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APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN - MEETING MINUTES
October 22, 2019
APPROVED – November 5, 2019

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CALL TO ORDER - approximately 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mr. William McDevitt, Mr. Doug Viger, Mr. Hal Lynde, Ms. Heather Forde,
Mr. Kevin Cote, Town Administrator Brian McCarthy

ABSENT: None

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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MINUTES REVIEW:

October 8, 2019:

MOTION: (Forde/Lynde) To approve the October 8, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

None

OPEN FORUM:

No one came forward.

APPOINTMENTS

Fire Chief James Midgley – The promotion of Lieutenant Dan Rooney

Chief Midgley came forward and told the Board that approximately a year and half ago the department had done a promotion process. He said it was no surprise that Lieutenant Rooney came out number one. He discussed his training and credentials then invited Lieutenant Rooney forward with his wife to change out the badge. The Selectmen congratulated Lieutenant Rooney on his promotion.

Planning Director Jeff Gowan – Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (‘CMAQ’) review and discussion of future bridge projects

Mr. Gowan stated he had raised an alarm last week after attending a Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (‘TTAC’) meeting. Two items were brought up during that meeting involving the Department of Transportation (‘DOT’). The first appeared to be a change in the State’s 10-year plan regarding Pelham’s two remaining bridge projects that appeared to push the projects back. However, after bringing his concern forward, he spoke with Lisa Martin of Quantum Consultants who reminded him the State follows a fiscal calendar year. He noted Ms. Martin didn’t have any concerns. He read

45 aloud a portion of an email he received (from DOT) confirming that the Old Bridge Street project had
46 not been pushed back. It indicated that the amendments made to the 10-year plan were done to more
47 accurately quantify the financial commitments of the State Bridge Aid Program. Mr. Gowan reiterated
48 neither the DOT nor Quantum was concerned about the schedule. Mr. McCarthy noted a copy of the
49 email had been forwarded to the Board.

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51 Also, during the TTAC meeting, Mr. Gowan learned that the DOT was pursuing their own grant
52 program for light treatments. They're planning three flashing yellow lights (left turn on flashing yellow
53 light) in Pelham: Willow Street/Route 38, Atwood/Route 38 and Main Street/Route 38.

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55 Mr. McCarthy asked for an update regarding the 'traffic ahead' light the State was to install on Route
56 38 near Ledge Road. Mr. Gowan replied he hadn't heard an update but would get an answer.

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58 Mr. Gowan provided the Board with an update regarding the intersection project for
59 Marsh/Mammoth/Sherburne Roads and informed it was on-track. He said preliminary engineering has
60 been submitted to DOT. Mr. McDevitt asked if there had been resolution to the abutter whose septic
61 was located in their front yard. Mr. Gowan replied that house would be impacted through the right-of-
62 way process, which is the next thing to be dealt with during the project. The only concerns he had at
63 this time were delays due to utilities and/or environmental issues.

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65 Mr. Cote spoke about the function of hybrid vehicles (stopping and starting when idling) and would
66 like to see if a study had been done to see if there has been an increase in left turn accidents because of
67 the new flashing yellow lights at intersections. He believed the new technology in vehicles would
68 reduce the need for CMAQ measures. Mr. Gowan replied he would ask the State that question.

69

70 Mr. McCarthy questioned why Ledge Road hasn't qualified for some of the CMAQ grant money. He
71 pointed out vehicles queued for a long time before egressing onto Bridge Street. Mr. Gowan replied
72 they had revisited the intersection in the road safety audit. He felt it was one of Pelham's worst
73 intersections and didn't know what solution would work; he would add the question to his list for when
74 he speaks with the State. Mr. McDevitt asked how the CMAQ grants were realized. Mr. Gowan said
75 they simply heard there was a grant opportunity opening up, so they pursued it. Mr. Lynde believed
76 the Nashua Regional Planning Commission informed the grant would be opening up.

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78 **Hobbs Community Director Sara Landry – Thrift Store signs**

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80 Ms. Landry described the thrift store, which is managed 100% by the Council on Aging ('COA'); the
81 money raised goes to them. The thrift store was recently renovated and part of the reason for the sign
82 was to let people in the community know its there. It will be named the 'Pelham Community Thrift
83 Store'. They also accept donations of children, women and men's clothing as well as small household
84 items. They don't take larger furniture, electronics, televisions or computers.

85

86 Mr. McDevitt questioned what the COA used the money for. Ms. Landry replied the money was used
87 as part of their budget for various activities and functions at the center. They also provide a scholarship
88 to a graduating senior.

89

90 Mr. Viger asked if the COA was paying for the sign. Ms. Landry answered no; the funding for the sign
91 is coming from the Senior Recreation Impact Fee. That impact fee is used for senior impact items,
92 which is broadly defined. Ms. Landry pointed out that the store was a wonderful place for seniors to
93 volunteer, work and give back to the community. The thrift store is also used as a social place for
94 connecting the seniors and social interaction with people in the community.

95

96 Mr. Viger wanted to know the price of the sign and if they received three quotes. Ms. Landry spoke
97 about the two signs. One will be mounted on the building (\$850) and the other will be installed by the
98 road (\$650). She obtained one quote from Hammar Signs, who she worked with for the other signs t
99 the center. She said she would obtain additional quotes if the Board wanted her to do so. Mr. Cote
100 questioned if the price included installation. Ms. Landry answered yes. Ms. Forde understood the
101 merits of obtaining additional quotes; however, from a design perspective having all the signs at the
102 center be the same color and font was a good idea. She felt the proposed pricing was reasonable given
103 it also included installation. She asked Ms. Landry if she was looking for both signs or choosing
104 between the two. Ms. Landry replied the COA was requesting both so people driving by would know
105 the store was there and where they could enter. She said they would have the Highway Safety
106 Committee review to see the best location for the street sign. Mr. McDevitt didn't believe it was the
107 Board's practice to require three quotes on items with the proposed cost. He believed the cut off was
108 typically about \$5,000.

109

110 Mr. Cote questioned if the sign near the street fell under the Town's sign ordinance. Ms. Landry replied
111 it would. She noted they had gone through a lengthy process when installing the sign for the Hobbs
112 Community Center. She noted the sign for the thrift store wouldn't be lit or electronic. It had a colonial
113 look to compliment and match the existing signs around Town, such as those in the roundabouts. Mr.
114 McDevitt asked Ms. Landry to check with the Planning Department to be consistent. He noted Towns
115 weren't subject to their own regulations; however, Pelham tried to follow them. He said if there was a
116 significant problem with the proposed signs with regard to the Sign Ordinance, he asked her to let the
117 Board know.

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MOTION: (Forde/Cote) To approve the two proposed signs conditioned on Ms. Landry
checking with the Planning Department to ensure the proposed signs were in
compliance with the Sign Ordinance; if they are materially inconsistent, she is to let
the Selectmen know.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

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120 **DISCUSSION**

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122 **Setting the tax rate**

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124 Mr. McCarthy stated they have run the numbers and now needed to decide how much would be taken
125 out of the fund balance.

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127 Mr. Viger asked for the current tax rate. Mr. McCarthy replied \$21.46 per \$1,000. Mr. Viger asked
128 for the proposed tax rate figure (prior to taking money from the fund balance). He told the Board the
129 Assessing Assistant sent him a file listing the property values before and after the valuation (2018 –
130 2019) so he could see the ratio for how the number would come out. He said of the 5,600 properties in
131 Pelham he did a sampling and noted approximately 86% wouldn't see a tax increase.

132

133 Mr. McCarthy told the Board the tax rate would be \$19.38 with \$1.2 million from the fund balance.
134 Mr. Viger questioned why they proposed to take money out of the fund balance. He said with the new
135 revaluations, if they kept things as is, there would be no tax increase, and possibly a decrease. Mr.
136 Lynde stated the rate would go down, but the taxes would increase. Mr. McDevitt understood the
137 valuation increased approximately 12% for residential. Mr. Viger said if they took \$1.2 million out of
138 the fund balance this year, they would essentially have to do it every year to keep the tax rate the same.
139 He said if they took money out when they didn't have to, they were exposing themselves to have to
140 take more money from the fund balance to keep the tax rate stable.

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142 Mr. McDevitt was concerned that they may need the fund balance to help offset taxes if the voters
143 approve changes to Memorial School because it could turn out to be a big number. He was concerned
144 with lowering too much, which would cause an increase in next year's taxes. He felt leaving the rate
145 the same would be a good idea. Mr. Lynde said he could 'plug' in a tax rate to see what the amount
146 would be if they left it alone and if they took from the fund balance. He said during the recent New
147 Hampshire Municipal Association ('NHMA') meeting it was pointed out that the Town would be given
148 money this year and next year (with no stated purpose) to go toward reducing taxes. Mr. McCarthy
149 stated the amount was \$108,000 each year. He noted the money could also be used toward capital
150 projects; it could be spent 'as designated by the Board of Selectmen'. Mr. McDevitt and Mr. Viger
151 both stated the money should be used to reduce taxes.

152

153 Mr. McDevitt believed the general feeling from the Board was to do what could be done to keep most
154 people's tax bill the same. He noted by doing this there would still be some people's taxes would
155 increase and some would decrease. He believed those with a house value that increased greater than
156 12% may get a tax increase.

157

158 Mr. Viger asked for the current fund balance. Mr. McCarthy replied it was approximately \$4.9 million.
159 Mr. McDevitt wanted to know if the State was ready for the Town to set the tax rate. Mr. McCarthy
160 replied not yet; however, it had to be done before the end of the month. Mr. McDevitt stated the Board
161 was giving Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Lynde general direction; the Board won't know the tax rate until
162 they get the final numbers. Once the numbers are received, they are sent to the State Department of
163 Revenue Administration.

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165 **Proposed 2020 Warrant Articles**

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167 Mr. McCarthy told the Board he would keep the agenda item listed for the Selectmen to see what
168 articles were for consideration. An addition was to revise the elderly exemption. Mr. McDevitt asked
169 Mr. McCarthy to include a chart compiled by the Assessing Assistant which showed post valuation
170 figures. The Board briefly reviewed the items on the list.

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172 **Utilizing Facebook Live for Board of Selectmen meetings**

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174 Mr. McDevitt saw a video that discussed increasing exposure to younger people who were cutting cable
175 by utilizing Facebook live. He suggested adding it in addition to cable. Mr. Cote believed having a
176 You Tube channel would be better than Facebook Live because Facebook required a separate stream
177 account.

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179 Cable Coordinator Jim Greenwood came forward and explained to the Board they currently utilized a
180 video on demand service. Board meetings were generally available for viewing the same night. He
181 noted as people cut cable, the Town would lose revenue from the franchise contract. He discussed the
182 type of equipment needed to broadcast live through Facebook and to upload onto You Tube. He said
183 it would take some research and will work with IT Coordinator Brian Demers.

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185 Mr. McCarthy will set an agenda item for Mr. Greenwood to come back for a discussion.

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187 **3rd Quarter Expense Report**

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189 Mr. Lynde asked if there was a revenue report. Mr. McCarthy answered no and explained each time
190 he pulled a report he wasn't getting consistent information. He informed as of the end of the third
191 quarter the Town had 34.90% of the budget remaining.

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TOWN ADMINISTRATOR / SELECTMEN REPORTS

Ms. Forde stated she submitted a volunteer application to assist the Town with the dry weather outfall testing (part of MS4 requirements). The tasks would fall under the purview of allowable hours toward the degree she is pursuing in landscape architecture. She hoped to help reduce the overall price point of having someone else conduct the testing in exchange for practice hours. Mr. McDevitt noted the Town hadn't requested volunteer applications and understood Ms. Forde was offering to volunteer as part of her educational program. Ms. Forde stated she would step aside if someone more qualified came forward. She said her overall goal was to help reduce the price point of the project. Mr. Viger suggested opening acceptance of volunteer applications for one week and by the next meeting discuss further. Mr. McDevitt said they would accept applications and described the field work that would be done. Anyone who would like additional information should contact the Planning Department or Mr. McCarthy.

Mr. Lynde provided a summary of the joint Planning Board/Zoning Board meeting. He then spoke about the proposed zoning changes being reviewed.

Mr. Cote stated he was continuing to work on getting solar information for the Town; the school has submitted their electric bills for consideration. He said there would be a public meeting regarding the findings. He then told the Board he would like them to consider establishing an agricultural commission. He said the process had gone well and continued to have interest. He will bring a presentation to the Board.

Mr. McCarthy told the Board he received a request from the Road Agent to expend funds out of the Highway Building Capital Reserve to pay Keach Nordstrom (engineering review firm) for the work they've done regarding the proposed highway building. The expenditure is \$5,868.36.

MOTION: (Lynde/Cote) To approve the expenditure of \$5,868.36 out of the Highway Building Capital Reserve (as explained by Mr. McCarthy).

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Mr. McCarthy commented about the Town's representatives to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission needing reappointment. Currently serving were Selectmen Lynde and Mr. Dave Hennessey. Mr. McDevitt questioned if they also seek public volunteers for the positions. Mr. Lynde believed the Town was allowed 3-4; currently there were only two. Mr. McCarthy believed the positions were last appointed in 2015. Mr. McDevitt asked that they advertise for volunteers and conduct interviews and make appointments at their next meeting.

Mr. McCarthy informed the Town had been awarded three energy audits for Town buildings from NH Saves program. The three building were: Library, Hobbs Center and the municipal building. He ended by speaking about the Willow Street Bridge project, which was on track and scheduled to open November 1st. He tentatively planned to have a brief ribbon cutting ceremony and small function at Town Hall to celebrate the opening.

Mr. McDevitt reported he attended a seminar presented by the New Hampshire Housing Authority regarding community development (including affordable housing). In the future he will give the Selectmen a report.

238 Ms. Forde stated there were a number of collection boxes around Town for candy to be donated to
239 Blueberry Circle. She's been in contact with the residents on Blueberry Circle and believed there were
240 some residents on Falcon that may also be interested in being included; she'll contact them this week.
241 She explained the purpose was to hold a lightly modified Halloween with trick-or-treat stations at the
242 end of resident's driveways for those with mobility and sensory issues.

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REQUEST FOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION: (Lynde/Forde) Request for a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II, a & e
(personnel; consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation)

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

247 It was noted that when the Board returned, after the non-public session, the Board would not take any
248 other action publicly, except to possibly seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the
249 meeting. The Board entered into a non-public session at approximately 8:15pm.
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MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To leave non-public session.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

251 The Board returned to public session at approximately 8:51pm.

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MOTION: (Cote/Forde) To indefinitely seal the non-public meeting minutes.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

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ADJOURNMENT

257 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:51pm.

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Respectfully submitted,
Charity A. Landry
Recording Secretary