

**NOT APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN–MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 7, 2023**

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CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Cote called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30pm

PRESENT: Jaie Bergeron, Kevin Cote, Jason Croteau, Charlene Takesian, Town Administrator Joseph Roark

ABSENT: Heather Corbett

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MEETING MINUTES REVIEW

October 17, 2023

MOTION: (Bergeron/Croteau) To approve the October 17, 2023 meeting minutes as is.

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

OPEN FORUM

No one came forward in open forum.

APPOINTMENTS

Public Notice: Vote on acceptance of dog ordinance in Town parks and athletic field

Chairman Cote explained that the Board will be voting on the acceptance of the dog ordinance in Town parks and athletic fields.

MOTION: (Croteau/Bergeron) To accept the Town’s dog ordinance in Town parks and athletic fields.

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

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48 Jim Hoffman, Highway Director: Highway tractor purchase

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50 Jim Hoffman, the Town's Highway Director, explained that their roadside mower, also known as
51 the sidewalk machine, is having problems since the roadside mower part is not made for the
52 machine. He added that the company who sold it is no longer selling them due to all of the issues
53 they have. Mr. Hoffman stated that the machine is usually broken three months out of the year,
54 and the costs to repair it are high. Chairman Cote asked if they could still use the machine
55 without the roadside mower part that keeps breaking, or if they are not able to use it all anymore.
56 Mr. Hoffman stated that they can still use it to snow blow the sidewalks.

57

58 Mr. Hoffman explained that he got the prices of three tractors. He added that once you purchase
59 the machine you can purchase more accessories for it in the future so it can complete different
60 kinds of jobs. He stated that the Kubota from MB Tractor had the best price and options. The
61 total price is \$61,413.70. Chairman Cote asked Mr. Hoffman how the Highway Department
62 plans to pay for this. Mr. Hoffman explained that it will be funded through the Highway Block
63 Grant, so there is no tax impact. He added that he planned to purchase a new backhoe through
64 the CIP next year but has now decided to push this purchase off for another year or so. He
65 explained that now that they can park the machines in a garage, they are lasting a lot longer.

66

67 Mr. Croteau asked Mr. Hoffman if this company offers 0% financing to municipalities for
68 purchases. Mr. Hoffman stated that he did not look into financing options for this purchase since
69 he planned to use Highway Block Grant funds. Mr. Croteau and Mr. Cote agreed that Kubota is
70 the best brand to go with. Ms. Takesian noted that the three quotes Mr. Hoffman received were
71 \$65,500.00, \$67,113.00, and \$61,413.70.

72

73 The Board permitted Mr. Hoffman to move forward with the purchase using Highway Block
74 Grant funds.

75

76

**77 Audrey Frater, Executive Director: Bishop Stanley & Ruth Choate Wellness and
78 Recreation Center Introduction**

79

80 Ms. Frater explained that she provided the Board of Selectmen a handout with updates about the
81 center. She noted that they are hoping to start taking students in January. She added that they are
82 working hard to get a grant to help them make the facilities state-of-the-art. Ms. Frater explained
83 that she thinks these facilities can benefit not just their target population of teens and young
84 adults, but all of the residents in Town. She explained she hopes that this is more of a community
85 center than just a youth center. Ms. Frater stated that the center will focus on mental health and
86 will have qualified professionals running support groups and workshops regularly. They will
87 have a self-care room and sensory room as well. The workshop topics will include things like
88 financial wellness, culinary arts, dance, and many more topics.

89

90 Ms. Frater explained that the center hopes to host seniors during the hours kids are in school,
91 between 9:00 am and noon. She also hopes seniors in Town will want to volunteer during the
92 hours kids are there. They could be instructors at workshops if they have experience. In return,

93 the center would offer a free space for seniors to walk, play pickleball, or do other physical
94 activities indoors. They also are looking at starting a garden in the spring. They would also allow
95 them to use their classrooms if needed.

96

97 Ms. Frater explained that they have been trying to figure out how to make this center accessible
98 to everyone. She added that the pricing is based on the fact that they have to pay to maintain the
99 facility, including utilities. She noted that they would like to eventually be able to pay rent to the
100 church that is providing the center.

101

102 Ms. Frater stated that her goal is to partner with the Town, so they understand how important this
103 center is and encourage its use. She has been working with the Town's Superintendent of
104 Schools, but explained they need more than just the school system to partner with them for this
105 to happen. She added that if they receive funding from the grant they applied to, the Town will
106 have access to something that other towns will want to replicate. She stated that it will be a place
107 where youth can feel empowered to be their best selves. Ms. Frater noted that their entire staff
108 will be trained in first aid and mental health.

109

110 Ms. Frater showed the Board of Selectmen a video of the center.

111

112 Ms. Frater explained that although they are already set up to provide services to the youth, there
113 are still many improvements they would like to make. She explained that for this to happen, they
114 need support from the Town as a whole, including the Senior Center, school system, and more.

115

116 Ms. Frater asked for the Board of Selectmen's support, whether it is in the form of a
117 memorandum of understanding that the Town is in support of the center and wants to be a part of
118 it, or if there is funding available to help them make improvements.

119

120 Chairman Cote stated that he has been to the center, and thinks it looks great. Mr. Croteau agreed
121 that everything looked great and added that all of his children had been there. Mr. Croteau asked
122 Ms. Frater what exactly she was looking for in terms of support. Ms. Frater explained that they
123 need funding, and to be awarded sizable grants they need to be able to show that the Town is
124 prepared to support the center.

125

126 Chairman Cote noted that Ms. Frater explained that the youth center and the church are under the
127 same parent organization and asked her to further clarify how the youth center is set up as an
128 organization. Ms. Frater explained that the youth center is a separate 501c(3) from the church,
129 meaning they are a non-profit.

130

131 Mr. Bergeron stated that the Board supports the youth center and what they are doing in Town,
132 but thinks it is difficult for the Board to help with grants when they have their departments in
133 Town, like Parks and Recreation, who find their grants. Ms. Frater explained that it is not
134 uncommon for Towns to show support for youth centers like this, and it goes a long way when
135 applying for grants if they have that support. She added that for the youth center to get grants the
136 Town needs to be committed to supporting it. Mr. Bergeron explained that he does not
137 understand what Ms. Frater is asking for exactly. Ms. Frater explained that she is inquiring about
138 any extra funding that the Town may have to support the youth center. Town Administrator

139 Roark explained that, although not a quick process, the Town does have a Health Services
140 budget for donating to non-profits every year. He added that they could have the youth center
141 come in during the budget process with a similar presentation and decide if they are worthy of
142 the funding over the less active organizations they have donated to in the past.

143
144 Ms. Takesian suggested they could also set up something similar to the eighties fund, where they
145 could pay the youth center rent to hold different Town programs there. She added that they could
146 use the stage at the youth center for the Town's theatre program instead of using Sherburne Hall.
147 Then, the Town would not be paying for the rent but the money made from the programs would
148 fund it. Chairman Cote agreed and suggested Ms. Frater have a conversation with the Town's
149 Parks and Recreation Director about holding Town programs at the youth center.

150
151 Mr. Croteau asked Ms. Frater what the capacity is at the youth center. Ms. Frater stated that the
152 capacity is 350 people in the gymnasium, but she was unsure of the total maximum capacity of
153 the building. Mr. Croteau also asked who else Ms. Frater is working with for partnerships. Ms.
154 Frater explained that her main focus is partnering with Pelham, but she has also been working
155 with UMass Lowell and mental health professionals.

156
157 Chairman Cote thanked Ms. Frater for her presentation.

158
159

160 **Police Chief Perriello: Follow-up/update on the Highway Safety Committee**
161 **recommendation to adopt two new signs on Hayden Road**

162
163 Chief Perriello explained that after her last meeting with the Board regarding the complaints
164 about speeding on Hayden Road, the Police Department put up the speed signs and monitored
165 traffic in the opposite direction of where they were monitoring originally. Chief Perriello
166 provided the Board with a breakdown of the daily traffic statistics on this road. She explained
167 that there is an extremely high volume of traffic on this road every day, the highest volume being
168 from around 7:00 am to 9:00 am, and picking up again in the evening.

169
170 Chief Perriello stated that the Highway Safety Committee has put together a few
171 recommendations for the Town to consider. One recommendation is to install permanent solar-
172 based speed signs, one in each direction. She noted that the residents on this road are in favor of
173 installing these signs. Another recommendation is adopting a three-way stop sign. The last
174 recommendation is installing a small rotary to help keep traffic moving, but forces operators to
175 slow down. She stated that although the average speed is not above the speed limit, they are
176 seeing many cars speeding at over 50 mph on a residential road.

177
178 Mr. Croteau asked Chief Perriello about the neighbors being in favor of the solar-based speed
179 signs. Chief Perriello explained that the ones who attended the last meeting stated that they felt
180 like the signs were effective. Mr. Croteau asked Chief Perriello if she thought the signs were
181 effective. Chief Perriello stated that she thinks the signs are effective but does not think they will
182 be able to change everyone's behavior. She added that they have been more heavily patrolling
183 this area, which she believes is also helping. Chief Perriello also explained that you can program
184 the signs to send a blinking message, like "slow down", which was effective on Willow Street in

185 Town. She added that they also have these signs on Sherburne Road, but they are not as effective
186 there.

187

188 Chairman Cote stated that he has spoken to residents on Sherburne Road who have said the
189 speed signs have made an impact on the noise levels from cars on the road.

190

191 Chief Perriello explained that although there is an upfront cost to install the signs, the
192 maintenance costs, like changing the batteries, are covered under the Police Department's
193 budget. She added that the signs on Willow Street have been up for years, and they just had to
194 replace the batteries. The cost of replacing the batteries is around \$350.00.

195

196 Mr. Bergeron asked Chief Perriello if the complaints from Sherburne Road had stopped. Chief
197 Perriello stated that the complaints have slowed down, but they have not stopped. She went on to
198 explain that their biggest complaint is the traffic backup, but they also get speeding and reckless
199 driving complaints. Mr. Bergeron stated that he thinks installing the signs is the cheapest and
200 easiest option. Mr. Croteau agreed. Mr. Bergeron also recommended that the Highway Safety
201 Committee should suggest installing rotaries when older roads are being developed with the new
202 houses.

203

204 Ms. Takesian asked Chief Perriello how the Highway Safety Committee feels about rotaries and
205 asked if they think it slows emergency vehicles down. Chief Perriello stated that she thinks the
206 rotaries have saved a large number of accidents from happening. She added that they rarely have
207 crashes on the rotaries. Ms. Takesian asked if the rotaries slow down emergency vehicles. Chief
208 Perriello stated that they do slow them down a little bit, but not drastically enough to not have
209 them.

210

211 Chief Perriello explained that if they go with the solar-based signs for Hayden Road, but they do
212 not make an impact, the signs can always be moved to a new location.

213

214 Chairman Cote suggested the Board move forward with the signs for now, and also have a
215 conversation with the developer on Hayden Road about installing a rotary. Ms. Takesian agreed.
216 Mr. Croteau asked about the timeline if they agreed to install the signs. Chief Perriello stated that
217 the signs would take around five to six weeks to come in.

218

219 Town Administrator Roark explained how some roads have installed stop signs where new
220 housing divisions were put in to help combat speeding. However, he added that the Department
221 of Transportation discourages the use of stop signs to reduce speeding.

222

223 Mr. Bergeron asked Chief Perriello how they should go about funding the speeding signs.
224 Chairman Cote asked Chief Perriello what the cost of the signs was. Chief Perriello stated that
225 she forgot to bring that paper, but she believes it is about \$8,100.00. Mr. Bergeron asked if the
226 Police Department usually purchases the signs. Chief Perriello explained that they have
227 purchased them in the past, and the school system has assisted with the costs of the ones in the
228 school zone. Mr. Bergeron asked Chief Perriello if she wanted to purchase the new signs with the
229 Police Department budget. Chief Perriello stated that since they have been down some staff they

230 could purchase them with their budget. Chairman Cote asked Chief Perriello could move forward
231 with purchasing the signs and if there were any issues with their budget to let the Board know.

232

233

234 **Yvonne La-Garde, Council on Aging: Pickleball court update**

235

236 Ms. La-Garde, Chair of Pelham's Council on Aging, approached the Board to provide an update
237 on the pickleball courts.

238

239 Ms. La-Garde stated that she is proposing the Board of Selectmen consider accepting a generous
240 gift from the Pelham Council on Aging. This gift includes the donation of four pickleball courts,
241 comprised of three tile courts and one cement court. Along with associated landscaping and
242 irrigation for the area. It is important to note that the gift excludes memorial trees, shrubs,
243 perennial gardens, birdhouses, bird baths, benches, and signage. The estimated total value of this
244 asset is \$181,831.00. She is requesting that the Board of Selectmen deliberate on accepting this
245 valuable gift, which the Council on Aging believes is a benefit to the community of Pelham.

246

247 Mr. Croteau asked about the buffer along the court for the neighbor's house. Ms. La-Garde
248 explained that she feels that their neighbor will never be happy, as they have planted the trees
249 that the Board recommended. She noted that it will take around five years for the trees to grow
250 and be more of a buffer. She is not sure what else they can do to make the neighbor happy.

251

252 Chairman Cote asked if the concrete was cracking. Ms. La-Garde stated there is cracking in the
253 concrete, but that is to be expected. She explained that their volunteer pickleball coordinator
254 suggested there would be some cracking along the seams of the court to help the cement breathe.
255 Ms. La-Garde stated that she did contact the company that installed the concrete court and asked
256 them to come to look at it, as there is a five-year warranty for the concrete courts. She added that
257 the cracking does not affect play. There is also a little bit of chipping on the paint, but this also
258 does not affect play. Chairman Cote explained that there is a difference between expansion
259 seams and concrete cracking. Ms. La-Garde explained that to her understanding she thinks it is
260 just expansion seams, not cracking.

261

262 Chairman Cote stated that he had some questions about the asset number. He explained that he
263 had a document with the asset number listed as \$111,459.00. Ms. La-Garde asked what that
264 number is excluding since she has it as \$181,830.00. Chairman Cote explained that this excludes
265 the site prep work for \$9,000.00 since this is not considered an asset. Chairman Cote added that
266 the landscaping work is also not an asset. Ms. La-Garde asked Chairman Cote what he thinks the
267 assets are valued at. Chairman Cote stated that his estimate based on the numbers Ms. La-Garde
268 provided is around \$111,459.00. Ms. La-Garde stated that she will accept that. Ms. La-Garde
269 added that they have an extra tile court in the shed, so the tiles can be easily replaced if
270 something happens to them.

271

272 Mr. Bergeron asked about the memorial trees not being a part of the gift. Ms. La-Garde
273 explained that the memorial trees, shrubs, and other pieces were not a part of the gift because the
274 Board of Selectmen had made it very clear that they did not want the responsibility of
275 maintaining them. She added that the Council of Aging is setting up a restricted funds account

276 using the money they made off selling these pieces to help maintain them. She noted that they
277 will put a line item in their budget for pickleball and park maintenance. Mr. Bergeron asked Ms.
278 La-Garde what she foresees the Town being on the hook for maintenance. Ms. La-Garde
279 explained that she is not an expert, but she does not think a lot of maintenance will be required.
280 Mr. Bergeron asked if they had insurance for the courts, and what company they have. Ms. La-
281 Garde stated that they use Pappathan Insurance. Mr. Bergeron asked Town Administrator Roark
282 if the Town's insurance company would have any problem covering the courts. Town
283 Administrator Roark explained that there may be a small raise to their premium, but there should
284 not be any issue.

285
286 Chairman Cote noted that they have to hold a public hearing before they can vote on accepting
287 the gift of the pickleball courts.

288
289 Ms. Takesian asked Chairman Cote why the asset value or what they include in it matters.
290 Chairman Cote explained that they need to set a number so that the Council on Aging can take
291 that amount off of their books and the Town can add it. Ms. Takesian asked Ms. La-Garde if she
292 cares if the landscape is included in the asset value or not. Ms. La-Garde stated that they did put
293 a lot of money into the landscaping, but she is happy if the Town accepts the pickleball courts
294 and irrigation system.

295
296 Ms. La-Garde asked what the next steps are. Town Administrator Roark explained that they need
297 to hold a public hearing, and they also need to provide at least a ten-day notice to the public.

298
299

300 **DISCUSSION**

301

302 There was nothing up for discussion.

303

304

305 **SELECTMEN AND TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

306

307 **Town Administrator Roark** had nothing to report.

308

309 **Mr. Bergeron** had nothing to report.

310

311 **Chairman Cote** had nothing to report.

312

313 **Ms. Takesian** had nothing to report.

314

315 **Mr. Croteau** had nothing to report.

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317

318 **REQUEST FOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

319

320 **MOTION:** (Corbett/Croteau) Request for non-public session per RSA 91-A: 3, II (a):
321 personnel

322

323 **ROLLCALL VOTE:**

324

325 Selectman Bergeron– Yes

326 Chairman Cote– Yes

327 Selectman Takesian – Yes

328 Selectman Croteau – Yes

329

330 (4-0-0) The motion carried.

331

332 It was noted that when the Board returned, after the non-public session, the Board would not take
333 any other action publicly, except to seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the
334 meeting. The Board entered a non-public session at approximately 7:48 p.m.

335

336

337 **ADJOURNMENT**

338

339 Respectfully submitted,

340

341 Makayla Clougherty

342 Recording Secretary