

**Board of Selectmen  
January 11, 2023**

**Present:** Richard C. Edwards, Chair; Mark P. Duffy; Kenneth G. Fifield; 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. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, 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 pay part-time police officers overtime for holiday shifts, and to allow the part-time paralegal to earn comp time at time-and-a-half for the same shifts. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, 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 authorized an increase to \$5000/year for Laurel Morrill, Town Treasurer, effective as of April 1, 2023 (said sum to include the 2.2% COLA). **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:44 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board considered and tabled a letter of resignation from Priscilla Colbath. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (b). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:53 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase for Emily Zanis to \$18/hour, and authorized the hiring of Brennan Peaslee as a P&R bus driver at the rate of \$18/hour.

The Board recessed at this time, until 7:02 p.m. At this time those present included Police Chief Michael Fenton. Mr. Edwards led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Appointments** – None scheduled.

**2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1** – None forthcoming.

**3. Unfinished Business**

**a) HVAC Maintenance Contract** – Mr. Edwards stated this topic will be tabled as we continue to wait for additional information.

**b) Review/Adopt Town Personnel Policy** – Mr. Edwards stated this topic will also be tabled until the Town Administrator is present.

**c) Operating Budget Warrant Article** – As a result of the recent Budget Committee meeting, Article #33 of the Town Warrant will list the 2023 Operating Budget at \$7,697,739, and the 2023 Default Budget at \$6,874,366. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve Article #33 as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

**4. New Business** – None forthcoming.

**5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures** – None scheduled.

**6. Correspondence** – None forthcoming.

**7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2** – None forthcoming.

**8. Administrative Matters**

**a) Town Administrator's Update** – In Mr. Scala's absence, Ms. Bodah read from his prepared report:

--Wakefield experienced areas of flooding during the recent severe storm. Thanks to Police, Fire and DPW for doing their best to keep up.

--The Town received a one-time check for bridge repairs and construction from the State of NH in the amount of \$100,047.02. Additionally, we received our yearly Rooms/Meals check for \$458,224.48. The bridge check is very specific as to how it can be spent; and the Rooms/Meals check goes towards our revenue line as usual.

--We have started the process of applying for grants for Town beaches/boat launches. We will apply for 1, perhaps 3, with Lovell Lake being the priority. This would be a \$100,000 grant, 75/25 split.

--Budget process is nearly complete after a meeting last night to finalize Town and School budgets and warrant articles, with a bond hearing scheduled for January 17 at 7 p.m. regarding Article #8.

--Deliberative Session is February 4 at 9 a.m.; Voting Day is March 14.

--For anyone interested in running for elected positions, signups are from Jan 25 to 5 p.m. February 3.

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

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

**d) Payment Manifests** – **Mr. Duffy moved to approve PR #01 in the amount of \$109,734.90. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

**Mr. Duffy moved to approve AP #2 in the amount of \$1,406,368.63. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0. Mr. Duffy questioned whether the Board should report at its meetings any documents signed via DocuSign—perhaps as part of the Administrator's report.**

**e) Minutes** – **Mr. Duffy moved to approve the minutes of December 28, 2022, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Mr. Duffy moved to approve the Non Public minutes of December 28, 2022, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

**f) Selectmen's Work Session**

--Mr. Fifield referred to 2 issues that need to be brought to the attention of the NH DOT's engineering department that studies/deals with traffic issues. We requested about 2 years ago that DOT study and find a solution for the intersection of Route 16 and Gage Hill Road. There have been many accidents and he believes the intersection at least needs a traffic light, as well as possibly adjusting the speed limit. The other issue is with the timing of the 2 sets of traffic lights, near the Irving and Mobile stations. Better timing during the weekends could alleviate traffic back-up on Route 16. The current timing is too short and is triggered by side streets, completely stopping north/south traffic on Route 16. Chief Fenton referred to a number of accidents on Wakefield's stretch of Route 16 over the past 4 years. He noted that a vehicle in the south-bound turn lane near Gage Hill actually blocks site of the other south-bound traffic from those vehicles trying to enter from Wakefield Road. Mr. Fifield believes the State should have enough data after 2 years of study. With the Board's permission he will work with Chief Fenton to draft correspondence to NH DOT for the Board's signature. The Board agreed by consensus.

--Mr. Duffy referred to his comments about the Post Office during the Board's last meeting. He has since met with a former Postmaster, who viewed many of the returned tax bills and who advised the issue is not entirely a post office issue. Mr. Duffy noted that the 'Address Change Form' now includes a section to list 'Mailing Address'. End result: Small liability belongs to the post office; liability also belongs to the mailing service; and the Town needs to do a better job of reaching out to property owners, when possible.

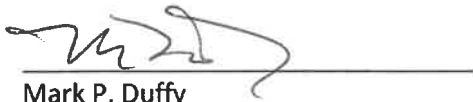
Mr. Duffy moved to adjourn at 7:28 p.m. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:



Richard C. Edwards, Chair



Mark P. Duffy

Kenneth G. Fifield