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APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN – MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 2021

CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chair Viger called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 pm.

PRESENT: Jaie Bergeron, Kevin Cote, Hal Lynde, Douglas Viger, Brian McCarthy Town
Administrator

ABSENT: Robert Haverty

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Viger asked Selectman Cote to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES REVIEW:

August 31, 2021

MOTION: (Cote/Bergeron) To approve the August 31, 2021 meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: (4-0-0) The motion carried.

OPEN FORUM:

No one came forward to speak in open forum.

APPOINTMENTS:

STATE SENATOR CHUCK MORSE: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

35 Senator Morse said this was his second night in a row at a selectman's meeting and he's not used to that
36 schedule. He made a note that there have been two elections with changes in the board since the state was
37 pretty much closed down in April of last year. He made it a point to let the selectmen know that he is
38 available at any time. He explained that the state's sessions and hearings were held on Zoom, and they
39 were more difficult on Zoom. Senator Morse doesn't think the Zoom platform really works for the state.
40 He finds things to work much better meeting in Concord.

41
42 He explained that when they started the budget process, they wanted New Hampshire to come out of the
43 pandemic and come out stronger and it was a major part of the budget development. He said there are
44 purposely some significant tax decreases in the budget. He noted that the July and August numbers for the
45 state were strong, and the state also ended a very strong year, which details should be out very soon on.

46
47 He explained the governor put a plan in place to wind down the interest and dividends tax over the next
48 five years with a little bit hitting this budget. Senator Morse believes that in the long run, this should
49 encourage people to stay in New Hampshire and maybe help with the workforce shortage. He said they
50 also tackled the rooms and meals tax. They had been hearing for years that it's been higher than
51 Massachusetts and they started to lower it in this budget by reducing it by .5%. He explained that there's

52 been the idea that the state was taking 40% of the rooms and meals tax and giving it back to communities,
53 but this has not happened in all the years he's been involved with budgets. They took a different approach
54 this year, and with a law that was just written, put it into a dedicated fund with 30% going back to
55 communities. They are now sending \$188 million back to the communities as part of the rooms and meals
56 tax. He made note that some of this is going back to the property taxpayers by reducing the school funding
57 by \$100 million this year. He explained the state is putting \$102 million more into education funding this
58 year based on the \$46 million from last year's budget expiring. They are holding school systems harmless
59 for the year before knowing they would never get the numbers right based on a pandemic year and a few
60 communities putting full time kindergarten in place with nothing to look back at and funded those. He
61 believes they will be expanding upon this when they go back in January. Senator Morse explained why the
62 education funding normally kills them in the southern tier of the state because nobody wants to look at the
63 cost of living, having to pay higher wages based on location, etc., but instead look at property rich towns
64 and say they're going to take money from them. He said the way it was presented, it would have led to an
65 income tax on top of that and this is not how we should be going as a state. He felt the budget kept things
66 pretty harmless and they funded what they believed to be the correct number for education.

67
68 Senator Morse said there will be a rainy-day fund of over \$200 million and noted the state is in great shape,
69 much like the communities he represents, and they are at a level where they can hold onto cash that they
70 should be at. He explained that it will "rain someday," and we need to be prepared for it this time, unlike
71 when he went back in 2011. He believes the state is in great financial shape.

72
73 He explained there is federal funding coming to New Hampshire. They have a billion dollars that came to
74 the state with half in bank right now. He said when this started Washington said it could be used for water,
75 sewer and broadband. There has been a working group in meetings with the governor since February.
76 Broadband has now been taken out of that and it's a separate number that could come to the state as they
77 apply for it. They are questioning whether the broadband funding can be used on other things, such as to
78 help build towers and improve radio communications. He said we should see a lot happen with the bucket
79 of the billion dollars and in October they should be announcing what they will be doing with a big
80 percentage of the funding. Water will be a high priority. He explained the SRF Funding and how they
81 want to start looking at how they can work with towns on things that have been applied for on water and
82 how there's money on SRF for sewer. He explained that the federal money must be spent. It can't be
83 loaned. It must be granted and spent by 2026, maybe December of that year. He said the capital projects
84 will be significant on construction companies in New Hampshire once this money hits the streets. He talked
85 about money for MTBE and noted they still have money in the account that can only be used for that. It
86 was explained that if any town has contamination issues they can come to the state at any time, without
87 deadlines. He said there is a 19-member committee, that he is involved in, that is working hard to get
88 through the projects that have been presented. He went into more detail on the SRFs and also future funding
89 for these issues. Senator Morse also explained that he is working with Senator Shaheen try to eliminate
90 kayak tax, which would allow them to be able to help providers that are working to bring pipelines in. Right
91 now, this kayak tax hits the water rates.

92
93 He said we should see significant things for mental health. We will see COVID effects in the state and they
94 will put money in when they go to fiscal. He said there have been great strides in the budget for things like
95 parks and they are looking at Cannon Mountain to see if they can help them through some problems. We
96 will see more money put into parks with the federal money as we are seeing an increase of people coming
97 to the state and the north country for day visits. Senator Bradley is working on that category, as well as
98 Erin Hennessey from the north country.

99
100 Senator Morse explained the Guide House document. They spent about \$5 million to hire this company to
101 audit the state as they take in the billion dollars and to get guidance from the federal government on what
102 money could be spent on what issues. He said there was a revenue shortage at the state level and the money

103 from the federal government can be used on anything to replace the revenue shortage. He said communities
104 with revenue shortfalls are having discussions daily on what they can do with the funding. He explained
105 that he feels that Guide House is the company to run things by.

106
107 Senator Morse said he is available to help and encouraged the board to reach out to him with questions they
108 may have and he can help answer them. He can give direction on federal funding and see how to apply for
109 projects, etc. He explained there are many more accounts that have been set up and he only gave a few
110 examples such a drought account, etc. They are encouraging communities to head towards public water
111 systems. They believe the decision becomes easier, when contamination comes, if they can get water piped
112 in. As a state, they want to drop the water into communities. He said communities might as well bring
113 their needs to the table while the state has some money.

114
115 Mr. Lynde asked of the \$360 million was the state education tax. Senator Morse said it is the state education
116 tax on every one's tax bill and they are putting \$100 million against that number. Mr. Lynde confirmed
117 this was being subsidized with state money, which Senator Morse confirmed, but he was unsure if this was
118 a one-time thing as they are hearing property taxpayers are looking for the state to help. There was also
119 some discussion that we should see some brain power going into shoring up the retirement system, too.

120
121 Mr. Cote brought up the MBTE issue, explaining that we had serious issue in town with MBTE, but we
122 can't get any of that money. He said the state asked them to put together a water commission, which has
123 been done, and they put the town at 70th on list to get funds. He said the town could really use some help
124 with dealing with the state in trying to get access to some of that money.

125
126 Senator Morse said the fund has nowhere to go but in the southern tier, as that was where the issue was.
127 The money left in the account can only be used for that, not anything else. He said to have the town manager
128 call and he could put that application together. He explained that the commission is looking for a third to
129 be grant money and looking to communities to help with the balance, which some communities are saying
130 they won't contribute. There was discussion between Senator Morse and town administrator McCarthy on
131 the size of the project, what the original application had dealt with, as well as previous discussions with
132 Pennichuck. Senator Morse talked with Mr. McCarthy about getting the application to him and reaching
133 out next week to discuss it in more detail once he has been brought up to speed.

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135
136 **AGRICULTURE APPLICANT INTERVIEW: JOSEPH BOISSONNEAULT**

137
138 Joseph Boissonneault, 2 Doris Avenue came forward.

139
140 Mr. Viger asked what experience he would like to bring to this position. Mr. Boissonneault explained that
141 he had fairly no experience with politics but as far as agriculture he has grown up on farms and homesteads
142 all his life, raising ducks, goats, etc. He was very involved with the livestock ban in town and they were
143 able to considerably defeat the ban. He explained he volunteers a lot of time with the farmers market,
144 attended a lot of agricultural committee meetings, as it is important to him whether or not he is on the
145 committee.

146
147 Mr. Viger asked if there were any specific goals or objectives he would like to implement. Mr.
148 Boissonneault said he would like to try to keep Pelham as a farm town and let people us their property for
149 what they want to do with it in a respectful way.

150
151 Mr. Cote noted that Mr. Boissonneault has been very active in getting the agricultural commission started
152 and volunteering with the farmers market and feels he is a very good candidate for the position.

153

154 Mr. Lynde thinks Mr. Boissonneault will do fine.

155

156 Mr. Viger confirmed he was applying for an alternate position for two years.

157

158 **MOTION:** (Cote/Lynde) to appoint Joseph Boissonneault for an alternate position for two
159 years.

160

161 **VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

162

163

164 **CHIEF MIDGLEY: AMBULANCE LOAN AGREEMENT**

165

166 Chief Midgley came forward and explained that a week ago he was contacted by the town of Hudson who
167 requested to borrow one of the ambulances. He explained that Pelham, unfortunately, is usually the
168 recipient of aid like this, having gotten an engine from Litchfield for multiple weeks and an ambulance
169 from Salem a couple of times for quite a few days. He explained that by now having three ambulances, we
170 can do this and help the mutual aid district. He said that Hudson is looking to hold the ambulance for
171 approximately 2 weeks as one of theirs is down and another is going in for rehab.

172

173 Chief Midgley said he is looking to ask the board to allow him to loan the ambulance. He said this is not
174 typically how this would go, as he would normally get a phone call that an ambulance is needed now. He
175 has had to do this for our own department in the past. Chief Midgley asked the board to consider leaving
176 an open-ended right for him to, based on inventory, loan out to the mutual aid district. He explained the
177 town is part of a 2-state, 28-town mutual aid compact, which the town voted into on a warrant article in
178 1977. Chief Midgley is currently the president of the Border Area Mutual Aid Association. He asked the
179 board to consider leaving this open ended so if a town calls, and he has the availability with his apparatus,
180 that he'd be allowed to loan out.

181

182 Mr. Viger said he recalled having to borrow fire truck. Chief Midgley explained that Litchfield had given
183 the town their brand-new engine.

184

185 Mr. Viger read the agreement regarding insuring the vehicle and responsibility for necessary repairs and
186 the policy for returning the vehicle, if requested by the town. He said he had no issue leaving it open ended.

187

188 Mr. Cote shared the same sentiment. He asked if it was feasible to ask to return an apparatus within an
189 hour if we need, as the agreement had stated. Chief Midgley explained the agreement was generated by
190 Salem and they took it and built in. The idea is if an ambulance goes down and he needs it back then he
191 needs it back, but obviously if they needed a few hours to strip their equipment off of it, he would be fine
192 with that.

193

194 There was a discussion with Mr. McCarthy about inspecting the truck before it is given to them, envisioning
195 the rental car process. Chief Midgley said the truck would be stripped before we give to them. Chief
196 Midgley noted he is neurotic about dents or scratches getting fixed and he knows and will document what's
197 on the truck.

198

199 Mr. Bergeron asked how often all 3 ambulances are out at once. Chief Midgley said they can't staff 3
200 ambulances. He cited that 28-35% of the time they have double ambulance calls, and that statistic hasn't
201 really changed since he started. He said that getting all 3 on the road is between 3-5%, but is dependent on
202 staffing.

203

204 Mr. Cote asked if the open-ended deal was to do this with Hudson or the ability to be able to do it with
205 other communities. Chief Midgley said the ability to do it with others and Mr. Cote said he is okay with
206 leaving that in his judgement. Chief Midgley asked to leave it as apparatus, not just ambulances.

207
208
209 **MOTION:** (Cote/Lynde) to allow Chief Midgley to enter into apparatus loaning to other
210 departments within the Border Area Mutual Aid Association as the fire chief sees
211 fit.

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213 **VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

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216 **DISCUSSION:**

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218 **FACILITIES MANAGER MARK CARTER’S RESIGNATION**

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220 Mr. Viger noted there is a letter of resignation and letter of retirement.

221
222 Mr. McCarthy said Mark Carter, facilities manager, is resigning/retiring, really retiring. He noted that Mr.
223 Carter has been with the town for last 3 years and has done a great job. He is moving to a warmer climate.
224 The town wishes him the best of luck. Larry Nesky is retiring from the transfer station. He thanked him
225 for his years of service to the town and wished him well on his retirement.

226
227 **MOTION:** (Cote/Bergeron) to accept both resignations from both people.

228
229
230 Mr. Viger commented that Mr. Carter was extraordinary with helping out around the town, doing screen
231 fixes, light bulb changes and even managing some of the town’s larger projects. He wished both gentlemen
232 the best of luck.

233
234 **VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

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237 **SELECTMEN/TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

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239 **Mr. Bergeron** nothing to report.

240
241 **Mr. Lynde** nothing to report.

242

243 **Mr. Cote** noted Old Home Days is on Saturday.

244

245 **Mr. Viger** no report.

246

247 **Mr. McCarthy** updated the board that the audit was completed and they expect to have their letter soon.
248 He noted the town did really well. He said Deb Padykula, the new finance director, was instrumental and
249 they were in and out in three days. He explained they do a lot online now, but Ms. Padykula stepped up
250 and her experience showed in the process. He said Melanson should be out shortly to address them
251 regarding the audit and its results.

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254 **REQUEST FOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

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MOTION: (Cote/Lynde) Request for a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II, a (personnel).

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Bergeron – yes
Mr. Lynde – yes
Mr. Cote – yes
Mr. Viger – yes

(4-0-0) The motion carried.

It was noted that when the Board returned, after the non-public session, the Board would not take any other action publicly, except to seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the meeting. The Board entered a non-public session at approximately 7:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Atkinson
Recording Secretary