

**Board of Selectmen
February 28, 2024**

Present: Richard C. Edwards, Chair; Kenneth G. Fifield; Dino A. Scala, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Edwards called the posted meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:34 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$35.57/hour for Sgt Trevor Cherry, contingent upon passage of the 2024 operating budget. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:38 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$24.68/hour for Officer Stephen Beckwith, contingent upon passage of the 2024 operating budget. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:42 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase to \$31.66/hour for Sgt Brandon Jendrock, contingent upon passage of the 2024 operating budget. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:49 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted that Amber Marcoux would receive the same rate of pay (\$20.53/hour) for each position held (Welfare Director; Land Use Clerk; interim Deputy Tax Collector) and, further, that Ms. Marcoux would receive a \$50/week stipend until a permanent Tax Collector is in place. Mr. Edwards then called for a recess, calling the meeting back to order at 7:02 p.m. Mr. Edwards led all in the Pledge of Allegiance, and there was no public present.

1. Appointments

a) Brock Mitchell re: Salt Barn – Mr. Scala stated that Mr. Mitchell is not present as it was decided we should wait until after the March vote to consider construction of a new salt barn. We have an estimate of the anticipated cost of construction, and we have Highway Block Grant funds available. However, those funds may be needed elsewhere depending upon passage of the operating budget and warrant articles.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public – None forthcoming.

3. Unfinished Business

a) Town Ballot – Revised Estimated Tax Impacts – Revision of several warrant articles resulted in the need to amend the estimated tax impacts involved. The following were corrected on the 2024 ballot and should be confirmed by the Board:

Article #5 - \$500,000 for Highway Construction CRF = \$.15 tax impact (previously \$.22)

Article #6 - \$20,000 Transfer Station Truck CRF = \$.008 tax impact (previously \$.004)

Article #13 - \$35,000 Town Hall Improvement CRF = \$.02 tax impact (previously \$.04)

Mr. Fifield moved to accept these corrections that are reflected on the ballot. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

4. New Business

a) HVAC Proposals – Mr. Scala stated that this contract would be for units at both the Town Hall and the Annex (Parks & Rec). Most companies that submitted bids also toured the facilities. 4 proposals were received as follows:

Palmer Sicard @ \$2850/year, plus \$100-\$200/hour for emergency calls

Thayer LLC @ \$5352/year, plus \$115-\$172.50/hour for emergency calls

Alliance @ \$1904, plus \$125-\$187.50/hour for emergency calls

Wicked Cool Mechanical @ \$1788/year, plus \$120-\$180/hour for emergency calls

Mr. Scala will evaluate the proposals and make a recommendation to the Board at the next meeting.

b) Sewer Warrant 2023-2 – Mr. Fifield moved to approve the 2023-2 Sewer Warrant in the amount of \$36,047.44. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

c) Anglin Road – Mr. Scala referred to his meeting with the State of NH Road auditor regarding difficulties presented with the name of this road. Internet searches send vehicles (emergency and otherwise) down Blackwood Road, then through the woods. Peter Gosselin has been working with the area residents (of which there are few), who have agreed by consensus to change the name of the road to Eagles Way. Discussion followed as to whether a public hearing would be necessary to effect this change. The Board agreed by consensus to move forward with this name change in accordance with applicable laws.

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures

a) Police Vehicles CRF \$4504 – This represents the cost to purchase/install a low-profile lighting package on the 2023 Interceptor. Mr. Fifield moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

6. Correspondence

a) Valerie Ward – Certified Municipal Clerk – Kudos to Valerie for her accomplishment! Mr. Scala read aloud information regarding this designation—benefits, criteria, etc. Discussed the possibility of posting this information to the website.

b) Angie Nichols – Resignation as Tax Collector – Mr. Scala read aloud Ms. Nichols' letter of resignation. Mr. Fifield moved to accept the resignation of Angie Nichols as Tax Collector. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

c) Laurie Sylvia – Resignation as Deputy Tax Collector – Mr. Scala read aloud Ms. Sylvia's letter of resignation. **Mr. Fifield moved to accept the resignation of Laurie Sylvia as Deputy Tax Collector. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

d) Donna Ackerman – Resignation as Member of Conservation Commission – Mr. Scala read a portion of Ms. Ackerman's letter of resignation. **Mr. Fifield moved to accept the resignation of Donna Ackerman as Conservation Commission Member. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, with regards. The motion then passed 2-0.**

e) Whitney Consulting Group – Mr. Scala stated this firm has been providing interim assessing services since the resignation of Cindy Bickford as Assessing Technician. He read aloud the letter from Whitney, stressing that they have agreed to waive 2 weeks of the 30-day termination notice requirement.

f) Peter Gosselin Letter of Appreciation to Staff – Mr. Scala read aloud Mr. Gosselin's letter to Larissa Mulkern and Amber Marcoux in which he expresses his appreciation for their efforts.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment – None forthcoming.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator's Update

--Mr. Scala referred to the vacancy in the Assessing office and the firm providing interim services. A new Assessing Tech has been hired and will begin her tenure with the Town on March 4.

--No one came forward to run for the position of Tax Collector, although there is an active write-in campaign in progress. Once this elected position is filled, the new Tax Collector will recommend a deputy. Meanwhile, a former deputy tax collector has agreed to keep the office open Tuesday through Friday from 9a – 1p.

--We received a check for \$27,323.89 (as budgeted) from the NH Highway Block Grant, which will be used for any road projects the DPW schedule throughout the year.

--Mr. Scala presented an Engagement Letter with Vachon Clukay for the Town's audit, which was executed by Mr. Scala and Mr. Edwards.

--Ambulance billing for 2023 totaled \$258,221.07. \$40,061.70 was written off. Mr. Scala anticipates presenting more potential write-offs in March.

--Mr. Scala noted we have approximately \$82,720 in the Town Hall Improvements CRF and are asking for \$35,000 on the warrant. If the article is approved, we would still be short up to \$17,280 compared to the estimate we have to do the Town Hall roof. Therefore, we may need to put the project off until 2025. Mr. Edwards is confident we can get it done with the funds available and suggests we put the project out to bid.

--The website address for the Town's birthday celebration is www.wakefield250.com. Once there, one will find a calendar of events, as well as an opportunity to make a contribution. Events may include a 'Restaurant Week.'

--Our election is Tuesday, March 12, 2024, from 8a to 7p in the Opera House of Town Hall. Mr. Fifield will be on hand in the morning, Mr. Edwards in the afternoon, with Mr. Duffy joining in later in the day.

b) Building Permit Releases- Mr. Fifield moved to approve the building permit release for Map 56 Lot 63 on Fox Lane. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

c) Treasurer's Reports for January 2024 – Provided for the Board's information.

d) Tax Collector's Month/Year Comparisons – Provided for the Board's information.

e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Fifield moved to approve AP #5 in the amount of \$191,982.66. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve AP #6 in the amount of \$373,312. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve PR #4 in the amount of \$95,001.96. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

f) Minutes – Mr. Fifield moved to approve the minutes of January 24, 2024, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the January 24, 2024, minutes of Non Public Session #'s 1,2,3,4 & 5, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the January 31, 2024, minutes as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the January 31, 2024, minutes of Non Public Session. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the February 21, 2024 minutes, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the February 21, 2024 minutes of Non Public Session #'s 1,2 & 3, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Fifield moved to adjourn at 7:42 p.m. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:


Richard C. Edwards, Chair

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Mark P. Duffy


Kenneth G. Fifield