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Town of Northumberland
Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes - Draft
Date: Monday, August 5, 2024
Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square
Time: 6:00 P.M.

Board Members present: Jim Weagle, Jim Tierney, Keith Bronson
Others present: Tammy Letson, Lee Rice, Rick Archer, C. R. Wheeler, Pete Marshall, Norm Cotter, Al Rossetto, Jodi Paradis, Clint Bramlett, Glenn Cassady, Judy Fox, Deb Laflamme, Roland Laflamme, Kathy Frechette, Rena Kirk, Reggie & Terri Charron, Andre Brasseur, 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:** 07/15/2024

   Motion to accept the 07/15/2024 minutes by: J. Weagle
   2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

4. **Department Head Business:**

Highway – Glenn Cassady, Road Agent

- Randy filled in for Glenn during his vacation, that week a large tree came down on Brooks Rd. which got hung up in another tree and hung over the road. They called in a local tree arborer to remove it. The people on that road cleaned up the rest of it.
- Reggie, Randy, Reid, and Glenn worked on the manholes with the State engineers. They predicted the heights, there are a couple that are lower due to the pavement being thicker. It was an all-day job, and it was very hot.
- On the 10th we had the massive flooding. There was severe damage on Herman Savage Rd. we lost 2 culverts. A 2' one washed out and undermined around it. The biggest damage was the 4' culvert it was completely exposed all around; the road was gone.

  Brooks Rd. washed out at the beginning and the end. There was damage the first 450' – 6'-10' wide; in areas it was 2' deep. The brook couldn't handle making the turn and took the lower 200' of the road out which was deep. The lower section was totally gone. We got this repaired first due to people not being able to get out. It took ¾ of the day for the water to recede enough for us to work on it. Glenn discussed what had to be done. With the headwalls gone we had to slope everything; it's held up with all the rainstorms since. It is a major thing that needs to be done this fall, will talk about it later. Before we did anything we took pictures, etc.; it put a lot of debris in the ditches, we got them cleaned out while the equipment was there.

- Old Village Road has been ground. We had a water leak on the south end of the road that was found before paving; Glenn and Reggie further discussed.

- Wanted to start striping; the State started painting theirs today, he's waiting on them. It needs to be done before school starts.

- Ed Stanley called today about paving Old Village Rd. We will start working on getting it ready for the paving.

- 90% of the work to the damaged roads has been done. He told FEMA and the State that shaving will be needed with a grader. Reggie's crew started shaping up their roads so we could get through with material to start spreading it out. Will be submitting bills to Tammy for the loads of gravel that we use.

- Glenn went to the pool; the Rec Committee is handling the back flushing; they are doing an excellent job. They are keeping it clean. Tammy said Ashlyn has gone through the class to be a pool operator. By State law we need to have an official certified pool operator. She has learned a lot and is tweaking things based on what she has learned.

- The other dirt roads, Glenn is going to call the grader operator to see what his schedule is and discussed what he would have him do. Al Rossetto noted that Page Hill isn't too bad. Glenn said the calcium chloride helped firm it up. J. Tierney asked how magnesium chloride compares to calcium chloride on the roads. Glenn wasn't sure but can research with other road agents. Tierney said they are trying the magnesium chloride in the Sunapee/Newport area as a test program.

<u>Water/Sewer – Reggie Charron, Supervisor</u>
- We received the new water sewer truck; it's being outfitted and prepped for winter. Randy is working on it.
- Bart went out and shaped the roads.
- At the Old Village facility there have been issues (leach field) with E.coli's; which is due to the heat, animals, etc. There were a couple of violations, which are expected this time of year. The river was very high, it's been a tough summer, the grass is growing like crazy.
- Today we had another sewer issue; found an unknown manhole that we had to cut up. We will be repairing tomorrow. When we did the road back in 2016 the tar was already over it. We got it fixed and the homeowner back up and running. It was on their side, but we needed that extension.
- The meter readings are done, and the bills went out.
- We have another new house coming in that we need to hook up W/S to. There is another new one at 89 Old Village Rd., water is already there.
- DES and FEMA, we are trying to work with them.

Norm asked about the problem in the Northumberland leach field. Reggie said it's one of the tests that we do, there are deer and other animals up in there which can equate to e coli. It's in good shape but has a seasonal effect.

K. Frechette heard that someone on Eames St. turned on a fire hydrant. Reggie said yes and he was dealt with. Residents are not supposed to do that. It was on July 4th; it was a fireman, and he knew that he was wrong. When you do that the residents end up with dirty water. When he did that it made the water in the pipes dirty. He agreed that he made a mistake. Reggie said unless it's a fire or emergency no one is to open a fire hydrant. J. Tierney asked if there is anything in the water regs pertaining to a fine if someone opens a hydrant? Reggie said someone complained about the dirty water and has asked for an abatement. If we are opening a hydrant we notify the residents prior to. Reggie further discussed. Tammy said we checked and there isn't anything in the regs. There is no way to know what was wasted. Reggie said in that area it's probably a 500 – 600 gal/min. because it's a 4" line.

C. Wheeler asked if the State will be paving out to the shoulders on Church St. Glenn said no, they didn't do it in Lancaster either. They milled it out. J. Tierney said in 2026 we are redoing the sidewalks, when that's done they will come in and repave. We have a verbal agreement that it will be milled down and 2" layer will be put on. Chris asked if the sidewalks will be narrower so that Main St. is wider. Tammy said it depends on where it is, some are not wide enough, and some are too wide, which is based on from the yellow line to the curb. In some areas we may widen the sidewalk but will lose a couple parking spots. There will be a public hearing about this in the not-so-distant future, which hasn't been scheduled yet. Glenn said the sidewalks on State St. are wider because in the past property owners had porches and the property line comes out into the sidewalks. The State has a right of way, beyond the white line is ours to maintain. Glenn said it's just how they wrote the laws back in the day. The storm drains, snow removal, etc. is the Town's responsibility.

Norm asked if his rate would change if he opens the hydrant for a fire at his house? Reggie said no.

5. Requested Agenda Matters:

a. Veterans & Active Military Appreciation Day – Rick Archer said we are working with the American Legion Post 17 along with the Vouchers for Veterans Program to put on a Veterans Appreciation Day on Sunday, October 20, 2024.

We are going to have several different veteran motorcycle clubs participating. We are looking to use the big ballfield for everybody to assemble and have a blessing of the bikes. We are working on a route for them to ride and then return to the Legion for food and music.

J. Weagle said they can't go on the field, but can be outside the fence. Glenn can show Rick the area that would be permissible. J. Tierney said people are not supposed to drive/park on the field. If the American Legion is co-sponsoring they can cover the event with their insurance. Chris asked if he will be talking with the Legion about the insurance. Rick said he's working with Commander Perry and will met with him on Monday. Tammy noted that they can provide a certificate of insurance, if not Rick can come back to the Board. She also recommended checking with the school re: games scheduled. Kelly Brown is the Athletic Director.

K. Frechette asked what will be happening at this event. Rick explained the bike ride, will put up a tent at the Legion, will have food trucks, and the Legion will provide music. J. Weagle suggested contacting the Coos Sheriff's office about it, they might help out.

Tammy said Rick had asked about cutting into the curbing at the small ballfield for disabled people in wheelchairs. He has a vendor that comes to the Farmers Mkt in a wheelchair and the family has to lift her over the curb. Discussion ensued about the possibility of doing this to make it easier for those that are in wheelchairs.

Glenn said the State moved the crosswalks; discussion continued re: the crosswalks. The State reached out about removing the one by Charron's. They told us if it weren't removed, the Town would need to put in a light to meet regulations. The light system would cost the Town approx. $50,000. Andre further discussed the white lines.

Norm asked about the lights; J. Weagle explained it would be a push button type when someone wanted to cross.

6. Town Administrator Business:

a. Hazard Mitigation Grant – Tammy said the Board needs to sign it and initial the bottom. The Hazard Mitigation Grant is expiring, and the State does a grant to offset the cost. It costs about $10,000 to update; the grant pays 90% of it.

J. Tierney read the Hazard Mitigation Grant.

"The Select Board, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as presented in the amount of $9,000.00 for updating the local hazard mitigation plan. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be $10,000, in which the town will be responsible for a 10% match ($1,000)."

Motion to have James Tierney, Chairman sign all the documents related to the grant by: K. Bronson
2nd by: J. Weagle, All in Favor 3-0

Please note: James Tierney, Chairman – Board of Selectmen is authorized to sign all documents related to the grant.

b. Dog Waste Trash Receptacle Complaints – Tammy said a person stopped in and filed a complaint about the Dog Waste receptacles, they are overflowing. We contacted the Beautification Committee to please clean them up. Then Paul Perras came in and said the people think it's the Town's responsibility. J. Weagle said Paul saw him about it and Jim will be taking care of them tomorrow. There is probably garbage in the bottom of it as well. We put a garbage container out. K. Bronson thanked Jim for taking care of it, but he isn't the only one on the Beautification Committee. J. Weagle said the others are 2 ladies and he doesn't mind taking care of it. K. Bronson said he also got complaints through calls at home. If it came down to it, he would do it if necessary.

Tammy said that one of the comments on Facebook implied that the Beautification Comm has dis-banded. We gave them a large sum of money, by their request, that's in the budget. J. Weagle said as far as he knows it's still active. Tammy said they get an appropriation for $4,500 which was an approved warrant article. J. Weagle said they use it for the flowers, dog receptacles, banners, etc.

Clint Bramlet said he took the pictures of the receptacles and posted them. He said they are terrific to have. He asked if the committee put a trash can near the gazebo. No, the Town put that out. Clint said it seems logical with a Town trash can close by to have the Town take care of them. J. Weagle said some towns have a Parks and Recreation Dept, but we (the committee) put them in, and we have been taking care of them. Clint doesn't see why the Town doesn't just do it. What raised the issue with him, was when he was coming into Town with a friend, he sees the bridge that needs to be painted and the train that need repairs and painting then down the street is the dog receptacle mess. It's a bad first impression and it needs to be kept up.

Reggie agrees, but Paul is getting hit and it's not his job. If the Town is going to do it the Selectmen need to approve. If people are putting trash in the dog receptacles they should be fined. Tammy commented about Lancaster and taking the waste stations away. She can reach out to other Towns in regards to what they did when they removed them and is it a health issue? Discussion continued about the use of the dog receptacles and littering.

Deb Laflamme said it should probably be checked every day with all the dogs around. Judy Fox noted there is a resident that is using the one near the Town Office instead of taking care of it themselves.

c. 7/10 Storm Damage Update – Tammy – As Glenn said we had quite the damage on 2 highway roads and 3 W/S access roads. FEMA reached out to ask if they could come in, Glenn and Tammy met them after hours. We looked over Brook Rd and Herman Savage Rd. Kudos to the Highway Dept. for getting them fixed. She had to show FEMA the pictures of what the damage looked like. They have put in the paperwork to the Federal government. They are trying to declare an emergency; and are waiting for a signature to get it declared. It could take 2 weeks or more before we hear anything.

Part of what they pushed for is an organization called Natural Resources Conservation Service. Glenn met with them last week; they said part of our damage is something they can help with. We will have to go through a grant application process with them.

Glenn has reached out to a company about replacing the large culvert on Herman Savage Rd. The cost for the permitting and the engineer just for the culvert came in at approx. $73,000. With all the damage in the area with other towns, they recommend we put a down payment on it now. The good news is FEMA implied if circumstances allow they will let us to go with a box type culvert. J. Tierney discussed work they have done in the past that failed; they eventually learn. Tammy noted they will talk to us about increasing the size.

Glenn reviewed. Tammy said we don't want to order something that we can't afford and have FEMA and NRCS not support it. We have been sitting on extra bridge and block grant State money, $119,000 has been reserved. When we spoke with Paul Crane (2 years ago) his opinion was we are probably looking at a quarter million. When dealing with FEMA it was estimated at $400,000. This will give us a match on either of the 2 grants. Glenn out of all that looked at it there are some that have the same idea about moving the culvert up the road and changing the angle. J. Tierney suggested finding out what a 6' culvert costs. Glenn said it could take a month. Tammy doesn't want to do a downpayment right now, some grants won't allow for payments before, or the cost is outside of the project. Tammy said the bridge grant can be used for the culvert and the highway grant can be used for the road.

***Clint asked if we had some resolution for the dog waste. J. Weagle is going to pick up and J. Tierney said the Board will discuss again once Tammy gets additional info from other towns re: what they have done. So maybe at the next meeting or the first meeting in September.*

J. Tierney further reviewed the damage in the local area – there was more than enough for a federal declaration. Tammy said FEMA makes their decisions, they can't include the State roads. Their level is only for the Town roads; Corrigan Hill and Rt 135 are State. Lancaster had approx. $3.5 million on their town roads, Dalton approx. $1.5 million.

d. 48 Maple Street (Map/Lot 104-229) Bid – There are 2 bids that came in.
1. Harry Rice Jr & Deb Weeks - $5,102.00
2. Rena Kirk - $1,011.00

Motion to go with the Harry Rice & Deb Weeks bid for $5,102 by: J. Weagle 2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

Tammy reminded that it's tax deeded property and we need to go through the process.

e. Investment Policy – Tammy didn't recommend anything for changes; it basically says the the Treasurer is in charge of doing the investments, investments are at your direction and the Town is in charge of making sure there are internal controls in place to reduce the chance of embezzlement, or fraud. Tammy noted that she changed the names on the bottom for this year.

Motion to re-adopt the Investment Policy by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

f. Water/Sewer Abatement Request – Tammy said this is a property in Town that Reggie had reached out to the homeowner (because it was vacant) to recommend shutting off the water. They advise they had heat in the building and didn't want to do that. A contractor showed up in the spring and advised there is a leak. There was over 1,000,000 gallons that has run through the meter. The break was on the other side of the meter. The property was being foreclosed on; the title company has reached out for information. K. Wiles told them what was owed ($538.00) and there would be a water bill also. We warned the foreclosure company the bill is in excess of $17,000.

The title company contacted us and said the property has been sold and it won't be foreclosed. Tammy had everyone in the office search for any email from the property, the title company name, etc.; none of us could find an email where the title company had contacted us for what was outstanding. The property was sold on April 5th, the bill wasn't issued until the end of April. It was for the 3 months under the prior owner. The title company has reached out to us 3 months later to ask if the water bill can be abated.

Somebody who is aware of the amount of the bill came in today to advise it's for sale. The company sold in April for approx. $129,200. It's currently on the market for $299,000. If the title company didn't do their job that's not the Town's issue.

Motion to deny the request for an abatement by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

g. Tammy – 6 Central Ave – A couple purchased the property at 6 Central Ave. recently. They want to do some renovations and know they will need a building permit. They are both teachers and have only 2 weeks of summer left before they need to head back. They are not worried about anything in the house, but there is a dilapidated garage on the property and would like to take it down prior to the building/demo permit getting approved. J. Tierney had no issue with them taking it down, the permit needs to be in for the next meeting.

****Roland LaFlamme asked about the million gallons of water lost; how did the meter readers not catch it? Reggie said it was in between meter reads and it was 69 days. He asked if that's why the water bill went up? Reggie said not. This is the W and S bill. Clint Bramlet asked if a lien can be placed on the property. Tammy said the bill just went out, in NH if it's not paid by our next lien date, then a lien can be placed on the property. She discussed the deeding.*

Motion to allow 6 Central Ave to demo the garage only. The demo permit and building permit need to be in before the next meeting by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson

Norm asked if this includes the sewer; J. Weagle said yes because this was negligence.

All in Favor 3-0

Tammy recommended for when motions are on the floor to complete it before allowing other topic discussions in the middle of it.

7. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

a. Building Permits (1): Map/Lot 101-029; Steven Law, 29 Graham St. - 1 bedroom, 1 bath**,** 540 sq ft., 10' x 20' concrete slab, 10' x 20' prefab building, 10' x 14' added bedroom, 6' x 14' front deck, town W/S hookup. Al needs to sign; the $250.00 fee is paid. Glenn said

the owner reached out to him, he has no problem with the location of the driveway, it was existing.

Reggie asked if we will require a bond on him? We will need to dig up across the road, Glenn commented that he wants to do the work himself. We haven't requested a bond when it's a local contractor. Mr. Law claims he's doing it through his father-in-law, we don't know if he's renting an excavator or what. Reggie discussed what will need to be done, closing the road, charging for materials, etc. J. Tierney said he needs to be bonded. Glenn noted it could be anywhere from $20,000 – $25,000. J. Weagle said most contractors have $1,000,000 in insurance. Reggie said he knows that it needs to go under the main line. Al asked if this place is on a slab, where does the w/s go? Reggie said it will come up through the slab and be inside. Al said there was some confusion on the form with the fossil fuels, etc. This is a modular and he has not been able to confirm if a modular is exempt from the PUC energy code. A modular needs to meet the NH Energy codes where a trailer is exempt.

Tammy recommended having Mr. Law send us the certificate or an email stating it's not necessary. Al discussed the property card and the appraisers showing a building but it's not there yet. Tammy clarified, it says it's a 2024 pickup and they need to look at it this year. Discussion continued regarding the property card.

Motion to approve the building permit on condition that it comes back saying they don't need an additional number from NH Energy Commission, plus the driveway and bonding is followed through by: J. Weagle

N. Cotter asked if the applicant marked 2 places? J. Tierney said this is to do with the NH Energy Commission, he marked the yes line then scribbled out; and marked the no line. K. Bronson didn't second the motion; he feels it's incomplete.

2nd by: J. Tierney, 2 in Favor 1 Against

b. Intent to Cut (1): Map/Lot 207-004 - The Board approved this individually; when it was forwarded to DRA, they advised the forester filled out the form wrong. The forester has since re-done so now the new form needs to be signed. He checked something that didn't need to be with municipal land.

Motion to resign the Intent to Cut by: J. Weagle
2nd by: K. Bronson, All in Favor 3-0

8. **Public Comment:

- K. Frechette asked if we have a curfew in Town. Lee Rice said it was never rescinded Tammy said a curfew isn't allowed to be enforced. J. Weagle said people in town didn't want the whistle shut off. Kathy said if we don't have a curfew what do we do? The other night there were a bunch of youngsters riding around on bikes with no lights, going in and out of the street someone is going to hit them. J. Tierney suggested going to the PD.

Andre said he asked a couple of years ago about having the horn shut off and was told there is an ordinance to cover it. It costs a lot of money to keep it going between the compressor and size of air tank and the State has to come in to inspect and certify every 2 years. T. Letson will review the curfew ordinance and noted the PD has been short staffed; one officer will be back this week. Tammy will also speak with the Chief this week.

K. Frechette asked about the house on Cumberland St. that is occupied by someone other than the owner. Tammy said this was discussed at a Dept. meeting; the property was condemned last year. There are also complaints about the W/S bill.

K. Frechette asked what is the Town doing about the property on Bearce St. that the Town owns. It's a tax deeded property, J. Weagle said we typically don't clean up properties due to liability. Reggie said we can hire Beattie to come in and clean it up. There is probably some hazardous material there as well.

- Deb Laflamme asked about a property on her street. J. Weagle said you can live in it as you want. Tammy commented that if a person chooses to live in a derelict building, we are not allowed to say you cannot live in that derelict building. We have a right to say what the yard looks like to an extent. R. Laflamme said there is a unregistered car parked on the street that's been there since April, they plow around it and the PD drives by it; Tammy said one of the officers has said they would gladly look into it. Deb said it's 8 Fiske St. Roland said we have sold our property, and the new owners have asked these questions. Why is trash being put out on Wednesday when p/u isn't until Friday? There are bears getting into it. He further discussed the issue. J. Tierney said there was a warrant article for a Wildlife Ordinance that was turned down at Town Meeting. Trash couldn't be put out until a certain time in the am. Tammy said we do have a bear issue in Town, the best we've been able to do is send a letter.

  Deb and Roland further discussed their street and the issues they have been having. Is there anything that can be done? They feel nothing ever does get done. Kathy asked what do you do when the bears have strewed the garbage? Roland asked if the Health Officer could be sent up to check the area. Tammy will ask the Health Officer to check it. We have the Solid Waste Ordinance, but there isn't a time referenced in it. We have asked the PD to get after them for littering. We know it's a problem.

  Tammy said the Town has no right to lookup a vehicle without a legal reason. The PD has a separate system, but they don't have a legal right to lookup without reason. Tammy further discussed. She didn't know the answer, but we can look in the right-of-way issue.

- Reggie – talking about bikes – the electric bikes, scooters, are they registered? They are going 40 mph headed north by the funeral home. J. Weagle said they are not registered don't have to be. Tammy said she believes the size of the motor makes the difference, but they still have to obey the rules of the road. She noted that one operator came in to say they got into trouble with the PD. J. Fox talked about a couple that she's encountered near the high school. Discussion continued about the types of electric bikes and scooters.

- C. Wheeler – at the last meeting you were going to look for money to stripe the Brown Rd. J. Tierney said we did, and it will be done when the State does theirs.

  Hill project – Tammy said there was a pre-bid meeting last week. Three contractors came to the meeting, and another had questions but couldn't be there. There will be bid opening on Wednesday 8/7 at the Horizons office. After the bids are reviewed and complete, the Board will review them. They are hoping work will start in September; some of the small areas will be done with the majority being be done next year. As part of the pre-bid meeting, we wanted the work to start this year.

  Chris asked about the railroad crossing, who is responsible for it? The railroad is it was repaired 4-5 years ago. They are hard to get in touch with. The State owns the other crossings. It was St. Lawrence that owned it, someone else leased this side. Now VT Central will have both, but it hasn't been sold yet. J. Tierney said we can put in a request with them. Reggie said currently we are in negotiations for the hill project. Tammy will get the contact info from Horizons and send a letter.

- Discussed the new employee at the meeting house. He has knowledge but isn't local however he is learning it rapidly. He said he's not a historian, I'm a person that loves history. He's only doing Saturdays this year. He's hoping for a long relationship with the Town.

- Pete Marshall thanked whoever for his junkyard permit – he has received it.

9. Announcements:

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office will be closed on August 22, 2024 for training.
National Night Out will be tomorrow (8/6/24) from 4 pm – 8 pm at the big ballfield.
The Town Office will be closed on Monday, September 2, 2024, in observance of Labor Day.

10. Next Board Meeting Date: Monday, August 19, 2024 – 6 pm

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

Resident was not at the meeting – there was not a Non-Public Session held.

a. Resident Matter

12. Adjournment:

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm

*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 (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