

# Approved

## Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting September 20, 2021

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	Karen Scott	Selectman
	David Litwinovich	Selectman
	Donna Mombourquette	Selectman
	James Brace	Interim Town Administrator

Andrew Tiebout and Representatives from Affinity LED Lighting, Recreation Director Mike Sindoni, Dan Garrity, Chris Hall, Bill McFadden, Kaleb Jacob, Joyce Arivella and one or more additional 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 David Litwinovich at 6:00PM beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda-** The Selectmen reviewed the September 20, 2021 consent agenda and deferred approval pending further discussion. There is a new deadline of Friday before Monday Selectboard meetings for adding items to the Consent Agenda to allow the Selectmen time to review all items before the meeting.

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

David 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 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. 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. Seeing none, David closed the first session of public comment.

### **C. APPOINTMENTS:**

**Item 1: LED Streetlight Presentation:** Project Manager Andrew Tiebout and Project Developer Cassidy Brenner from Affinity LED Lighting presented to the Selectboard regarding an LED Lighting proposal for all New Boston streetlights. Energy Commissioner Bill McFadden brought this idea to the Town Administrator last year and he was in favor for low maintenance, energy and costs. This project is estimated to save the town at least \$80,000. Affinity will handle the GIS audit, reconciliation, review findings with the town, contract installers, handle all billing for the project and work with Eversource for incentive payments. The payment structure was reviewed as there is a 50% deposit, then the town pays for delivery and installation. Affinity will help apply the approximate \$4,200 Eversource rebate. There is a one-year labor warranty and a ten-year product warranty. The company saves energy, supports

green initiatives and their products are built by veterans. A sample lighting fixture was viewed. They will bring in a bucket truck and a flag vehicle and the town is responsible to provide any police detail. Police detail will be evaluated but is not anticipated to be necessary. It takes approximately six minutes to install in each location. The project is anticipated to be completed by the end of October. It has been found that the town has been paying Eversource for two extra lights, request for a refund will be considered. Affinity will not convert “private area lights” that are paid for by private residents, not the town. The Selectboard thanked Affinity for meeting with them.

**Item 2: Recreation Director Mike Sindoni-Confirm Trick Or Treat Hours And Trunk Or Treat Event:** Recreation Director Mike Sindoni was present to meet with the Selectboard to discuss proposed Halloween activities offered by the Recreation Department including Scarecrow Alley beginning October 4 and Trick Or Treat from 6:00-8:00 PM and Trunk Or Treat event using Town Hall parking spaces and the gazebo for lighted pumpkins from 4:30-9:30 PM on October 31, 2021. Mike requested using Town Hall parking spaces and the gazebo for lighted pumpkins from 4:30-9:30 PM for the event. The Recreation office and library are accepting candy and sanitizer donations to help downtown residents who have hundreds of trick or treaters each year. Downtown residents have not contacted the Recreation Department with any concerns about the holiday. The Recreation Department may also work with Recreation Commissioner Katie Hawkes to create a map of additional town locations where trick or treating is occurring for families that want to participate but avoid the crowds that typically occur downtown. Karen moved to allow the Recreation Department to move forward with Halloween events as presented. Donna seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

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

**Item 3: Town Employee 2022 Pay Scale Discussion For Budget Preparations:** The Selectboard reviewed a town employee salary proposal for consideration during 2022 budget preparations. Jim requested a pay scale adjustment to keep salaries competitive as the town is losing valuable employees to other towns with higher salaries, sign on bonuses and other incentives. COLA adjustments approved in New Boston in the past were reviewed. The Selectboard requested more information about the job description and salary and COLA frequency used for similar positions in surrounding towns. Jim began researching this with cooperating towns on the NH Municipal Association website and will print this for Selectboard review. David will contact SNHPC for additional information. Donna suggested the state might have some information for positions and salaries in the public and private sector. Jim suggested the Selectboard consider the value and quality of the employees along with job descriptions and expected tasks for each employee. The Selectboard will review the information in preparation for the October 4 meeting.

**Item 4: Use Of Decommissioned 2014 Police Cruiser For Building Inspection Purposes:** The Selectboard reviewed a proposal to use the decommissioned 2014 police cruiser for Building Department inspection purposes. The Building Inspector currently uses a personal vehicle to travel to inspection locations and is reimbursed mileage at over \$1,000 per year. Jim proposed converting a decommissioned 2014 police cruiser (his former cruiser) for use by the Building Inspector to travel to inspections as other towns do to possibly save tax dollars and prevent wear and tear to employee personal vehicles during town business use. There are no maintenance

issues with the vehicle, with approximately 126,000 miles on it and it is anticipated to need only a console, insurance, gas and annual inspections and oil changes. Donna is not in favor and Karen noted she suggested using a former police cruiser for the fire department command vehicle in the past and was told used police cruisers are junk, although the fire department command vehicle would be used and upfitted in a different manner than a building inspector vehicle. Jim noted this is his former cruiser used for town v. city use and does not have the wear and tear other police cruisers have and offered to take the Selectboard for a ride to determine condition. David requested a cost comparison of the current procedure v. converting the vehicle for building inspector use. If approved, it is anticipated to be kept in the town hall parking lot when not in use.

**Item 5: Use Of ARPA Funds To Purchase Air Quality Systems For Town Offices:** The Selectboard reviewed a proposal to use approximately \$20,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funds to purchase air quality systems for town offices in approximately eight town buildings. This recently became a concern when air quality was tested at the Old Engine House and when a COVID-19 situation occurred in the town hall. Employees and the public going to town buildings could be at risk, and it is important to protect them with better air quality. This is a good use of ARPA funds as specifically related to COVID-19. The Selectboard would like to move forward with this proposal and obtain further input from Department Managers on how ARPA funds could be used in New Boston. Former Town Administrator Peter Flynn and Finance Director Jennifer Allocca began this process. Jim will ask Finance Director Jennifer Allocca if she received any follow up from Department Managers. Funding broadband expansion in town is also being considered for these funds.

**Item 6: Discussion Of Accounts Payable Policy:** The Selectboard reviewed and revised a draft Accounts Payable policy prepared by Finance Director Jennifer Allocca as a result of an issue that occurred in the Peterborough, NH accounts payable department. The policy is still in preparation stages and when it is complete it will be brought to the Selectboard for a first read according to the policy approval process. The current process was reviewed. Jim has noticed discrepancies in the process and the policy is anticipated to prevent these by ensuring all involved are following the policy. All involved take this very seriously. The Selectmen want to ensure the policy is followed and that backup information to accounts payable requests is always provided and reviewed.

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

**Item 7: Approval of Public Minutes and Non-Public Minutes of September 1, 2021:** The Selectmen reviewed the Public minutes of September 1, 2021. Karen moved the Public minutes of September 1, 2021 be accepted as amended. Donna seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 The Selectmen reviewed the Non-Public minutes of September 1, 2021. Karen moved the Non-Public minutes of September 1, 2021 as presented. Donna seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

**Item 8: Mill Street Follow Up Discussion And Recommendations-Chris Hall:** Chris Hall and Dan Garrity of Mill Street were present to follow up on discussion and recommendations at the August 16 Selectboard meeting. The Selectboard reviewed documentation provided by Town Engineer Kevin Leonard with recommendations including investigating drainage from the

hill and inspecting and cleaning out the catch basin by the river. Dan noted he has made improvements to his property to prevent damage from rainwater, water is coming down the ravine from the cemetery between the barns at map 19 lot 17 and map 19 lot 16 and adding an addition and parking lot to the church prevented water from diverting according to the previous design, the proposed curbing would divert water behind the fire station and seems to be the preferred solution. Dan also suggested putting asphalt and a drain in front of Chris' driveway to prevent water from going into his garage. Chris offered to help install curbing as Road Agent Allen Brown suggested. Jim noted the Fire Department also had significant damage after the July rain storms and brush cutting might be helpful to expose the catch basin. Dan noted that was caused by the catch basin between the fire station and the town common being filled in during construction a few years ago and water coming down Meetinghouse Hill Road, not the water that is affecting his property that is coming down the ravine. Jim investigated the catch basin between the fire station and the town common and learned it was filled in but no reason was given. Recreation Director Mike Sindoni noted there was a similar issue of flooding on the ballfield and town hall basement that seems to be caused by a clogged basin. The Selectboard want to continue to consider possible solutions with the town engineer and considered placing sandbags/diverters in the area temporarily. Jim noted the road level has risen and is higher than the catch basin especially near the café and that could be contributing to the problem. Jim will contact the town engineer to discuss the curbing and diverting options, keep in contact with Chris and Dan and direct the Highway Department to clean out the catch basins and brush cut in the area. The group can then reconvene if there is another significant rainstorm to see if cleaning the catch basin improves the situation. Documentation was reviewed showing the homes are not in a flood zone. A tree will be cut in a way to clear the space and leave a light and noise barrier for residents in the area.

**Item 9: Discussion-Further Input On Meeting Policies:** The Selectboard reviewed and revised proposed revisions to the Selectboard Meetings policy and will continue to consider if these procedures should be formalized.

## **F. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Item 10: Update-Year-To-Date Expenditures And Revenues:** Documentation was provided and reviewed in detail.

**Item 11: Town Administrators Report:** Jim presented the Town Administrator's report as follows:

- There was a COVID outbreak within the Town Hall. Four employees have tested positive. Policies were instituted per current guidance to ensure the safety of our remaining staff as well as our public who visit the Town Hall. Planning and the Clerks' office will be closed through September 27, 2021. Plans are in place to continue town business.
- Gas Pumps – Jim has been in contact with MB Maintenance, and the project is scheduled for mid to late October. The file on this project including communications with NH DES about the base will be kept together. Donna moved to contract with MB Maintenance for the gas pump renovation as presented for \$58,000. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0
- Town Administrator Search – This is ongoing, further discussion in non-public tonight.

- Lyndeborough Road Bridge project is on track. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2021.
- We have a letter from Continental Paving offering a 1 to 3-year extension on the resurfacing bid based on current pricing, except for liquid asphalt. Karen will bring this to the Road Committee for a formal recommendation on if the town should accept it. Jim noted it is a good offer that should be considered. Jim noted Continental Paving has been fantastic to work with and is highly reputable. Town Engineer Kevin Leonard has the results of the asphalt test samples. If there are any issues with the paving quality, Continental has stated they will be corrected at no additional cost.
- Jim met with Al Bickford (725 River Road) on Thursday regarding some dead trees on town property that are hung up on other trees and leaning towards his property. He will meet with Alan to see what can be done to address this concern.
- On the 7th David and Jim attended a meeting with the Fire Department, Town Engineer Kevin Leonard, and Architect Roger Dignard to discuss the feasibility of a safety complex on the parcel of land planned for a new fire station and how experts involved will be compensated. A follow up meeting is planned for October 2021 at the library. This project will be considered in accordance with the voting cycle timeline. The Selectboard is concerned the meetings involved will not be transparent as they have not been public. They will be public. The Selectboard requested a public document be prepared with the detailed final recommendations.
- Monthly Manager Reports provided (Clerk, Planning, Library missing).

## **Item 12: Selectmen's Reports:**

Donna reported the following:

- Transfer Station Manager Gerry Cornett prepared a mission statement for the committee for Selectboard review. Committee members are sought and this will be announced on the town website, Facebook and in the New Boston Beacon. The Committee is hoped to begin by the end of October.
- Consolidated Communications, a Francetown resident with expertise, Finance Director Jennifer Allocca and the Fire Department have provided some information regarding Broadband in New Boston. Comcast has not yet provided its information of services provided in town. This information is being compiled to determine what services are needed in New Boston. Donna has been working with Bill McFadden. NH Municipal Association noted there is an organization helping towns improve Broadband services. This might be a good use of American Rescue Plan Act funds for infrastructure. The project is currently estimated at approximately \$10,000. Donna will continue reporting as information becomes available.

David reported the following:

- The September 28, 2021 Planning Board meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19 and the next Planning Board meeting will be October 12, 2021.
- SNHPC sent notification of possible dangerous intersections in New Boston. The Police Department received this information as well and will contact SNHPC if necessary.

Karen noted she requested Road Agent Allen Brown attend tonight's meeting to discuss paving

progress as it seems more paving is going on than was approved. She feels it was a disservice to the taxpayers to repair some roads with a temporary method that is anticipated to last only six to eight years, and may not even last that long.

Jim presented documentation from Allen of all completed and scheduled paving. The Selectboard requested a more comprehensive document from Allen. Jim noted he has had conversations with Allen where Allen stated his intent is to do his job as Road Agent/Department Manager in the best manner possible for the town and is making good financial decisions. Finance Director Jennifer Allocca provided documentation of the total cost to date of the paving project, it is within budget and will be underbudget by approximately \$60,000. The Selectboard can encumber any remaining paving budget and Allen has a plan for overlay next year. A Warrant Article for road needs can be considered. He noted the Civil Engineer on the Road Committee estimated road sizes and paving costs and the actual costs to pave have been lower. Some Tier 3 roads have been paved before Tier 2 roads due to their size and funds available. These roads were also repaired to keep them in good shape for approximately six to eight years when more significant improvements are planned (possibly through the CIP Schedule or a Warrant Article), and also to prevent wear and tear on town equipment such as Highway Department vehicles, when traveling these roads.

A Road Committee meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2021. They have not met since June. Karen reported Road Committee Vice-Chairman Denis Pinard resigned and read his resignation letter aloud. Jim noted Denis had value to the Committee and was valued. Karen noted several roads have been paved that were not recommended by the Road Committee or roads were not paved appropriately according to the Civil Engineer's recommendations after spending hours evaluating all paved town roads. She is concerned funds will not be available for the overlay, the Selectboard's July 7 motion has not been followed and the Road Agent has not presented to the Selectboard since then. She noted the Road Committee became concerned when Byam Road and Wilson Hill Road only received an overlay instead of full reclaim and repave as these roads were in very poor shape due to heavy trucking that continues to occur regularly in the area.

Jim noted he reviewed the Road Committee meeting minutes and found Allen has done nothing inconsistent with the minutes regarding paving, he has followed the intent of the Committee goals, there has been additional paving but this is not operating outside Road Committee recommendations and this was done in the best interest of the town. Jim recommended the Road Committee discuss any issues with the Road Agent and obtain an understanding of why he is making decisions in this manner. If there is a personnel issue it should be discussed in non-public session and if there is a procedural issue it can be discussed in public session.

Donna noted the roads were previously in poor condition and Allen has been able to improve them with the budget available. She hopes he can create a road maintenance schedule of items to be done with Highway Block Grants to ensure the roads never deteriorate to their previous condition again. The Town Administrator is the Road Agent's supervisor, the Road Committee is advisory to the Selectboard, not the Road Agent. The Road Agent is responsible to make decisions. The Road Agent made a decision, contacted his supervisor the Interim Town Administrator who supported and approved the decision, any discussion the Selectboard want to have should be with the Interim Town Administrator, not the Road Agent.

Karen noted she discussed this with the Interim Town Administrator and the Road Agent discussed it with David.

David noted the Selectboard values the work the Committee has done and requested a comparison of the work that was done to the Committee recommendations with the understanding that changes can be made but priorities are set. He noted the Selectboard agrees with the Road Committee he appreciates Tier 1 was established and these roads were paved. He requested input in writing from both the Road Committee and the Road Agent earlier in the year next year to prepare for paving season.

### **G. PUBLIC FORUM:**

David 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 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. 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.

Kaleb Jacob of Fraser Drive made a comment.

Seeing no further Public Comment, David closed the second session of public comment.

**Item 13: Possible Request for Non-Public-Per RSA 91-A:3, II(a)(b)(c):** David moved to enter Non-Public session per RSA 91-A:3II at 9:35PM. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 Poll Vote: David-yes, Donna-yes and Karen-yes. The Board then entered non-public session.

**Move to exit Non-Public Session:** Donna moved to exit Non-Public Session at 10:49PM. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 Poll Vote: David-yes, Donna-yes and Karen-yes.

Donna moved the Non-Public minutes of September 20, 2021 be sealed five years. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Donna moved to accept the LED lighting bid from Affinity for streetlights as presented. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

**ADJOURNMENT:** Donna moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:50PM. Karen seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

*Prepared by Maralyn Segien*

**Next Scheduled Meeting: Non-Public Special Meeting  
Town Hall Conference Room September 23, 2021 (7:00 PM)  
7 Meetinghouse Hill Road- New Boston, NH 03070  
Phone: (603) 487-2500-[www.newbostonnh.gov](http://www.newbostonnh.gov)**

**Handicap Access available**