

# Adopted

## Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting November 4, 2019

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	Joe Constance	Selectman
	Karen Scott	Selectman
	Christine Quirk	Selectman
	Peter Flynn	Town Administrator

Transfer Station Manager Gerry Cornett, School Board Chairman Kary Jencks, Open Space Committee Chairman Ken Lombard, Treasurer Bill Gould, Dick Jardine, Jen O'Brien, Gail Cousins, Keith Gentili, David Litwinovich, Patrick Burke, Marie Grella, Angela Sullivan, Kaleb Jacob, Bill McFadden and five more members of the public were present for all or part of the meeting.

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

**Consent Agenda-**The Selectmen signed the consent agenda. Christine moved to approve the consent agenda. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

### **B. PUBLIC FORUM:**

Joe 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. Anyone with a comment is asked to state their 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. If there is any need for extended dialogue a request to be added to the agenda and supporting documentation should be sent to the Town Administrator beforehand.

Dick Jardine of Depot Street was present to discuss the requirements necessary for names of New Boston service members to be eligible to be added to the memorial on the Town Common. He noted he wrote to the Selectmen on September 10 and presented the letter to the Selectmen at the meeting. He grew up in New Boston, served in the military twenty-four years including times of conflict. His brother also served. He asked if their service qualified to add their names to the memorial. Another person he graduated high school with is on the memorial. Dick brought this up a couple years ago with Peter and former Selectman Rodney Towne. Rodney noted at that time that they were eligible to be added to the memorial and directed them to Peter. He has not yet received an answer, information or action and is seeking an answer to the criteria necessary in writing.

Peter reported at this meeting that he has a file on this and their names can be added to the memorial as soon as possible. A confirmation letter will be sent. There is a proposal to move the memorial, but names can be added at any time. The Selectmen asked if there are any others

whose names have been left off the memorial and asked for confirmation of the qualifications necessary to be added.

Patrick Burke of Cedar Drive asked who owns and cares for the monument. The Selectmen noted it is town property set up through Town Meeting and the care of this and other monuments around Town is done by volunteers with little formality.

Dick volunteered to help care for the military monuments around Town. The Selectmen thanked him and said they will take care of it.

Seeing no further comments, Joe closed the first session of public comment.

### **Announcement of the 2019 Tax Rate**

The Selectmen reported they held a public meeting October 30, 2019 to set the tax rate. They removed \$175,000 from the unreserved fund balance to put toward the tax rate. Peter reported the NH DRA contacted the Town after calculating the tax rate using the property valuation approved by the state, the budget approved at Town Meeting in March, abatements, exemptions and revenues including motor vehicle registrations and the \$56,000 from the state as discussed at recent Selectmen's meetings. The net amount would have been 25 cents more than the amount calculated after the Board took the action October 30 to offset 26 cents on the original tax rate. The tax rate for the town portion only is \$5.48, a 25-cent increase from the previous rate. The total tax rate consisting of local school, state school and county that the Town has no control over is \$25.05, \$1.18 more than the 2018 rate of which the Town is responsible for 25 cents of this increase.

Joe explained the Town unreserved fund balance. The state recommends the Town retain between 5-10% of the Town Budget in the unreserved fund balance. Prior to 2019 New Boston's balance was approximately 9% but approximately \$139,000 was removed according to Town Meeting in March for the Daugherty Lane Bridge and the senior bus transportation. 9-10% is a good balance as the Selectmen could vote to put some toward the tax rate to ease the tax burden to residents in lean years/recession.

The Selectmen discussed three scenarios to withdraw from the unreserved fund balance to put toward the tax rate this year: none, \$175,000 and approximately \$340,000. The Selectmen considered the need for funds for a settlement with utility companies that will require use of some of the unreserved fund balance in 2020. After withdrawal of the \$175,000, the unreserved fund balance will be approximately \$1.4 million which is not a lot considering sizable emergencies that could occur.

Treasurer Bill Gould was present and noted the state recommended Town's keep two months of expenses in the unreserved fund balance. New Boston spends \$1.2 million per month causing New Boston to keep \$2.4 million in the unreserved fund balance if it followed the state recommendation. This is more than the amount New Boston has in its unreserved fund balance.

### **C. APPOINTMENTS:**

**Item 1: Marie Grella-Presentation Re: Purple Heart Community:** Marie Grella was present to meet with the Selectmen to update information given to the Selectmen in previous years. She asked the Selectmen to consider a Proclamation to make New Boston a Purple Heart Community as other Towns have done to honor Purple Heart Veterans. She noted it will not cost the town any money if donors pay for the signs to place around Town that cost approximately \$555.00. The Highway Department would install the signs. Karen moved to prepare a Purple Heart Proclamation to be read at the next Selectmen's meeting and made into signs. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 Marie will meet with the Selectmen again when the proclamation is ready.

**Item 2: Ken Lombard-Discussion Re: Teague Conservation Easement:** Open Space Committee Chairman Ken Lombard was present to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the possibility of preserving the Teague property with a Conservation Easement. He has been working with them to protect this property containing the middle branch of the Piscataquog River where there is tremendous wildlife activity. Joe moved to authorize Ken to continue working with the Teague's for a Conservation Easement. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

#### **D. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Item 3: Approval of Public and Non-Public Minutes of October 21, 2019:** The Selectmen reviewed the Public minutes of October 21, 2019. Christine moved the Public minutes of October 21, 2019 be accepted as amended. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 The Selectmen reviewed the Non-Public minutes of October 21, 2019. Christine moved to accept the Non-Public minutes of October 21, 2019 as presented and sealed for the standard amount of time. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

**Item 4: Update on Finance Director Position:** The Selectmen reviewed a memo from Peter dated October 30, 2019 with the recommended procedure to hire a new Finance Director as the current Finance Director Elisa Fitzgerald resigned effective two weeks from today. Initial interviews of the five applicants will begin Wednesday with an interview committee. The selected candidate will be hired through a Consent Agenda and confirmed at the next Selectmen's meeting. The selected candidate will be compensated at a rate not more than presently suggested in the Grade and Step Plan under the Finance Director category including 2020 proposals. Elisa is willing to come back a couple days to help explain the computer systems and has already arranged that with her future employer. The Selectmen agreed to the procedure.

#### **E. NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

#### **F. OTHER BUSINESS:**

##### **Item 5: Town Administrators Report:**

- Recreation Bus Shelter: The winter cover ok'd at the Transfer Station. The Recreation Director cancelled the order with TNT Carports last week. They were paid in full earlier

this year and a refund check is expected. Another company is sought.

- Update on Record Retention Committee: No update.
- Expenditure and Revenue Update: Provided.
- Budget Review Process-November 7<sup>th</sup> Start: Budget preparation is ready for Thursday night.
- Employee Holiday Potluck Lunch: The potluck with yankee swap is planned for December 11, 2019 at 11:30 AM.
- Revised Meeting Schedule: The Selectmen revised the revisions as discussed at the October 21, 2019 meeting. An additional change was noted for a typo.

#### **Item 6: Selectmen's Reports:**

- Karen reported the Road Committee is meeting November 6, 2019.
- Joe reported the following:
  - The Planning Board completed review of Subdivisions and Zoning revisions to be voted on at Town Meeting.
  - The Forestry Committee had a work party yesterday with five volunteers at the Lydia Dodge Forest to take sample plots for future cuts as part of the American Tree Farm System qualifications. A cut could take place next summer. The Committee plans to employ an intern next summer to confirm forest boundaries as a lot of borders in town are wrong due to the current mapping system.
  - Joe reported his and Christine's response to Karen's comments at the October 21, 2019 meeting as follows:
    - A paragraph in the Selectmen's Meeting Procedures was cited as referring to Selectmen. That paragraph refers only to town employees not elected officials as all elected officials in the country are subject to questions. Questions can be regarding decisions made, statements made, and elected officials are subject to criticism. This is basic American politics and civics. Joe has received criticism since he became a Selectman.
    - If an elected official is going to level criticism to entities such as the Fire Department, Transfer Station, Police, etc., one must be prepared to receive criticisms or revisions in statements no matter what they may be.
    - If someone in the audience asks a question or raises a criticism of the Selectmen, the audience should not ask that person if they have attended Selectmen's meetings before, are a resident or pay taxes. If a person contributes to the community, they have every right to ask a question or raise a criticism at Selectmen's meetings.
    - There is an insinuation that the Board consisted of an Old Boy Network. Joe noted he and others that have served on the Board are old boys but that doesn't mean they conducted affairs surreptitiously, under the table or with any ill intent or malfeasance. Everything was above board. Christine is the longest serving Board member and longest serving woman in the history of the Selectmen who has cut her own way in any deliberations. She had disagreed at times, sometimes heatedly and has never been afraid to take on an old boy.
    - Civility: When the Selectmen deal with people at the meeting or with any town employee Selectmen have a responsibility to be civil. This is a tradition

- the Board has had a long time and needs to continue.
- It is good to have a cohesive Board, not to have “dirty laundry” put all over as Patrick Burke mentioned at the October 21, 2019 Board meeting. Joe noted he has tried to work with every Selectman collegially and cooperatively and will continue to do so. This is part of the democratic tradition of New Boston and needs to continue.

**G. PUBLIC FORUM:**

School Board Chairman Kary Jencks clarified the October 21, 2019 minutes as she was unsure of the exact amount of the state refund but didn't feel comfortable giving the amount as she did not have her notes with her. The amount Joe provided at that time was correct and confirmed at the October 30, 2019 School Board meeting.

Gail Cousins of Ridgeview Lane noted she asked a question at a previous Selectmen's meeting that may have stirred up controversy. At that time, she asked if Selectmen can abstain from voting and the Selectmen answered yes. She noted that is not included in the minutes of the meeting.

**Item 7: Possible Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (a)(b)(c):** Christine moved to enter Non-Public session per RSA 91-A: II at 6:35PM. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 Poll Vote: Joe-yes, Christine-yes, and Karen-yes. Board then entered non-public session.

**Move to exit Non-Public Session:** Karen moved to exit Non-Public Session at 6:40 PM. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

**Public Action from Non-Public:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 PM. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

*Prepared by Maralyn Segien*

**Next Scheduled Meeting: Town Hall Conference Room on November 18, 2019 (6:00 PM)  
7 Meetinghouse Hill Road- New Boston, NH 03070  
Phone: (603) 487-5504-[www.newboston.gov](http://www.newboston.gov)**