

**Board of Selectmen  
March 27, 2024**

**Present:** Richard C. Edwards, Chair; Mark P. Duffy; Dino A. Scala, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Edwards called the posted meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (b). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:39 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to hire David Landry as a fulltime patrol officer at \$28.77/hour. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:41 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board was advised of the resignation of Anthony Castaldo as a part-time patrol officer. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘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 was advised of the return of an employee from extended leave. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:55 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board approved a \$1/hour shift differential for police officers filling overnight shifts. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 6:57 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to hire Zoie Fox as an ASP/Summer Counselor at \$13.65/hour. **Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 7:06 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to promote Caleb Kinville to Asst Parks & Rec Director/Community Building Coordinator at \$20.04/hour, and to promote Alyssa Hall to Parks & Rec Director at \$54,318.34/year.

Those present at this time included Selectman Kenneth Fifield via Zoom (muted); Natalie Kelley; Jim Kelley; Wayne Robinson Jr., Priscilla Colbath; Jerry O’Connor; Mary Collins; Sandy Ouellette; Denis Umphlett; Neil Rowe; Rob Roy Macgregor; Brock Mitchell; Relf Fogg and Mary Wing Soares.

Mr. Edwards led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Appointments**

**a) Denis Umphlett re: Witchtrot Road Speed Limit** – Mr. Scala stated that Chief Fenton is aware of Mr. Umphlett's concerns and will be placing the radar trailer in that area. Mr. Umphlett stated that the speed limit should be 25 mph as vehicles come down the hill and added that Mr. Fifield was going to determine whether that speed limit would be allowable. Mr. Umphlett also referred to the lack of signs (yellow) from the Poor Peoples Pub to Canal Road, except on corners, although there are 2 signs going in the other direction. Mr. Mitchell stated that if he has the signs in stock, they can be put in place tomorrow. Mr. Umphlett shared several scenarios where excessive speed was involved. Mr. Scala stressed that Mr. Mitchell will work with Chief Fenton on this. Mr. Umphlett would also like a 'Blind Driveway' sign. Mr. Mitchell can obtain same should the Board so desire.

**b) Brock Mitchell re: Vehicles, Salt Barn and Road Projects**- Mr. Mitchell stated the crew was about ready to start grading roads, then the snow returned! This summer he plans to repave Witchtrot Road to Canal, Gage Hill and Garney, and finish the tail end of Brackett Road to the Pond Road intersection. In addition, he hopes to top what is already done on Brackett. Hopefully, we can then address some dirt roads. Mr. Edwards asked about plans to assist Parks & Rec. Mr. Mitchell stated they have begun to do that project; however, it will take some to remove all the dirt on site.

Mr. Mitchell had planned to propose construction of a salt barn; however, he is having major trouble with one truck, although we did get an extra 2 years out of it. \$21,000 has been put into that truck over the past year. Trade-in value is around \$45,000. He is pricing a new truck, which would come with a 5-year warranty, through HP Fairfield. Mr. Duffy referred to a possible lease option. About \$182,000 is available in the CRF (including the 2024 appropriation), plus the trade-in, plus about \$100,000 from Highway Block Grant funds. Mr. Scala stressed cash flow constraints prior to receipt of revenue from the first tax warrant. Mr. Mitchell confirmed to Mr. Duffy that the wash pit is utilized.

The open house for the new DPW building will be held on the first Saturday in May, from 9a – noon.

**2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1**

--Mr. Kelley asked whether the Town has compared a commercial lease to outright purchase. Mr. Mitchell confirmed that he has, noting possible issues at the end of a lease; however, he believes we will need to go in that direction eventually. He advised he works with a municipal leasing company with reasonable equipment availability.

**3. Unfinished Business**

**a) DPW Grand Opening** – Discussed above.

**b) Jette Park Update** – The current owners of Jette Park would like to donate this property to the Town, and the Town would like to accept it! Mr. Scala has one more person to contact tomorrow in order to get the process moving.

**c) Health Insurance Opt-Out** – Mr. Scala noted that the Board had previously agreed on up to a \$3000 opt-out payment, as long as the employee can show proof of other insurance. He would recommend the following opt-out payments per plan:

Single plan - \$2000

2-Person plan - \$2500

Family plan - \$3000

This could be paid once a year, twice, quarterly, by pay period. **Mr. Duffy moved to accept the opt-out rates as recommended by Mr. Scala, to be pro-rated per pay period. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

#### **4. New Business**

**a) Pavilion Playground** – Mr. Robinson referred to the grant received in 2023 to construct the pavilion and a playground. Although 2 proposals for the playground were received last fall, the Committee decided to postpone that project until the pavilion was completed. This has been accomplished, and the Committee is now ready to move forward and recommends the Board approve the proposal submitted by New England Recreation Group (\$88,000). It is anticipated the project will be complete in 8 weeks. The Board viewed photos of the equipment. Mr. Edwards noted this project is not costing the taxpayers any money, as it is being funded via a grant received last year. **Mr. Duffy moved to accept the proposal (of New England Recreation Group) as recommended and move forward with the project. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**b) Purchase Order \$39,227.84** – This represents cost of the new police vehicle as approved by the voters. The vehicle is a 2023 Ford Explorer Interceptor. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve the purchase order as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

#### **5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures**

**a) Highway Garage CF \$6249** – This represents ½ the cost of purchase/installation of security system cameras at the new DPW building. There will be no maintenance fee. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve this CRF as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**b) Transfer Station Facility CRF \$6880** – This represents ½ the cost of purchase/installation of security cameras at the Transfer Station. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve this CRF as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**c) & d) Landfill Closure CRF** – The first request is for \$855, the cost of the mandatory annual reporting. The second request is for \$990, the cost of required groundwater monitoring. Both requirements are done by HydroGeochemical Solutions. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve both the \$855 for annual reporting and \$990 for groundwater monitoring, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.** Mr. Mitchell confirmed to Mr. Duffy that we have encountered no groundwater issues to date.

**6. Correspondence**

**a) Strafford Regional Planning Commission** – SRPC would like to meet with the Selectmen and/or the Planning Board in order to provide a 10-15 minutes update on their current projects. It was agreed that Mr. Scala will invite them to an upcoming Selectmen's meeting.

**b) Wayne Robinson** – Mr. Robinson's resignation as Parks & Rec Director was read aloud by Mr. Scala. Mr. Edwards is sad to lose Mr. Robinson as he has done so much for the recreation department in Wakefield and hopes his legacy carries on. Mr. Duffy added that Mr. Robinson is leaving big shoes to fill. He has saved the Town so much money in operating all these programs. Wayne has done a great job and deserves a round of applause (which he received).

**7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2**

--Mr. O'Connor received confirmation that the Board will approve Denny Miller as a Trustee of the Trust Funds later in the meeting.

**8. Administrative Matters**

**a) Town Administrator's Update**

--The MS 232 has been prepared for submittal to DRA, evidencing the March voting results. The Board executed same.

--Mr. Scala will conduct a department head meeting tomorrow at which time he will clarify the effective date of the COLA as well as hear status reports from various departments. Mr. Scala would like to suggest an employee appreciation party for sometime this spring.

--The new Tax Collector (Coreen Brooks) is in residence and has modified her office hours as follows: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 8am to 4 pm; Thursday 10a to 6pm; and the first Saturday of each month 8am to noon. These hours coincide with the Town Clerk's hours and, hopefully, will be convenient for those who cannot make it to Town Hall during regular hours.

**b) Building Permit Releases** – None forthcoming.

**c) Various Board/Committee Appointments**

Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Denny Miller as a Trustee of the Trust Funds until the March 2025 election. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Coreen Brooks, Tax Collector, has recommended that Amber Marcoux be confirmed as Deputy Tax Collector. Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Amber Marcoux as Deputy Tax Collector for an indefinite term. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Duffy moved to reappoint Robert Baxter as Zoning Board of Adjustment member through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

Mr. Duffy moved to reappoint Judy DesRoches as Zoning Board of Adjustment member through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.

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**Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Aleksandar Cook as Zoning Board of Adjustment alternate through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to reappoint Pamela Wiggin as Heritage Commission member through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Jeanne Loughan as Heritage Commission member through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Ann Gehring as Heritage Commission alternate through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Mr. Edwards referred to membership on the Conservation Commission, noting he has watched the video and reviewed the applications. He personally is in favor of appointing Mary Soares and Sasa Cook. Mr. Duffy agreed, noting that both have a lot to offer. **Mr. Duffy moved to appoint Mary Soares and Sasa Cook as Conservation Commission members through March 2027. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Mr. Fogg asked whether he could serve as an alternate if he is no longer to be a member. Mr. Edwards referred to turmoil that has been caused which seems to be getting worse. He believes it may be time for Mr. Fogg to step back and allow someone else to take a turn, although he knows Mr. Fogg is certainly capable of doing good things. Mr. Duffy agreed that it is time for a fresh start.

**d) Treasurer's Report February 2024 – Provided for the Board's information.**

**e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Duffy moved to approve PR #7 in the amount of \$98,755.99. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to approve AP #9 in the amount of \$207,048.69. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**f) Minutes – Mr. Duffy moved to approve the minutes of March 13, 2024, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Mr. Scala noted that the March 13, 2024, minutes of Non Public Session #1 should be amended to reflect Mr. Robinson's employment beginning in 2003. **Mr. Duffy moved to amend the minutes as indicated. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to approve the March 13, 2024, minutes of Non Public Session #'s 1 (as amended), 2,3,4 & 5. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Duffy – 'aye'; Mr. Edwards – 'aye'. The motion passed 2-0, and the Board entered Non Public session at 8 p.m.**

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The Board returned to public session at 8:30 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase for Seth Garland to \$32.97/hour (Step 8). **Mr. Duffy moved to adjourn. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 2-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:



Richard C. Edwards, Chair



Mark P. Duffy

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Kenneth G. Fifield