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Town of Northumberland
Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes - Draft
Date: Monday, August 19, 2024
Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square
Time: 6:00 P.M.

Board Members present: Jim Weagle, Jim Tierney, Keith Bronson
Others present: Andre Brasseur, Jim Gibson, Clint Bramlett, Eric Brown, Dawn Bryan, Jeff Normand, Chris Wheeler, Norm Cotter, Pete Marshall, Al Rossette, Tammy Letson, Pat & Molly Carr, Doug Dano, Melissa Dano, Deb Miles, Reggie & Terri Charron, Angella & John Richard, Kathy Frechette, Pete Pelletier, Rebecca St. Cyr – Minute Taker.

1. **Chairman Opens the meeting:** J. Tierney opened the meeting at 6:00 pm

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** All

3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** 08/05/2024

   Motion to accept the 08/05/2024 minutes by: J. Weagle
   2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

4. **Department Head Business:**

Fire Department - Andre Brasseur, Chief

Since the last report on July 16, there have been 8 calls for service; (55 calls YTD). Routine service calls, alarms, permitted burns, a couple of accidents.

July 27th we had our two fire engines tested; the newer one, which is 23 years old passed with no issues. The truck that's 34 years old had a minor issue, it was leaking oil from the fire pump transfer case, which has since been fixed. The cost was $662.00, which isn't bad compared to what they quoted of $1,000 - $2,000. It's back in service. Both are good to go.

Aug 3, we participated in the Stark's 250 Year Celebration parade.

The trucks will be going in for routine inspections in the next few weeks. ATG, Lancaster does the inspections.

We are looking at getting the hoses and ladders tested; it is a significant cost – approx. $2,000 - $3,000. It's supposed to be done yearly. The hoses have not been tested since Andre has been on. It will require using some water; he's talked to Reggie about that. A lot of hoses actually haven't been used, there is over 1000' on a truck and to get to the end of the hose would take something big. They will be pulled off for the testing, a serial # will be put on them and they will inventory them. NFPA recommends this yearly.

Ambulance – Jim Gibson, EMS Director – EMS Chiefs Report – 08/19/24

1. 2024 as of this printing, we have had 336 calls to date.

2. 2023 on this dated, we were at 299 calls.

3. Comstar report as of 08/09/2024. New commitments are $152,176.80. This does not include payments made directly to the office or contract fees.

4. The new ambulance has been sent to get the lettering done, we should be taking delivery by the end of this month. No updates. Jim said he did get a call today; Covid is a thing again, and they don't have drivers, but hope for delivery the week of Labor Day.

5. The next cycle for relicensing of some of the providers is in September. I have a few attendants that will be doing classes to get their recert hours.

6. A1 and A3 are both operational and up to par. They will be due for inspections soon.

   Tammy noted that an AED was dropped off today, and asked Jim if they could hold for the winter. Yes they can.

C. Wheeler asked Andre who does the testing on the hose. Andre said it's a company called Top Rung from Connecticut. We could do it, but we aren't qualified. Chris commented they should look into getting qualified to do it yourselves, there is probably money to be saved. Andre reminded that we are all volunteers, he's glad to have people show up for calls and some might be willing to do it, but he would rather have that piece of paper from a company that does it. Chris feels they should look into getting qualified to do it. Andre said the company will combine us with another town and not come up here just for us. We don't have the proper equipment for testing and further discussed.

C. Bramlet asked if it's a regulatory requirement Andre said NFPA requires this.

E. Brown asked if the cost for the testing comes out of their budget or is it a special appropriation? Andre said it's in the regular budget.

PD – Peter Pelletier, Chief

266 calls for service (35 NHSP)

23 car stops

11 arrests with 23 charges between them.

2 DWI arrests

1 drug arrest

3 crash investigations

31 new criminal investigations

We are giving away free backpacks to students K-4 in SAU 58. This is a continuing effort by the HELP organization, aided by the Granite Guild to equip local children with packs, bike helmets and other safety items. Interested parents can pick up at the police station Friday, August 23 during business hours. This is the second year that we've done this.

We received a nice, certificate of appreciation from the Impact Academy as a result of allowing high school age students to intern with us for a semester of their school year. The students appeared to enjoy their experiences. Pete said it gives them a little experience, they also spent time with the ambulance crew. Their time spent was to see what the job is like.

The 2015 cruiser is dead again; it's 9 years old. This is the 4th battery since January 1. N. Cotter asked if anyone looked into why the batteries don't last, sounds like an electrical problem. Peter said we haven't had anyone that's found the issue and we need to stop spending money on it.

We are going to start getting the cruisers serviced at DK & Sons; (oil changes and tires). For a minimum charge, they will do a safety check once a month.

E. Brown asked if the backpacks are due to a grant or does the cost come out of the PD budget. Peter said that Rick Archer, Granite Guild has helped us with the programs.

Eric had questions going back to the unregistered vehicle of Officer Daisey. Did the PD investigate those allegations? He referenced RSA 261.77 states that having a plate on a car that isn't current is against the law. RSA 261.40 requires that all vehicles be registered whether they belong to a police officer or not.

Eric asked the Board, if the PD didn't investigate it, why didn't the Board direct the Chief of Police to investigate this? He was in violation of policy #3.04 – "All police officers shall refrain from breaking the law. They must follow State, local and Town ordinances". Eric wanted to know if Daisey was investigated and if not, why didn't the Board tell them to investigate? We are being sued by this guy (supposedly dismissed) and he's suing former employees of this Town for releasing public information that his vehicle was not registered. Why was nothing done?

Peter said an internal investigation isn't up for discussion in public. J. Tierney said he should be able to answer, was there one done internally? Peter said there was not a formal investigation done internally. Eric asked why wasn't a formal investigation done when there were so many allegations of this being a problem? If the investigation found that it was a violation, it's at their discretion if they can choose not to prosecute. Why wasn't he found guilty of a policy violation? Policy number 3.07 says that all police officers are to report this to their superior officers for it to be investigated. Eric asked: Chief, you heard about this. Why didn't you initiate an investigation into it? Peter responded: my answer is, I did not initiate an investigation.

Eric asked: do we not hold our police officers to a high standard? This department gets $700,000 a year." He reviewed the officer's income. Officer Daisey makes $89,000 for a total cost of $129,349.51, including overtime and benefits. Do we not hold them accountable to the law to follow policies? Peter said yes we do, the truck got registered. Peter is not at liberty to discuss further. Eric asked Peter again to explain why it wasn't done. Peter said a lot of this is still in motion with the Court. Eric said the ongoing civil trial has nothing to do with his criminal acts of driving a vehicle unregistered and displaying illegal plates that were past expiration.
It's not Eric's opinion, it's the law, so why are we not doing equal justice?

Eric gave Peter a formal complaint against Officer Daisey for driving an unregistered vehicle and displaying plates that were expired. He expects it to be investigated and he wants the results in writing. Peter said he needs to put his complaint in writing. Eric said he doesn't need to put it in writing. J. Weagle said Eric is right – a formal complaint can be verbal or written.

Peter said if the Board directs him to take this verbal complaint, then he will accept it. He said under the ADA we would have to help someone that has a disability that couldn't read or write; we would accommodate.

J. Tierney said it has been Town policy that complaints are in writing. In this case it's different since Eric is here and videoing – Tierney said he would accept it. Any other complaints that come into the Town Office need to be in writing.

Eric explained that he's not anti-police, he's anti bad policing. When the PD put in for their new cruiser he also advocated for the additional $5,000 to put in cameras to protect our officers. He is against police officers being given special privileges and special treatment by other officers in this Town. That's not how our country works.

5. Requested Agenda Matters:

6. Town Administrator Business:

Moved up to after Department Head business because the owners are here to discuss with the Board.

a. Map/Lot 104-006-00-00 Building Permit – Pat and Molly Carr purchased the property at 6 Central Ave. Their intentions are to make it an affordable home for someone to buy. It's the first time we've done this to buy and flip a home to sell. We're not experts at it and we're not in it to make a ton of money. We're in it to hopefully put a little money in our pocket so that in the future we can survive better. Because the housing market prices are through the roof we don't want to build something unattainable in the town of Groveton, but we do want to make something that's nicer than what is currently there.

Pat asked for clarity on the building permit. He said the ladies in the of office have been awesome. We've asked a lot of questions, and they answered everything. We applied for the permit, and there are levels of the permit and if you're going to make money on it more than $50,000 than the assessed value that it costs more. J. Tierney said it's if the value increases $50,000.

Pat appreciated the approval to take down the garage; they intend to follow the rules. Replacing a tub probably doesn't change much but a new roof, windows, etc. should. J. Tierney said it expires March 31, 2025, so he would need to stop in and renew if not done. Pat said it's likely that we put in as little as possible, but a quality homed that's affordable. He said if someone comes to them and wants to buy it at $140,501 – he's willing to pay the extra $150.00 to the Town. They don't plan to do everything on their list. J. Tierney said they don't have to do all that's listed, when they are done let the Town know so the assessors can do a pick-up.

Al Rossetto, Building Inspector discussed putting up a new garage and the increase in value. He discussed the permit fees; if you pay the $250.00 now it would cover everything including the garage and it's good for approx. 1 ½ years. Al said they can call him with any questions. His reasoning was the new garage would put them over the $50,000 threshold. As it stands, Al is happy to sign it, but they might be coming to the Town for another permit. Molly asked what the difference in cost is; Al explained $100.00 is for a change in footprint or $5,000 of materials. And if the improvements increase the value of the property in excess of $50,000 that's when the $250.00 applies. J. Weagle said there are different cost involved as you go up the levels. The $100.00 covers the base cost; the $250.00 covers more of our costs. Al said the assessors charge us $80.00 just to go out and look at it; the $250.00 is for a new house and they spend more time on it. Pat said he's not sure about the garage, J. Weagle said if you decide to add the garage at a later date, they can just come in a pay the extra $150.00.

Eric asked Al if the extra cost has anything to do with him going out to look at it. Al said no its all with the assessors. When they do a drive by it's $100.00; when they have to go

around the building it's $250.00. Al further discussed the building permits; we move it to the property owner to make sure it's up to code. K. Frechette commented that if she tore her garage down, it couldn't be put back there because it's within 15' of the neighbor. She would have to go through zoning to get a variance.

Motion to sign the building permit by: J. Weagle,
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

b. Map/Lot 101-029 Building Permit – Tammy said this was approved with contingency at the last meeting. They are going to dig and put the W/S lines in themselves; they need to have a bond, which they know about. The other contingency is they need to get a certificate from NH Residential Energy. Tammy said they are asking if it can be done in steps? Can they give us the bond, so the pad can be laid, do driveway work, and put in the W/S service while waiting for the State of NH certificate #. The building will be not be put on until they get the number. We don't have the bond yet; it needs to be in before anything is started.

Motion to sign the permit once the bond is obtained, then they can do the work up to putting the home on - until the energy certificate in place by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

c. Groveton High School 2024-2025 Road Tolls

Tammy said they reached out with the follow dates for Road Tolls:

August 31, 2024 -	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
October 12, 2024 –	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
November 9, 2024 –	9:00 am – 1:00 pm
May 24, 2025 –	9:00 am – 1:00 pm

The dates are all Saturdays; no rain dates were listed. They hold them on Church St. J. Tierney asked the Chief if the traffic is heavy over Labor Day; Pete said Lancaster is worse. It should be a good weekend for them.

Motion to approved the dates requested by: J. Weagle,
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

d. Energy Committee – J. Weagle has started this. Currently the members are - Sean Durkin, Al Rossetto, Dave Auger.

Motion to appoint Sean Durkin, Al Rossetto and Dave Auger to the Energy Committee by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

Al noted that he and Dave will be going to Stratford on Sept. 3 for a presentation by one of the companies that do community energy.

e. Hill Project – Tammy, the bid opening, 2 were received. #1) – approx. $13,000,000; #2) - $8,870,000. The #2 bid excluded Grand View; that street was a bid alternate. The winning bid put in just over $1,000,000 for that street. That's one road we thought we could leave off if necessary. The engineers would like to leave off Cumberland; we want that one done. They are having issues with the railroad; Tammy further discussed the issues. There are a lot of roots in those pipes; we have a meeting with them tomorrow, Cumberland needs to stay on and be long term acceptable. Reggie clarified that it's the Sewer on Cumberland it's the main line. J. Tierney said it needs to be done, it's the engineers' fault. USDA and DES have been pushing for the railroad permits to be done much earlier.

E. Brown thanked Reggie and Tammy for all their hard work on the project.
C. Wheeler noted it looks like you will leave off Grand View; when the project is done his presumption is the streets will be re-paved. Tammy presumes they will leave it off and the Town will have to add it to our list. It will have to be done when the project is done. J. Tierney suggested that the $100,000 that goes into the CRF should be saved for that. At a minimum we should be able to cold patch. Reggie said we are looking into the paving already. He has talked about it with Glenn.

E. Brown asked about the sidewalks; Tammy had said we need to break ground by a certain date. Tammy corrected and said we have to spend money on the Hill Project by a certain date or we lose approx. $1,000,000 in grant money. The TAP (sidewalks) project we can't break ground until 2026, it's in the NHDOT's hands and not the Towns. Tammy said there is a federal rule; if anyone touches a sidewalk; it needs to brought up to ADA compliance. So, when the State put on the skim coat, they touched them which was paid for by the State. This is not falling on our project money. The crosswalks that have been moved, might need to be moved again and the State knows that.

7. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

a. Building Permits (2):

1. Map/Lot 240-019 -Shawn Swallow – 16' addition off back of garage for cold storage. Fee is paid, Al has signed.
   Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

   Tammy noted they put down that it's commercial zoned; but it's Residential Low Density. They have a waiver to put in a commercial business in that zone, but it doesn't change the zoning.

2. Map/Lot 107-127-00-00 – Jeremy Warren & Shaina Rowell, Rich St. Tearing off existing porch to build a new one. Fee Paid, Al has signed.
   Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

b. Transfer Station Non-Resident Permit (2):

1. Map/Lot 107-005 – Steven Tate, 30 Main St. – renewal.
   Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

2. Map/Lot 251-006 – Vincent Quartararo, 66 Longview – new. Fee is paid.
   Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

c. Abatements (1): Water/Sewer Map/Lot 222-016 **–** Discussed at a previous meeting; a hydrant was turned on by a resident who shouldn't have done that. Another resident had to run her water for some time to get it clear. She sent an email and requested an abatement for what she lost. Tammy treated it like the running water program and took an average of previous quarters, looked at this quarter and abated the difference. We discussed this at a Dept. Head meeting, and we would like to see the person that does this (possibly this time and in the future) billed for the amount we are abating. We don't know how much was lost when it was opened. The abatement was for $247.16 based on how Tammy calculated it.

Barbara Wheelock put in the request. J. Tierney said this doesn't open the gate for others due to cloudy water. Tammy said she is the only one that filed an abatement. He said we don't know if we can bill it to the resident that caused it without talking to Sean if we legally can since it's not written into our policies. Tammy said she will call NHMA instead (at no charge). The billing part can be put on hold.

Motion to approve the request; and if we can bill the resident that caused the problem they should be billed by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

d. Yield Warrants (2):

1. Map/Lot 209-001 – Albert Cloutier, Jr. - $1,568.62 from a Timber cut that was done.
   Motion to approve the yield tax of $1,568.62 by: J. Weagle
   2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

2. Map/Lot 206-001 - Neil R. Syriac - $2,202.41
   Motion to approve the yield tax of $2,202.41 by: J. Weagle,
   2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

Tammy asked the Board to revisit the Energy Comm for clarification. Tammy asked how long will the term be for? If it's adopted you might want the Energy Comm. To review on a regular basis. J. Weagle said do the standard 3-year term, stagger the terms - 1 2 3 and luck of the draw for the members.

8. **Public Comment:

- C. Wheeler asked about the water bill for $17,000, what is the status? Tammy said they haven't paid it, but we have been in contact. The closing company had reached out about a month before the closing date. It was before we knew there was a problem. They have the opinion that if they have to eat it, they will. But obviously wants to put every effort into it to not have to. The Town should not have to; this was due to the owner's error.

- C. Bramlet – Dog Waste – follow up. Tammy reached out to the managers of Towns that belong to the NH Managers Assoc. The Town of Conway is the only one that got back to her. They said it was a terrific idea, they were great at first and then decided it was the worse mistake they ever made. They had issues of people mis-using them, with freezing, etc. They took them down and told homeowners they need to pick it up themselves. Clint's opinion is we pick up trash 20 yards away from one of the receptables every Friday; he can't understand why they can't take the bag out and throw it away. He walks with his dog; he uses the bags all the time and disposes of them.

  Tammy wondered if there was a way we could put the bags near the Town trash cans and use them for the disposal. J. Weagle said we have 3 poop stands; 1 near the bridge; 1 across the street; and 1 no where near the trash can. J. Tierney asked if there can be bags only? J. Weagle said you can, but we don't have garbage cans out in the winter. K. Frechette said we don't have as many trash cans out; she has seen trash that she would pick up and deposit if there were more cans. Tammy asked if she could let her know where they used to be that would be helpful. Reggie said we live in society where people stop and clean out their cars into trash receptacles. That's why the Towns are getting away from it. It costs money for the bags; so, it's budgets, etc. It's too bad, but if you bring it in – take it out and there is enforcement for that called littering. Tammy said we don't own the dog receptacles the Beautification Comm owns them.

- K. Frechette – last time there was talk about the bridge. People don't realize that we can't just strip off the paint. Our best bet would be to get a grant (like Stark did) to fix it up. J. Weagle said one difference between Stark and our bridge is ours has lead paint. Weagle said we would need to tent the bridge or hire cranes to move it completely off to do the work. Another difference is Starks is being used. J. Tierney mentioned the grant that Stark got is no longer being offered.

Tammy said we have continued to research for grants, because we don't allow vehicles we can't get anything through State Bridge aid money. We would have to open it back up to traffic. The Town can't do a pedestrian grant because we allow snowmobiles, we are excluded because if we allow or don't allow something on it. Stark's grant was through the National Historic Bridge Restoration, which the federal government no longer offers. We have talked to engineers about it who have done a quick evaluation on it. If it's removed, there are probably structural issues. When you pick it up and move it the issues might be compounded. All the answers are expensive. Tammy – putty and paint makes things what they ain't! It will make it look pretty, but it doesn't fix it. Painting is expensive because it has to be tented possibly approx. $200,000 to do it.

E. Brown commented why don't we shut the bridge down to the snowmobiles and ATV's and route them on the other bridge. Another question, we have problems stripping it due to environmental concerns, what if the paint just drops in the river? Tammy discussed the answer from DES. When we ask, the answer we get is kind of that they don't believe paint falls off – it's nature. If we cause it, then it's our issue.

E. Brown asked why we can't reroute the ATVs and snowmobiles to the Route 3 bridge and make it a pedestrian bridge so that we would be eligible for funding. J. Weagle said the State won't allow us to do that, it's too dangerous in their minds. Eric commented why can't they use the sidewalk on the bridge. Route 3 and 110 are both State roads. Discussion ensued regarding the State roads; plowing, crossing, etc. Eric feels there is some hypocrisy with what we are being told. J. Tierney agreed and said they do allow ATV's on roads in other Towns with a higher speed limit than we have on Route 3 here. They won't allow the ATV's to continue from the railroad tracks, they have to go over Riverside Drive. Eric commented that if one town can do it and we can't, maybe we need to have our lawyer look into it. Maybe we need to have it closed down to the snowmobiles and ATV's. J. Weagle noted that if we do that it has to remain pedestrian only. Eric suggested putting it on the Warrant and letting the people decide.

Resident (D. Bryan?) asked if there was an estimate done for restoration? Tammy said there was a rough draft from the engineers, it was in the multiple millions to do it. It was to remove it and fix the abutment and infrastructure. J. Weagle said to tent and paint it was approx. $1,000,000. Reggie commented that if it's not a historical bridge, the boards could be pulled off and replaced with composite. It wouldn't need to be done again. J. Tierney said it is eligible. Reggie said 90% of the complaints are about the boards. Clint said he wouldn't scrape it but would paint it. Driving by his thought is what a dump. He could handle painting it and not charge a thing to the Town.

Kathy asked about the property at the corner of Maple St. Ander went over there and was told the person living there is a relative. Kathy didn't think she is a relative so why is she allowed to live there. Tammy said when it was condemned, and the homeowner wanted to come back; the Atty at NHMA told us that immediate family can live in whatever conditions they choose. She sent an email back to that Atty and hasn't heard back yet.

- Kathy asked who does the pumpkin carving by the bridge. J. Weagle said the Beautification Committee. She has some carving equipment that she will donate. J. Weagle will pick it up.

- A. Richard is here to follow up from a previous meeting. Tammy said she has the paperwork if they want to stay for Non-Public.

9. Announcements: The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office will be closed on Thursday, August 22, 2024, for training.

The Town Office will be closed on Monday, September 2, 2024, in observance of Labor Day.

10. **Next Board Meeting Date**: Tuesday, September 3, 2024 – 6 pm

11. **Non-Public Session: (Pursuant to RSA'S 91-A:3, II (b):**

Motion to go into Non-Public session by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0
Roll Call: J. Weagle – Yes; J. Tierney – Yes; K. Bronson - Yes

Into Non-Public Session at 7:39 pm

a. Resident Matter – Sealed

b. Resident Matter – Sealed

Motion to adjourn the Non-Public session by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

Non-Public session adjourned at 8:45 pm

Into Regular session at 8:45 pm

Motion to seal all the minutes of the Non-Public session by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0
Roll Call: J. Tierney – Yes; J. Weagle – Yes; K. Bronson - Yes

No further business was discussed.

12. **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca St. Cyr, Minute Taker

*Agenda is subject to change
**Deadline for Agenda items is 12:00 noon on the Friday before scheduled business meeting (by vote of Board of Selectmen at 7/11/2005 meeting).
This deadline may be amended by the Board of Selectmen at will.

This Institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

(by vote of Board of Selectmen at 06/17/2024 meeting).

Minutes approved by Northumberland Select Board Members on_____

X_____
Jim Tierney
Northumberland Select Board Chair

X_____
Jim Weagle
Northumberland Select Board Member

X_____
Keith Bronson
Northumberland Select Board Member