

Approved

Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting May 2, 2022

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Donna Mombourquette	Selectman
	David Litwinovich	Selectman
	Jennifer Brown	Selectman
	Paul Branscombe	Town Administrator

A. CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Donna Mombourquette at 6:00PM beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda- The Selectmen reviewed the May 2, 2022 consent agenda. David moved to approve the May 2, 2022 consent agenda items including payroll, Accounts Payable and other signed official documents including reappointment of Michael Dahlberg and Ken Clinton to the ZBA. Jennifer seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

B. PUBLIC FORUM:

Donna noted the Board always welcomes public comment and feedback. There are two opportunities for public comment, one at the beginning of the meeting and then another at the end. Comments will be confined to issues on the agenda only. The Board asks that if you have issues or questions that need to be brought before the Board, please fill out a request to appear form and send it to the Town Administrator beforehand. Upon review of the request, you may be placed on a future meeting agenda or have your problem resolved by the Town Administrator. Anyone with a comment is asked to comment as per the rules for live meetings and state your name and address for the record and that comments be respectful and thoughtful. The Board will listen, but public comment is typically not back and forth.

Bill McFadden of Dane Road was present and noted there is a typo on the agenda as it says "Mark Dahlberg" but should be "Michael Dahlberg."

Seeing no further Public Comment, Donna closed the first session.

C. NEW BUSINESS:

Item 1: ARPA Funds discussions – Jennifer Allocca: Postponed as Jennifer Allocca was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Item 2: Road Committee Draft Proposal: The Select Board reviewed and revised a draft proposal for the Road Committee prepared by Donna. David moved to approve the Road Committee Procedures as amended. Jennifer seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Item 3: Resignation from Deputy Clerk Cathy Strausbaugh: Donna reported Deputy Town Clerk Cathy Strausbaugh has submitted her resignation. Cathy Strausbaugh was recognized as she was hired to fill a part-time position in the Town Clerk's office in late 2009 after a long career as an executive assistant at St. Anslem's College. In a short time, she became the go-to person for all things Elections. Cathy worked for many years as the Deputy Town Clerk under Irene Baudreau and now serves under Kim Colbert. She will always be remembered by town residents as the kindly woman who helped get your auto registered, your dog licensed or helped you register to vote, and if you needed to be sworn into office she is the person who can recite the oath from memory! Cathy was also responsible for establishing the Record Retention program in New Boston, which led to major scanning projects to reduce our need for storing paper copies. Additionally, she authored a successful grant application for the NH Moose Plate fund that was used to preserve New Boston's historical documents. Her resignation is accepted with regret. The Select Board thanks Cathy for her 12+ years of service to our community as Deputy Town Clerk, wishes her well and will miss her in the Town Hall.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

Item 4: Approval of Public Minutes of April 4, 2022 and April 18, 2022: The Select Board reviewed the Public minutes of April 4, 2022. David moved to approve the public minutes of April 4, 2022 as amended. Jennifer seconded the motion. The motion carried. 3-0 The Select Board reviewed the Public minutes of April 18, 2022. Energy Commission and Broadband Committee/group member Bill McFadden was invited to the table to clarify Consolidated Communication's position as they are not yet ready to meet with the Select Board to discuss broadband. Instead, Consolidated Communications wants to meet with the Energy Commission and unofficial Broadband committee/group first in preparation for a presentation to the Select Board. David moved to approve the public minutes of April 18, 2022 as amended. Jennifer seconded the motion. The motion carried. 3-0

E. OTHER BUSINESS:

Item 5: Town Administrators Report: Paul reported the following:

- **Credit Card Policy:** The Finance Director has been researching policies used in other towns and prepared a draft for New Boston. It is inappropriate to carry out actions without a policy in place. However, Department Managers have been using credit cards without a policy. The Finance Director and Town Administrator have been considering how to proceed and plan to allow credit cards to be used and put a policy in place. In the future action will not be taken without a policy. Department Managers are trusted and there is no history of credit card use abuse and there is a check and balance process. The Board will continue to review the draft in preparation for policy of adoption this policy.
- **Updates from Department Head & Staff Admin. meetings 4/19/22:** At both meetings we discussed and received feedback on the following topics:
 - The removal of steps to be replaced with annual COLAs and any merit increases to be based on performance.
 - Merit Pools.

- Paid Time Off.
- Pay Periods.
- Department Salaried positions.
- Training.
- The Feedback from all attendees was very rewarding and gives the Town Administrator a timetable to bring these before the Select Board and to implement some of the subject matters with the Select Board's blessing.
 - Almost a decade ago New Boston introduced a Step & Grade system which many did not think viable. All agreed that an annual COLA with merit increases based on performance is the way forward for all departments other than the Police Department. The Department Heads like the suggestion of merit pools as they would know better than the Town Administrator which of their staff are performing well and make these recommendations to the Select Board.
 - PTO did not go over well, and more research and discussion is required.
 - To move to a bi-weekly payroll would certainly injure some employees so for the time being we are going to leave this low hanging fruit that would streamline the process and save some taxpayer funds alone for now. David recommended researching other time saving options for the payroll process such as using an outside company.
 - A couple of Department Heads would welcome their position to be salaried rather than hourly. The Finance Director and Paul are working towards this goal in the fall.
 - All Department Heads view training as a much-needed tool and the Human Resources Director and Paul will keep them informed as Primex and other training opportunities become available.
- **Adopting Fiscal Year:** Paul contacted the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) to see if they would have a representative meet with the Select Board to make a presentation on the pros and cons of changing from a Calendar year to Fiscal. Barbara Reid of NHMA wrote an article in Town & City in 2006 which highlighted this subject. Katherine Heck from NHMA is prepared to meet with the Board at a cost of \$250.00 which is their nominal fee. Assistant to the Town Administrator Laura Bernard suggested this be posted as a work session due to the time involved and hold it mid-week. The Board agreed. We reached out to Jamie Dow at the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) to see if this topic was in her wheelhouse, and she came back with the [attached article](#) which outlines the advantages and disadvantages of adopting a Fiscal year budget.
- **Bar Harbor Bank & Trust:** On April 20, 2022 Laura, Jennifer, and Paul met with representatives from the Bank, one of whom is a New Boston Resident, to discuss the services that they can offer the Town. They are going to prepare pro-forma to compare to the current fees being charged by TD Bank. If the town is interested in possibly changing banks, it would have to put out a Request for Proposals.
- **Meeting with Fire Wards:** On April 25, 2022 Laura and Paul met with the Fire Wards and reviewed a presentation from Chief MacDonald regarding his retirement in June. A work session between the two Boards will be scheduled to collaborate in preparing a job

description and job posting for this position although the Fire Wards and Fire Chief do not report to the Select Board.

- **Eric Dubowik Resignation:** Regrettably, Fire Inspector Eric Dubowik did not accept our proposal to remain in the position and has resigned. Laura Bernard conducted an exit interview as Human Resources Director. Goffstown Building Inspector Mark Tessier will fill in on Building Inspections when needed and New Boston's Building Inspector will reciprocate to Goffstown when needed according to the intermunicipal agreement between New Boston and Goffstown. Paul contacted the NH Building Officials Association who will post New Boston's open Building Inspector position on its website. An applicant will be interviewed Wednesday morning.
- **Howe Bridge:** The Highway Department did not have the right equipment to remove the surface of the road on the Bridge, so it remained open. The Bus Company, the PD and the FD were informed, and it was posted on the website. No date has been set to begin the project.
- **100 Thornton Road:** The town is continuing to do research on this town owned property and the removal of the trailer on the property. Jennifer has researched the area as abutters have requested to purchase it. The mortgage company may need to be notified. The value of the property will be researched. Jennifer will continue to work with these residents and research if it is a buildable lot or if the Fire Department plans to place a cistern on the parcel.
- Paul will meet with Kevin Leonard from Northpoint Engineering to review all open projects Kevin is working on.
- Paul thanked Energy Commission member Bill McFadden for all his efforts resolving an LED streetlight issue.

Item 6: Select Board Reports: Documentation provided.

F. PUBLIC FORUM:

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Karen Scott of Dane Road was present and noted it is a disservice to restrict the Road Committee with the guidelines discussed above. The guidelines seem unusual as other Committees do not have this type of guidelines. The Committee has always had five members to allow for discussion and vote. The Road Agent and Select Board member have always been ex-officio members to oversee the meeting and provide assistance as needed. She agrees the Town Administrator should be involved but activity and meeting frequency should not be restricted as

the Committee members have road knowledge. She also noted it was not proper that Laura was allowed to comment at the end of the April 18, 2022 meeting.

Bill McFadden of Dane Road was present and noted the issue at 100 Thornton Road should have been an agenda item to allow the public to have more information.

Seeing no further Public Comment, Donna closed the second session.

ADJOURNMENT: David moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44PM. Jennifer seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Prepared by Maralyn Segien

**Next Scheduled Meeting: Town Hall Conference Room May 16, 2022 (6:00 PM)
7 Meetinghouse Hill Road- New Boston, NH 03070
Phone: (603) 487-2500-www.newbostonnh.gov
Handicap Access available**