

**Town of Boscawen  
Select Board  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Lorrie Carey, Paul Dickey, Matt Burdick, Kate Merrill, Kearsten O'Brien, Kellee Easler, Nicole Hoyt, Sarah Gerlack, Gary Moore, Tim Kenney & Kevin Wyman

Guests: Bonny John

**Roll Call:** completed and guests introduced.

Chairwoman Carey opened the public meeting at 6:00 P.M.

Chairwoman Lorrie Carey noted changes to the 11.17.22 minutes and 11.18.22 minutes.

**Selectman Matt Burdick motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Selectman Paul Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Department Head Updates:** Library Director Ms. Bonny John presented the preliminary 2023 Public Library budget. Ms. John stated a few lines in the budget decreased due to expenditures. They added a program line of \$1,000 for their Summer Reading program. Ms. John said it costs \$300 just for a guest speaker. The library used to get more community support money, but many have cut back on donations. The electric and gas line increased significantly. Overall, the budget is increasing by 1%.

**Selectman Burdick motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Boscawen Public Library budget. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler presented the Energy Committee's recommendation to approve work on insulating the Municipal building. The Energy Committee will send information about upcoming field trips. The public is welcome to attend. Field trips will also be posted on the website.

PCD Director Easler presented a ZBA resignation from Ann Dominquez. She will write Ms. Dominquez a letter of acceptance with regret and gratitude for her years of service.

PCD Director Easler presented a letter of agreement from Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) for 2023 in the amount of \$6,500. The town has received a grant with CNHRPC through InvestNH in the amount of \$26,905. The grant will be used to update the housing portion of the Master Plan, update the Mill Redevelopment District to multi-use and Planned Unit Developments. The Cluster Ordinance will also be updated to allow more housing options. PCD Director Easler said in the middle of the year, they will work on a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District for 2024 Town Meeting.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to approve accepting the letter of agreement between the Town of Boscawen and Central NH Regional Planning Commission for the amount of \$6,500. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

PCD Director Easler stated the Capital Improvement Plan will be reviewed by Planning Board next week. There is a proposed warrant article for King Street Improvements with a \$50,000 contribution. Towns are encouraged to put money aside when they plan on expanding. PCD Director Easler recommended setting aside \$300,000 over 6 years. Each year they would put in \$50,000. A new Capital Reserve Fund would need to be established.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to support putting \$50,000 into a Capital Reserve Fund for improvements to the King St project. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. Lorrie Carey abstained. Two in favor. One abstained. The motion passed.**

PCD Director Easler presented the preliminary 2023 Planning and Community Development budget. The Lane Use Income line increased. It is income received from application fees, public notices, and applicants. These sources are offset by the fees. Finance Director Kate Merrill said the auditors want to see both a budget for the expenses and the revenues that offset them. For line 1310.28, a portion of the Building Inspector Clerk's salary will be reimbursed from the Building Inspection account. Under assessing, increases were due to merit and COLA. Job description percentages changed for the Deputy PCD Director and PCD Clerk. Under assessing, they added mapping. PCD Director Easler stated the kiosk used to be paid out of Planning and Community Development, but they moved it to assessing for billing purposes. PCD Director Easler said they will encumber \$3,000 for the CNHRPC bill due to the InvestNH grant. She noted that normally it would cost \$7,500 but over the past years they have encumbered money. Next year it will increase unless more grant money is encumbered. They removed Intek maintenance for 2023 and 2024 because they paid for a 3-year contract which is good until 2025. There has been no invoice for the Twin Rivers printer. They split the cost with the Executive budget. PCD Director Easler budgeted \$500 for the Energy Committee to attend 4 conferences and renew their NH Energy membership. The Health department increased due to salaries. PCD Director Easler will encumber \$2,000 for Economic Development due to the InvestNH grant. The Economic Development budget will be \$2,250 this year. Chairwoman Carey asked if there is a line in the budget that provides funding to act on public health issues if the resident cannot help themselves. PCD Director Easler said there is currently no line in the budget. Deputy PCD Director Kearsten O'Brien stated it would come out of the General Fund because if it goes to litigation, they would be reimbursed.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Planning and Community Development budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

Fire Chief Tim Kenney presented the preliminary 2023 Fire Department budget. Overall, the budget is increasing 1%. The rise in the budget was due to electricity costs. Chief Kenney moved money around in order to replace old equipment and save for unexpected costs. Chairwoman Carey asked if they have been able to train this year. Chief Kenney said they have been training with the Town of Canterbury in which they split the costs.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Fire Development budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

Mr. Shawn Brechtel presented the preliminary 2023 Penacook Rescue budget. They are requesting an 8% increase in the budget to keep up with the cost of living. They currently have 30 employees. They are asking for a percentage increase in order to do a market adjustment to increase the pay scale for current employees. Several employees have left for non-public service jobs due to higher pay. The total contribution from Boscawen would be \$250,192. Chairwoman Carey stated they need to update the Fire Department budget to include the increase.

Chairwoman Carey asked what Penacook Rescue foresees needing in the next 3 years. Mr. Brechtel stated in the next 3 years, they will need a third ambulance. In the near future, they will have enough staff for two ambulances and the third would be used as a spare. Chairwoman Carey suggested presenting to the public, the opportunity to update the new Fire Department Building plans to include space for 3 ambulances for Penacook Rescue. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey stated they need to start discussing the plans for the new building. The longer they wait, the more expensive it will become. The budget was previously preliminarily approved as part of the 2023 Fire Department budget.

Police Chief Kevin Wyman presented the preliminary 2023 Police Department budget. The biggest increase to the budget was adding the 8<sup>th</sup> police officer position. That position was funded by ARPA funds in 2022. There is also an increase for Officer Chislett's former position which will allow them to bring in a new officer with 12 years' experience. Chairwoman Carey asked how many positions the Police Department has. There are 8 full-time positions with one opening. A new officer will be attending the academy in January and will be finished in May. They are also in the process of recruiting another officer from a different town. The salary lines increased due to COLA, merit, and longevity. Computer expenses increased because with body cameras they have to pay for the software and storage. In addition, they budgeted for a software update for the cruiser tablets. Chairwoman Carey asked if they had money left over in the budget from this year to encumber for the software. Chief Wyman will discuss with FD Merrill. There was an increase in uniform costs due to new officers. Dispatch fees increased as well. Chairwoman Carey stated they will wait to approve the Police Department budget to allow the opportunity for encumbrances. The Board will discuss further next week.

Finance Director Merrill asked the Board to authorize Chairwoman Carey and Town Treasurer Tama Tillman to sign the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) Agreement. FD Merrill noted the Board signed paperwork related to the TAN for disbursing money and stating they are a governmental unit.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to authorize Chairwoman Carey and Town Treasurer Tama Tillman to sign the Tax Anticipation Note Agreement. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill presented three ARPA transfers for approval.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve transferring \$130.10 from the ARPA Fund to the General Operating Account to reimburse for expenditures previously approved to support

Human Services (Backpack Program). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

**Selectman Burdick motioned to approve transferring \$4,200 from the ARPA Fund to the General Operating Account to reimburse for expenditures previously approved to update HVAC units (Invoice #34808). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Selectman Dickey motioned to approve transferring \$5,382.90 from the ARPA Fund to the General Operating Account to reimburse for expenditures previously approve for an additional Police Office position. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill recommended January 19th for the Budget Meeting and February 2nd for the Budget Hearing. She asked where the Board would like to have the meetings. Chairwoman Carey suggested approving the location to be at the Municipal Building. If they reach max capacity, they will move the overflow of people to the Boscawen Public Library. The meetings will be held after 6pm. Chairwoman Carey stated they need to notify the library about the location.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to approve January 19, 2023, and February 2, 2023, as Budget Meeting dates. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill sent out an update to the 2023 Holiday Schedule. They added an observed day for New Years.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to approve the 2023 Holiday Schedule as amended. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill presented the 2023 rate form from Health Trust for signature.

**Selectman Burdick motioned to approve authorizing Finance Director Merrill to sign the rate form from Health Trust on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill noted the Holiday Party will be tomorrow at Alan's Restaurant at 5:30pm.

Community Services Director Sarah Gerlack presented a tax update. Since the tax bills went out a week ago, the Town has received \$472,981.79 just in property taxes. Of that, \$53,996 came through the kiosk. No further discussion.

CS Director Gerlack updated the Board on the Community Service Department. She completed the signups for the Holiday Food Voucher program. Next week she will pick up the vouchers and people can grab them on Saturday, December 10 from 10am to 12pm at Town office. Reminder letters were sent out. Between Boscawen, Salisbury, and Webster there are 128 families signed up. CS Director Gerlack expressed gratitude to the Public Works Department, Police Department, Select Board and Ross Express for helping in past years. There will be a Meet and

Greet with Santa on Monday, December 5th. This year they will also be teaming up with Parks and Recreation and the Boscawen Public Library.

Facilities Director Gary Moore gave an update on projects. The insulation project at the Municipal Office will start next week. They have to work on Saturdays due to the odors. FD Moore will notify the Library about the installation project. He is getting quotes for a new door at the Police Station. No further discussion.

Public Works Director Dean Hollins gave an update on the Public Works Department. They bought a new sidewalk snowplow. PWD Hollins ordered a roll off container for demoing purposes. It cost less than last year and already arrived. PWD Hollins said they are getting a new variable frequency drive which runs the compactor motors. It burned out 2 years ago and was in the budget to be replaced. They took measurements and plan to replace the old one with a new one that is already built. PWD Hollins is getting a quote from an electrician to install it. The old one will be used as backup.

Chief Wyman asked the Board for approval for the Town Administrator to sign the closeout documentation for the K-9 agreement.

**Selectman Dickey motioned to approve authorizing Town Administrator Katie Phelps to sign the K-9 agreement on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

Chief Wyman noted on Saturday, December 3rd, the wreaths will be put out at the Veterans Cemetery, near Route 3 and 4. The Police Department is short staffed but will help as much as they can.

Chief Kenney said yesterday they closed down Route 3 due to some pine trees and wires down. No further discussion.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented reports and parcel counts as information for the discussion on elderly exemptions. She noted that the reports showed how many houses were not being assessed at full value because they are under construction. Another report showed the current use count of parcels. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the total exemptions and credits combined for the town is roughly \$937,400. They still need to review sales, deaths, and current use. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien made a recommendation based off of combining the 5.9% COLA last year and 8.6% this year and 40 hours a week at \$15/hr. Currently the exemption rate is \$25,000 for single and \$30,000 for married. Assets are at \$50,000. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien recommended increasing single to \$30,000 and married to \$40,000, if they increased the elderly exemption up for the income level. She recommended increasing the assets to \$75,000. For exemption amounts, the recommendation was to increase ages 65-74 to \$20,000, 75-79 to \$30,000, and 80+ to \$50,000. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien stated there are 3 people between the ages of 65-74, 1 person between 75-79 and 5 people who are 80 years or older. Selectman Burdick asked how many elders were not taking advantage of the exemption. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the number of elders not taking advantage of the exemption because they

are concerned with the COLA increase that they will not qualify for the exemption. With the tax bill out, there has been multiple Town's people calling to see what they can qualify for. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien noted there needs to be a warrant article for the Veteran's credit to remain at \$500.00 due to changes in the legislation. If the warrant article does not pass at Town Meeting to remain at the \$500.00 credit it will drop down to \$50.00. Chairwoman Carey noted credits and exemptions are paid for by other taxpayers. It is a matter of what they wish to pay for to fund their community. Chairwoman Carey stated the public has been clear that the working taxpayers in the community wish to fund Veteran's credits and elderly credits. Discussion ensued. Selectman Burdick recommended reviewing the numbers on elderly exemptions and deciding on changes at the next meeting. All concurred.

Selectman Dickey clarified the Board does support the grant for the Old Police Station. Chairwoman Carey stated for the record, the discussion was about a grant the county was awarded.

Selectman Dickey stated there is an individual walking up the road to the transfer station. He is concerned the person will get hit when the dump is open. PWD Hollins said they can't prohibit someone from walking on a public road. They will tell the individual to be cautious.

No public comment.

**Selectman Burdick motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:16pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session at 7:20pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Selectman Burdick motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes for 3 years under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:20 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session at 7:35pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes for 3 years under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:35 pm under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session at 7:43 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes for 3 years under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

Public meeting reopened at 7:43pm.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien was looking at the Town owned properties and there are two land locked parcels owned by the Town that the abutters might be interested in purchasing. She asked the Select Board if she could do the research and bring it back to the Select Board to see if they would like to put it on the Warrant.

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to allow Deputy PCD Director O'Brien to do research on the land locked properties. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 6:00 PM.

**Chairwoman Carey motioned to adjourn at 7:45pm. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None Opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner*