

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Lorrie Carey, Paul Dickey, Matthew Burdick, Kearsten O'Brien, Kate Merrill, Katie Phelps, Kellee Easler, Sarah Gerlack, Nicole Hoyt, Gary Moore, Dean Hollins, Kevin Wyman & Penny Sarcione

Guests: Bryan Christiansen, Lyman Cousens, Tama Tillman

Roll Call: Completed and guests introduced.

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

Chairwoman Carey gave Town Administrator Katie Phelps grammatical changes for the 06.30.22 minutes.

Selectman Paul Dickey motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with amendments to the minutes. Seconded by Selectman Matthew Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

No public comment on the agenda.

New Business: Mr. Bryan Christiansen from Comcast addressed a letter they sent to the Town regarding unserved areas. The State has \$120 million of federal funding available to expand broadband service to what is called 'the last mile'. Comcast is in the process of trying to quantify which addresses in Boscawen don't have broadband service. There are close to 100 in town that don't have Comcast service. Comcast needs to figure out how many addresses in Boscawen have TDS because if there are too many, they won't qualify for the grant. The first RFP has \$50 million to serve communities. It is due next Friday. Within the RFP there is one awardee. Comcast received indication from Broadband Matching Grant Initiative (BMGI) that the process for the second tranche of \$72 million will begin sometime in late summer or early fall. Mr. Christiansen asked the Board if they know precise locations in the community that don't have Comcast or TDS service. Chairwoman Carey has heard from people on Water St and High St that they don't have service. Mr. Christiansen said High St has TDS service. Chairwoman Carey asked if his belief is that TDS services the whole town with broadband. Mr. Christiansen said he would need to ask TDS. They are using various public records to find what addresses use TDS. Mr. Christiansen listed the streets they have confirmed don't have service. Discussion ensued. The Town will stay in communication with Comcast through this grant process. Town Administrator Phelps will contact Mr. Christiansen for a list of addresses.

Mr. Lyman Cousens, Trustee of the Trust Funds, reported the Capital Reserves Funds are down \$78,000 as of today. They had a difficult start to the year and then it settled down from April to May. In June they had another bad month. Mr. Cousens doesn't think July will be as bad. The investment policy requires them to have up to 20% in equities and 80% in bonds. Right now, 52% is in cash because both the stocks and bonds they are losing money in, have been liquidated.

The cash balance will keep them stable at 52% if they leave it for the rest of the year and it also gives them the opportunity to take advantage of investments when the market turns around. Mr. Cousens said all their investments are in Fidelity. Their Financial Consultant, Luca D'Italia, expects everything to level off for the rest of the year because of elections. All their investments are down 7% right now. They hope by the end of the year it will be up 1% to 2% from where they are at that point. Mr. Cousens suggested the Finance Director or one of the Board members attend the Trustee of the Trust Funds meeting next Monday, July 18th at 5pm. Finance Director Kate Merrill will be in attendance. Mrs. Tama Tillman was approved by the State to help the Trustees with their books. She stated the Capital Reserves are supposed to be a long-term investment, but the Town hasn't been treating it as such. The Trustees had it in the Fidelity account for about 9 months last year and made over \$40,000 in income for the Town. This year the Town lost \$80,000, bringing the total loss to \$40,000. Mrs. Tillman said it is a very small percentage of the total which is over a million. She recommended keeping the money invested in an account in order to get back the money lost. Legally, the Trustee of the Trust Funds can invest in any way they want. Chairwoman Carey suggested communicating better with the Trustees so they have an idea as to the length of time money will be in an account. Mrs. Tillman said the money is in one big account, prorated to individual accounts. TA Phelps said the issue is vendors are looking for payments for services or purchases. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey suggested putting more money into Capital Reserve Funds at the beginning of the year. Mrs. Tillman suggested having someone talk to the public at the annual Town Meeting to explain facts and show them the actual percentage that it would affect their taxes. Director Merrill asked for Trustee Cousens' recommendation for the Warrant Article for the Tennis Courts. The request was to take \$10,000 out of the Capital Reserves but the account is \$100 short due to the market. Both Trustee Cousens and Mrs. Tillman recommended taking \$9800 from Capital Reserves and \$200 from the General Operating Funds.

FD Merrill asked the Board about their expectations for the budget. Chairwoman Carey said there have been changes to the budget. She recommended building the budget from \$0, the way they want it, to see the cost of each department. The budget is due November 1st. Chairwoman Carey said now is the time for departments to voice their ideas on ways to collaborate across departments, to keep costs down. Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt noted the tax bills coming out in December are based on the meeting that already took place. TA Phelps stated in the fall Merrimack County will have \$2,000,000 in ARPA funding for Towns to apply for. Public Works Director Dean Hollins suggested having a fuel distribution center in town. Deputy Planning and Community Development Director Kearsten O'Brien suggested speaking with Merrimack County about doing a community facility where there is an area to fuel up. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey requested they find out more information on the cost.

Community Services Director Sarah Gerlack recommended clarifying or taking out requirements in the proposed Grant Application Procedure. Currently it reads that department heads must notify the Board of their intent to apply for a grant and must obtain approval before applying. CS Director Gerlack explained that some grants they apply for have a deadline of the next day. Chairwoman Carey suggested changing it to read that the department must notify the board about applying and obtain approval to sign. All concurred. TA Phelps will make corrections to the Grant Application Procedure.

FD Merrill emailed performance review templates that need to be updated. One template is for supervisors to fill out and the other is for employees. From the feedback she received, it is not user friendly and needs more explanations in responses. Someone suggested on the employee portion, to take out the rating. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien suggested doing peer reviews and a self-assessment after. It could be done anonymously or by a supervisor. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey stated the review should be tied to the job description. FD Merrill suggested inputting a comment section tailored to job description. Chairwoman Carey suggested inputting a section to highlight achievements and goals for supervisors. She also suggested adding a training section to indicate if the employee has completed training. Selectman Burdick suggested using the Supervisor list to make a similar review for employees and adding a section to describe their contributions. FD Merrill will update the templates based on suggestions.

FD Merrill presented a Capital Reserve transfer for approval.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to approve the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$622.82 from the Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund in order to discontinue the capital reserve fund per the affirmative vote at the 2022 Town Meeting on warrant article 8. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor.

Mrs. Tillman recommended amending the motion so the amount isn't specified because it could be different by the end of the month.

Chairwoman Carey amended the previous motion to state warrant article 8 has a balance of \$622.82 as of today. The balance that remains at the end of the July 2022 will be transferred to the General Fund. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented two Parks and Recreation donations for the Police vs Fire softball game. Mr. Ed Cherian donated \$20.00, and Soheila Degieux from Penacook Family Dentistry donated \$100.00.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve a \$20.00 donation from Ed Cherian and \$100.00 donation from Soheila Degieux at Penacook Family Dentistry for the Police vs Fire softball game. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Parks and Recreation Director Penny Sarcione reported they are 3 weeks into camp and have 50 children registered. They average 30 to 35 kids a week. They filled out an incident report for a broken wrist. There has been one Covid case. The Counselors are now taking temperatures every day at the beginning of camp. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said they sent out letters to parents with the Health Officer's signature, stating that if children have a fever, they will be sent home and must be 24 hours fever free prior to returning to camp. Mrs. Sarcione said they secured 5 trips to Wellington State Park. They are also going to Live Free Florals and 15 children have already signed up. There are 21 kids signed up for the Teddy Bear Picnic on August 9th at Merrimack County Nursing Home. On July 22nd, they are taking a field trip to the Weir Road Town Forest with Bill Lambert as their guide. There are 20 kids signed up. Mrs. Sarcione said there is a hornet's nest somewhere on the trail and one child is highly allergic. She said Mr.

Lambert will check to see if it's still there and if it is, they will avoid that path. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien will check with the Conservation Commission on who could remove it.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented a Gravel Warrant for Map 49, Lot 6. She noted for clarification that DRA approved the operation number for 2021 even though it states 2022.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve Tax Collector Nicole Hoyt to collect the sum of \$3,937.22, with interest at 18% for the Gravel Tax Levy, Map 49, Lot 6, Operation 22-049-05-E. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien presented an Intent to Cut for Map 45, Lot 46 Sublot A. The loggers will be using the same bond because the property is landlocked. They will cut through the current Intent to Cut on the property in front of it.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve the Intent to Cut on Map 45, Lot 46 Sublot A, Operation 22-049-06-T. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Department Head Updates: Public Works Director Hollins said there was an inquiry about plastic recycling. Right now, everything goes through NRRA, which has 14% of municipalities recycling 1-7 plastics. There are only two outlets (NY and PA), and it has to be baled. The Town would need the ability to store enough plastic to make bales and the ability to store bales until they have enough to make orders. PWD Hollins said they could join another town and do a split load. To do a split load they would need half a tractor trailer load of baled plastic. Discussion ensued. PWD Hollins recommended that baled plastic is not feasible at this point. He also gave an update on his department and new plow truck. One of the trash compactors broke yesterday so someone is coming to look at it tomorrow. PWD Hollins ordered handicap signs for the Boscawen Park and will put them between the Snack Shake and Tennis Courts.

Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler and Deputy PCD Director O'Brien attended the Capital Area Public Health Network (CAPHN). They will be attending the meetings bi-monthly. There was a new Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response Coordinator, Colleen Ford. She will be sending out a list of contacts to get updated with titles and phone numbers. PCD Director Easler attended the Energy Committee meeting. There were four guests meeting with the Committee: Madeleine Mineau of Essex Hydro, Aaron Hinze, Intern for the UCONN TAB Program, Green Lantern Solar, and Henry P. Herndon of Herndon Enterprises, LLC and of Clean Power Coalition of NH. Essex Hydro will be working on a new Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement that is due at the end of the year. Herndon Enterprises made a presentation on Community Power. They will send the Town information on how to save money. PCD Director Easler is working with Unitil on the streetlights to change them to LEDs. The Town will have to pay but it will save money in the long run. The Energy Committee would like to meet with Facilities Director Gary Moore in September to go over the energy audit. There will be a Briar Hydro tour in October at Lower Falls dam. They will also offer a tour in November with Merrimack Valley School District to see their Wood Burning Boiler. PCD Director Easler said the Master Plan for Energy and the Energy Ordinance has been sent to Central NH Regional Planning Commission for finalization. They are hoping to finish it all by September.

Town Clerk Hoyt presented a sewer warrant for signature. She noted that after she collects numbers from Penacook and imports them into the system, it creates a commitment report with a printout of a tax collector's warrant. In the past, she gave the report to PCD Director Easler, who then created the document for the warrant. PCD Director Easler said the warrant was sent to Patty and she is waiting to hear back. They told her the tax collector should be doing it, not assessing. Town Clerk Hoyt said sewer is usage, not an assessment. The Board signed the warrant.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve Tax Collector Nicole Hoyt to collect the taxes in the list permitted, amounting in the sum of \$51,027.52 with an 8% interest on all sums not paid. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Town Clerk Hoyt reported there are currently 88 unlicensed dogs. They have been trying to reach out to the individuals directly because there are still too many to pass onto the Police Department. Many people have voiced disappointment on the procedure. The department has educated the public on why the procedure happens and why the money is collected. Town Clerk Hoyt will be in office on Saturday, July 30th from 3-5pm for anyone overseas that needs a ballot. She contacted Laurie Dresser at Merrimack County Nursing Home to set up the Register to Vote event before the primary. There is no set date yet. Town Clerk Hoyt said political parties are supposed to have chosen their inspectors of elections by July 19. If they have not chosen, the Select Board chooses the inspectors. There will be a public auction in August or September for vacant property, which will be sold as is. Town Clerk Hoyt reported that taxes committed and supplemented for 2022 so far is \$4M+ with \$239K outstanding. Town Clerk Hoyt will be attending the Cemetery Trustees meeting next week to go over the responsibilities of the Town Clerk and committee members. She is also attending the Education Committee meeting next week for NH Tax Collectors Association. She is the chair of the education committee. There will be a conference in September. Town Clerk Hoyt noted the first week of August, she will be the only person in the department's office. Two employees are going to get their certification and one employee will be on vacation. Town Clerk Hoyt finished the DMV audit. She was told some of the ACH transfers to the State weren't as timely as they would have liked. It will be written in the report, and they are rectifying it. There was one decal missing from 2020 but during that time, the office was closed to the public and they were sharing decal packs. Town Clerk Hoyt said the LHS election machine company will be doing maintenance this month and the cost increased. Lastly, she will be reaching out to local printers to bid for the Town Report. She will report back with quotes.

Facilities Director Gary Moore said the tennis and basketball courts are moving forward. It has not been scheduled yet and will depend on weather conditions and what the company is currently working on. He is waiting on an update for the Torrent Station roof. FD Moore is the roof ladder is currently being fabricated. He spoke with a contractor at the 1913 Library and they will be coming to look at the leaks. They will put together two quotes on what it would cost to fix it temporarily versus a full repair. Selectman Dickey asked about painting the ceiling in the Municipal Office meeting room. FD Moore is looking at this for next year. He estimated \$2k to \$3k which includes staging, scrapping, and doing prep work. He will research less expensive options.

Chief Kevin Wyman reported the LED display board on the speed trailer needs to be replaced due to damage. It will get fixed by next week and damages will be paid by the responsible party. Chief Wyman also said the prior owner of 20 High St has contacted him about vehicles and the license plates. Selectman Dickey said under police supervision, the prior owner has until July 31st to remove the vehicles. All concurred.

Community Services Director Sarah Gerlack gave an update on upcoming projects such as the Backpack Program, Holiday food Baskets, fill a cruiser, fuel assistance and the Emergency Food and Shelter grant. CS Gerlack mentioned that if any resident is in need of fuel assistance that they are welcome to contact her and she will help them get connected to CAP. Selectwoman Carey asked about the welcome to Boscawen bags. Welcome to Boscawen bags are for our new residents and can be picked up at the town offices. CS Gerlack mentioned that in Community Services and Tax Collect they have seen several payments come through from the New Hampshire Homeowners Assistance program, information for this program can be found on the Community Services section of the website, there is no set deadline for the program and will go until funding is exhausted.

PCD Director Easler said the Planning and Community Development staff along with Public Works Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Underwood Engineers and the Contractors for the sixteen lot subdivision will be having a pre-construction meeting on Monday. They are waiting on plans they need to record as well as the bond. PCD Director Easler received a resignation from Dr. Gail Devoid on Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to accept Dr. Gail Devoid's resignation with regret for the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

There will be an open position for the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Chairwoman Carey suggested making a social media post advertising vacant positions within the Town committees. Selectman Dickey asked to advertise for the auction at 20 High St until August 6th. PCD Director Easler said Invest NH went out to developers last week. They will get information for municipalities at the end of July.

Finance Director Kate Merrill presented a Trustee of the Trust Funds transfer for approval.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to approve the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$9,800.00 from the Tennis Court Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse for the following expenditure: Invoice #1028. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien said the Capital Improvement Program Committee is meeting on July 19th. The security systems have been updated at the Fire Station, Transfer Station, and Public Works Building. The panic buttons have been updated at the Municipal Building. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien asked the Board if they could use the iPad at Town Meeting to display a slideshow of what boards and committees have accomplished. The Select Board had no issue with the request.

Deputy PCD Director O'Brien asked for Board approval to expand the Economic Revitalization Tax (ERZ) to 3 parcels on North Main St abutting B.E.S.T. Ave. The parcels are commercial and industrial areas that are underutilized and underdeveloped. The ERZ is a state tax that residents have to apply for with the State of NH by February 10th of every year. They can get a tax break of up to \$240,000 for their business profit tax. Expanding the ERZ would promote more development and jobs. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien has a list of what the Town currently has for the ERZ district. Discussion ensued.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to approve expanding the ERZ Zone to include Map 81B, Lots 53, 54 and 56A. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business: TA Phelps presented two State Water Pollution Control grant pre-applications for NH Department of Environmental Services from Underwood Engineers for sewer projects 3 and 4 and the C&D landfill closure on Corn Hill Rd. She requested permission to sign the pre-applications on behalf of the Town.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve the State Water Pollution Control Grant Pre-Applications for Sewer projects 3 and 4 and the C&D landfill closure on Corn Hill Rd. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to authorize Town Administrator Phelps to sign the Pre-Applications on behalf of the Town. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey said the Canterbury perambulation was completed. Selectman Burdick contacted a city representative from Franklin to help with that perambulation. Selectman Dickey has not completed the Webster perambulation. The Board will continue to work on completing them.

PCD Director Easler gave an update on Board of Health. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien sent out a letter discussed previously for the Parks and Recreation program. PCD Director Easler said there is no new information on the property in Town with sewer issues.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session under RSA 91(A), 3 II (I). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to exit nonpublic session under RSA 91(A), 3 II (I). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session under RSA 91(A), 3 II (I). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to exit nonpublic session under RSA 91(A), 3 II (I). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Motion made by Selectman Dickey to seal nonpublic minutes under RSA 91(A), 3 II (I) for three years. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

Selectman Burdick motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner