissions? A monitoring system for complaints to know when they came in and when they got answered, assign a categorical assignment to the complaints, and develop a time frame as to when they want to see the complaints resolved. Selectman Pratte would like to review the public comment procedure. He knows by law they do not bear any responsibility other than to hear the comment. TA Bolton said there is no succession plan, and it is something they will need to think about. Selectman Blume suggested dropping into the departments to put faces to names. Vice Chairman Knapp said they try not to interact during public comment unless they know the answer. Discussion ensued regarding public comment.

Administrators Report: TA Bolton presented the BOS with the three companies RFQs and will schedule them for the 27th interviews. TA Bolton said that the current minute taker said she would take on doing PARC minutes. There were five bidders and the CC that went to the asbestos remediation site walk for the Barden property all bids are due April 10th. TA Bolton gave the board information regarding legal and engineering RFPs. TA Bolton said there are two letters for correspondence; one she had forwarded to the BOS regarding 55 Winter Road and the second is that Sansoucy Associates is looking for a response as that has to with the Eversource Abatement. TA Bolton said there have been no applications for the Cemetery Sexton. There will be three burials in April. TA Bolton said they will upgrade the email license from kiosk to exchange plan one which allows for PST files it would increase the license by \$4 an account but she thinks it would save on sending out a monstrous email to all the volunteers to have them gather their information.

Selectman Mathews motioned to enter into a contract agreement with George E Sancoucy for abatement appeals with Public Service Company of New Hampshire also known as Eversource Energy or PSNH for the years 2017 to 2022 at a rate structure provided on page 7 of the agreement dated September 15, 2023. Seconded by Selectman Blume. Motion passed 4-0-1. Abstention by Drury.

Selectman Mathews asked why 55 Winter Road needs to come to the BOS for action and why it can not be a building department thing. TA Bolton said it came from attorney to attorney. The BOS will finalize a formal response at next week's meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding having updates from the different departments.

Meeting Times: Discussion regarding start times for meetings and summer meetings. The BOS agreed to leave the start time at 6:30. Selectman Mathews said there is a policy where the start time is 5:30 PM. She is willing to update the policy and share it with the BOS. Selectman Mathews said that she would like to add if there is a vacancy on the board and how they would fulfill that if everyone were okay with that. The board was okay with adding that to the policy.

Ex-Officio Elections: Discussion was had regarding the different committees. Chair of the Conservation Commission Andy Fulton said they do not have an Ex-Officio and there is an RSA 36-A regarding that. He would be okay with having a member of the BOS attend the meetings, but they would not have any voting power.

Board, Committee, Commission	Ex-Officio
Planning Board	Selectman Blume
Planning Board Alternate	Selectman Mathews
CIP	Selectman Mathews
Stone Fund	Selectman Knapp
Conservation Commission Liasson	Selectman Pratte
PARC	James Drury

Election on Chair and Vice Chair:

Selectman Blume motioned to nominate Selectman Mathews as Chair. Seconded by Drury. Motion passed 4-0-1 abstention from Mathews.

Selectman Blume motioned to nominate Vice Chairman Knapp as Vice Chair. Seconded by Pratte. Motion passed 4-0-1 abstention from Knapp.

247 **Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Mathews made a motion, and Knapp**
248 **seconded to adjourn at 9:07 p.m. Passed 5-0-0**
249
250 **ADJOURNMENT**
251 A True Record.
252 *Kearsten O'Brien*
253 Kearsten O'Brien, Minute Taker