

**Town of Boscawen  
Select Board  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, January 4, 2024, at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Matt Burdick, Lorrie Carey, Bill Bevans, Katie Phelps, Kate Merrill, Kellee Easler, Nicole Hoyt, Jason Killary, Gary Moore, Dean Hollins, & Tim Kenney

Guests: Loren Martin & Joshua Crawford

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

Chairman Matt Burdick called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Consent Agenda Items:**

- P&L, Balance Sheet, Check Manifest & Payroll
- Nonpublic/Public Minutes for Approval—12/28/23
- PCD Assistant Job Description Update
- E911 Liaison Appointment Kara Gallagher
- Deputy HO Appointment Kara Gallagher
- Mason W. Donovan Reappointment EDC
- Police Department Activity Report
- NH Public Utilities Commission—Order of Notice
- Sewer Project Intergovernmental Review Results
- Final Sewer Warrant 83 29 B—Signatures

Selectwoman Lorrie Carey noted grammatical changes to the 12.28.23 public minutes.

**Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Selectman Bill Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

**Guests and Hearings:** *OHD BINGO*—Ms. Polly Dawson, Chair of the Old Home Day Committee, mentioned that the Committee will be hosting BINGO on January 14th, February 10th, March 11th, and April 14th at Alan's of Boscawen from 12:30 PM to 3:00 PM. It will cost \$10 per person. Lunch will be served, and BINGO will follow at 1:30 PM. The State of New Hampshire approved the committee to hold BINGO, but there will be no cash prizes. Ms. Dawson asked the Select Board for permission to advertise the event using the signs at Jamie Welch Park and the Town Municipal building. Discussion ensued. Town Administrator Katie Phelps noted the sign at the Municipal Building belonged to the public library. Ms. Dawson will reach out to Ms. Bonny John. TA Phelps updated the sign at Jamie Welch park with information on the primary election and the budget public hearing. She asked if they could advertise after the primary election. Discussion ensued. TA Phelps will post it on the Jamie Welch sign after the election. Selectwoman Carey volunteered to post an advertisement on her sign. She also suggested reaching out to local businesses to advertise.

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**Department Head Updates:** Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler presented updates to the 2024 Planning & Community Development budget. On line 4191114, the salary was going to increase 8 hours, but PCD Director Easler decided to keep the position at 18 hours. The Agricultural Commission budget changed from \$1,700 to \$600. The Conservation Commission budget was updated from \$2,200 to \$500. Finance Director Kate Merrill suggested that the Conservation & Agricultural Commission budgets have one line of \$500 called ‘Administration’ so the Commissions can use the funds how they decide. Overall, after the offset from the building inspector account, the total budget increase for Planning & Community Development is 0.5%.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to preliminarily approve the 2024 Planning and Community Development budget. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Finance Director Merrill presented the revised 2024 Finance budget. Line 4150114: Finance Assistant was updated to reflect a decrease by the annual 2.9% step.

**Selectwoman Carey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2024 Financial Administration budget. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Finance Director Merrill presented the updated 2024 Personnel Administration budget. Line 4155111: Human Resource Assistant was updated to reflect a decrease by the annual 2.9% step. FD Merrill noted there was a change with an employee insurance plan. The health insurance line was budgeted at \$460,948 and was reduced to \$453,596 due to the change. The overall increase for the Personnel Administration budget is 0.8%.

**Selectwoman Carey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2024 Personnel Administration budget. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt presented the updated 2024 Town Clerk budget. Last week the Board approved encumbering \$2,000 from the 2023 budget for line 4140332: TC Equipment, Contracts, and Supplies. This has decreased the 2024 budget line by \$2,000.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to preliminarily approve the 2024 Town Clerk budget. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Town Clerk Hoyt asked the Board for a decision on the Town Report cover and dedication. She noted that the company supplying the printing for the Town Report held the same pricing as last year, so there was no increase in cost for 2024. Discussion ensued. Town Clerk Hoyt asked the Board to send any pictures they have, and she will create mockups for the Board to decide on. The Board will look at their pictures and those posted on Facebook and send options to Town Clerk Hoyt. The Board will make a decision on the cover and dedication for the report next week.

Town Clerk Hoyt provided information on the upcoming primary election scheduled for Tuesday, January 23rd. Police Chief Jason Killary organized a meeting tomorrow for all parties involved in the election. They will map out where things will be. Police Chief Killary checked parking spots and weather conditions. Town Clerk Hoyt sent Police Chief Killary the checklist from the Attorney General's office, so he will be aware of measurements, etc. Town Clerk Hoyt asked the Board if they will be attending one of the two trainings scheduled for ballot clerks. One will be held Wednesday, January 10th at 6 PM at the municipal office and the other training will be on Wednesday, January 17th at 6 PM, at the Police Station. The Board will attend one of the trainings. Town Clerk Hoyt noted on January 13th, her department staff will be attending a training for the elections in Manchester. On that day, the Supervisors of the Checklist will be at the Municipal Building for an open session for voter registration. Chairman Burdick asked what the role of the Select Board would be at the election. Town Clerk Hoyt said they would like the Select Board to help ballot clerks bring people in and send them out. Additionally, someone will need to manage the "return to undeclared" book. There will not be a photo ID station because laws have changed, and photo IDs will be managed by the Supervisors of the Checklist. Town Clerk Hoyt noted more education will be needed on the new affidavit ballot. There will be a different process for people moving in from out-of-state if they don't provide the correct documents. It will be an extensive process that mostly affects the Supervisors and Moderators, but other elected officials should be aware in order to answer any questions. Town Clerk Hoyt noted they have a plan for counting ballots at the end of the night.

TA Phelps noted that the Merrimack Valley School District budget hearing was moved to January 24th at 6 pm, with a snow date of January 25th at 6 pm. No further discussion.

Police Chief Killary presented a State of New Hampshire Highway Safety grant for signatures. Last year he applied for the highway safety grant for equipment, but due to the new police cruiser taking longer than expected, he did not buy the equipment because it would need to be installed in a short amount of time. Police Chief Killary reapplied for the grant this year and added 4 radar speed signs and a mobile radar. The police department would buy everything upfront and then submit invoices to the State to get reimbursed 75%. The police department would pay \$800 of the \$3,500 for cruiser radars and they would purchase one radar sign to get three free. The cost of one radar sign was \$4,000. Discussion ensued.

**Selectwoman Carey motioned to allow Chairman Burdick to sign the Highway Safety Grant on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

Facilities Director Gary Moore stated that he would like to pursue repairing the Police Station flooring this year. He noted it would ultimately depend on what funding gets approved at town meeting. The flooring in the station was about 20 years old. There is about \$35,000 in the Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund and FD Moore estimated the cost to repair would be about \$15,000. Selectman Bevans said there was \$53,000 in the Capital Reserve fund now and even if they spent \$18,000, there would still be \$35,000 to use. It would not be dependent on

anything approved at town meeting. Selectman Bevans said the flooring should have been replaced last year and he was in favor of getting it done. Discussion ensued. FD Moore will get the quotes updated and proceed if pricing remains around the same as last year.

Facilities Director Moore discussed MetTel. He confirmed that MetTel provides the town's telephone lines. TDS provides the information that goes over the lines. FD Moore noted MetTel wanted to remove the town's plain-old-telephone (POT) lines and upgrade to a Wi-Fi set up. The current POT price the town pays is \$363/mo. The new system called Peapods in a Box would be \$255/mo., saving \$112/mo. The installation fee would be between \$200 to \$400. The town has 5 lines (2 police, 2 municipal office, & a dispatch). FD Moore and a MetTel member will be locating the lines and seeing what needs to be done. In a few weeks, they will install and switch over to the new system.

FD Moore noted that PCD Director Easler would like to take down an old chalk board located near her desk. FD Moore would like to dispose of it because there was no room or purpose for it. He asked the Board if there was any historic value before doing so. Discussion ensued. TA Phelps will post a picture of the chalk board on Facebook to see if any residents want to purchase it. FD Moore will take it down next Thursday and dispose of it if no one wants it by then.

Public Works Director Dean Hollins received a complaint regarding one of the past volunteers at the treasure house. The former volunteer asked for clarification on if they were not volunteering if they were allowed to be at the treasure house. PWD Hollins explained that the person was at the treasure house for a period of time and a taxpayer went in and said they were not supposed to be there until after 1:30 PM. The complaint noted the discussion happened around 10 AM on Saturday. PWD Hollins reviewed the security footage and confirmed the person was there from 10 AM to 11:45 AM and then came back later in the afternoon. He noted the camera wasn't a great picture because it was far from the treasure house, but going off the vehicles there, the taxpayer was also there for about an hour. Discussion ensued. PWD Hollins stated that the past volunteer was a resident, and the treasure house is open to the public. Typically, PWD Hollins said there is about 5 vehicles there at a time for about 10 to 15 minutes. If any resident is loitering, they will be asked to leave. Selectwoman Carey was not concerned with the past volunteer going to the treasure house as long as they were not preventing others from accessing the building. She suggested posting on the town website 'no more than 15 minutes' at the treasure house. PWD Hollins noted they will make a sign to post at the treasure house as well.

Police Chief Killary clarified that for the Highway Safety grant discussion that the \$800 the department will pay for, for the mobile radio, will come out of the cruiser fund that they use for equipment costs. The money for the speed signs will come from impact fees. Police Chief Killary noted the \$800 expense will be the only impact to taxpayers.

Selectwoman Carey asked for an update on her request for a list of grants for all departments. FD Merrill was still waiting on a few departments to send in their information.

Fire Chief Tim Kenney gave an update on the Fire Department. In the last 60 days, the call volume has gone up. In the last few weeks, they have received several critical calls leading into the new year. They ended the year 9 calls ahead of last year with 281 calls. Fire Chief Kenney said the overhead doors at the station were having issues. He has been looking into quotes to see how much it will cost to fix the motors. The expense would come out of the Fire Station CRF funds. Chief Kenney updated the Board that the ice rink was flooded last week. Lastly, Fire Chief Kenney has been working on a grant that will open at the end of the month. He will provide details at a later time.

FD Merrill noted that the Board approved a budget line transfer for separation pay last week. The amounts that were transferred for each line were correct, but the total amount was incorrect. It showed the total separation pay, not the amount needed to transfer.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to correct the motion made on 12.28.23 in which the individual account amounts were accurate, but the total transfer amount of \$3,117.44 should have been \$2,649.83. The motion should have been, under RSA 32:10(E), motion to transfer \$2,649.83 from account #4155121 PA Employee Health Insurance to the following accounts: Account #4191111: P&C Deputy Director - \$1,246.98, Account #4152114 - Assessing Assistant - \$1,246.98, and Account #4411115: Deputy Health Officer - \$155.87 for the purpose of covering the unanticipated cost of separation pay for an employee who put in their notice. Seconded by Selectman Bevans. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill received a donation for the Backpack program from Elizabeth and Christopher Hodgdon in the amount of \$100.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to approve the \$100 donation from Elizabeth and Christopher Hodgdon for the Backpack program. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

FD Merrill presented the master budget sheet which is a list of all the budgets that have been preliminarily approved. She asked how the Board would like to proceed. Next week they will be closing 2023 bills on Wednesday. The actuals will be ready by Thursday along with budget binders. Discussion ensued.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to approve the 2024 budgets and to send them to the Advisory Budget Committee for review. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None opposed.**

TA Phelps noted the total increase for the 2024 Operating budget is 1.4% or \$70,508.

PCD Director Easler noted that Jacob Martin from the Economic Development Committee (EDC) has resigned.

PCD Director Easler mentioned that Ms. Kara Gallagher has begun her new position as the Planning & Community Development Coordinator. She noted there was an internal applicant for the Planning & Community Development Assistant position as well.

PCD Director Easler noted that Mr. Charlie Niebling offered to pursue a grant for the Boscawen Town park and various other places on behalf of the Economic Development Committee and the planned pavilion.

PCD Easler noted that the Planning Board approved the amended zoning ordinances to be put on the ballot for Town Meeting.

Chairman Burdick confirmed that he will be running for Select Board again for 2024.

Town Clerk Hoyt noted that the declaration of candidacy will be towards the end of the month. She will keep the Board updated.

Chairman Burdick opened public comment at 7:05 PM.

Ms. Loren Martin questioned how the town would have growth by using impact fees to purchase a radar sign. Police Chief Killary had it reviewed by Central NH Regional Planning Commission. The amount of traffic has increased in town. For example, King St is in Boscawen, but services several surrounding communities. As the communities grow, the traffic increases. The purchase of radar signs would cut down speeds, decrease accidents and make the roads safer by allowing the public to be aware of their speeds without the presence of an officer. It would also reduce labor hours because a police officer wouldn't have to be patrolling traffic in those areas. Ms. Martin did not agree with the growth potential and stated she would research further.

Ms. Martin felt that the treasure house issue was ridiculous. She suggested the sign should say 'leave it, take it, hang out.' She noted people drop used items off that they don't want. She felt people should be able to socialize. She visited the treasure house on Saturday with a neighbor that dropped off items. She went back in the afternoon, and everything was gone. She mentioned volunteers were there in the morning but not later when she returned. Overall, she felt that the issue was not a priority.

Chairman Burdick noted that the Board chose 3 town flag designs for Joshua Crawford to present at town meeting for the public to vote on.

Chairman Burdick closed public comment at 7:07 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 6:00 PM.

**Chairman Burdick motioned to adjourn at 7:08 PM. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Roll Call Vote. All in favor. None Opposed.**

*Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner*

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