Town of
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Town of Northumberland
Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes – Draft
Date: Monday, March 4, 2024
Place: Town Meeting Room – 10 Station Square
Time: 6:00 P.M.

Board Members present: Bill Caron, Jim Weagle
Others present: Al Rossetto, Jodi Paradis, Liz Ball, Amanda Anderson, Tammy Letson, Glenn Cassady, Kathy Frechette, Judy Fox, Norm Cotter, Ryan Shannon, Melinda Kennett, Reggie Charron, Terri Charron, Kathy Wiles and Andre Brasseur.

1. **Chairman Opens the meeting:**

   B. Caron opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Acceptance of Minutes:**

   Motion to approve the February 20, 2024 minutes by: J. Weagle
   2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

   Motion to approve the February 29, 2024 minutes by: J. Weagle
   2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

3. **Department Head Business:** Highway and Water/Sewer

   Highway – Glenn Cassady, Town Road Agent
   We had several small storms that we responded to. With the rain on Saturday, there were some spots that froze over on Page Hill. With the heavy wind, there was minimal damage from trees, just branches, etc.
   Randy is doing maintenance items.
   14 cords of firewood has been delivered. It was all sawed/split over three (3) days.
   Today, we started working on the dirt roads. We are dragging the York rake to help fill the holes. We are doing some cold patching, etc…With the thawing and freezing, so far the culverts have been ok. The roads are breaking up.

   Water/Sewer – R. Charron, Supervisor

   Reggie thanked Bart and Keith for a nice job while he was out, they didn't have any issues.

   He got back on 02/26. On Thursday, approx. 10:00 a.m., he went to get on the computer at the water plant and had no control. He just had a cyber security class. After three (3) hours of trouble shooting and having the guys from ME come over, R. Charron's biggest concern was to be sure we didn't get hacked. It was a SIM card on one of the modems through Verizon. He doesn't have remote access and is running the systems manually until the SIM card comes in.

   The guys got called back up there for water quality complaints in Town. They found that the 150-psi valve had popped off at the water plant. It's only happened three (3 0 times. We had

major water hammering in the Town. It's not caused by us. All the issues we had have been eliminated.

It popped off the 150-psi valve. It caused over 4-5 water complaints from no water to a trickle. It was very dirty water in the heart of Town. The last time it happened someone sucked all the water from North into Town. When that happens, the water reservoir wants to catch up and it dropped the water level in the tank over 1½' to 2'. If it was this entity, they supposedly fixed their issues, but couldn't give any good answers. R. Charron put a cease and desist on it until they can have a meeting. He checked to see if they were doing any testing, etc. They said no. The last time this happened, someone was testing their fire system. We can open three (3) hydrants and have this happen, that's why the fire trucks don't do that. The pumps weren't running, but it was a lot of water and when it happened it dropped the water like a rock. R. Charron isn't blaming anyone, but it's happened three (3) times. It made his weekend horrible.

Saturday, the plant was running and the Village tank was overflowing all that time on Saturday. We think all the debris got into the valve and clogged it up. We found that valve had flooded and we lost approx. 100,000 gallons. He shut the tank down for the night. When this happens, it causes nightmares. We are lucky we didn't lose anything. Usually when it happens, we don't see issues until 4-5 days later.

R. Charron wants a meeting with the entity to go over things and he explained that to them. R. Charron read the fire suppression rate schedule – *the needed fire flow for one (1) and two (2) family dwellings, not exceeding two (2) stories in height is 1,000 gallons/min.: for buildings 11–30 feet apart – 15,000 gallons/min. and buildings 10' or less. The needed fire flow for other structures vary depending on construction, occupancy, exposure, and communication. Regardless of the need fire flow line A residential pressure of 20psi is required throughout the system per NHDES water engineering Bureau standards. This min pressure required is intended to prevent the introduction of contaminates into the system.*

R. Charron did explain all of this to the entity. R. Charron further discussed their fire system and it being used to heat the building instead of what it's intended for. L. Marshall on Brown Rd. had no water last time this happened. B. Caron said he hadn't noticed any issues with water at his house on Brown Rd. R. Charron said unless you were drawing it, you wouldn't know. It's completely the same as what happened the last time. We are jeopardizing our system when this happens. We have tried to work with them. A solution would be they need their own fire pond. R. Charron further discussed.

Our water policy states that if we can prove it and there is any back pressure, the entity is responsible. He can't prove it this time. The camera caught the workers leaving at 11:30 that day. J. Weagle commented that we lost a couple of residential meters the last time.

R. Charron said it's happened three (3) times and also caused us problems at the pit. He called in Steve LaFrance who put the system in 30 years ago. When trying to close the bypass valve cover, it wouldn't close tight. There is over a 20' elevation from one tank to that one. That's why it's an altitude pit. We are lucky we didn't' lose anything. R. Charron isn't sure where the Board is going with this, but he's had enough. B. Caron said it would take a large entity to make this happen. They are the only ones that have a 1,000-gallon tank. He brought NH DES in on it and if you are not making 20 psi at all times, you are under regulation.

Sewer hasn't had any issues.

A. Anderson asked if there is a way we can do something when they are going to be testing their system? They need to contact the Water Dept. If there was a fire, how is the fire Dept. supposed to get water from the hydrants? If you know ahead of time, can you make an adjustment? R. Charron isn't blaming anyone at this point, but we went out of our way due to

other instances. When you draw water quick it could do that to any of the valves. This one was huge. He has sent letters asking businesses to let him know when there are testers there.

J. Weagle asked if we can hook a system on the line to monitor it going in? R. Charron said he had the engineer look at it. They are using the fire system for a different purpose. When he talked to the owner, he knew then that a pond is needed.

A. Anderson asked about them drawing the water and being a public safety issue. She questioned if that is something the Fire Dept and the Water Dept can do?

J. Weagle said if they are using the system for something else, they can't draw off our water. T. Letson commented they have done engineering on their adapted system to say that it works.

R. Charron said we need a meeting. They need a State inspection soon. R. Charron said he has been told he can't shut off the water. He's not blaming them, but when you do an investigation, and everything adds up – it can't continue. If it were 30 below and this happened, it could put the whole Town in jeopardy.

R. Shannon commented that we have an 8" line at his work facility and that they have to notify the city when something needs to be done. R. Charron said if we require them to have a meter, we have to buy it. Their word should be as good as his.

A. Anderson – if it's not the correct system, it's a system for fire suppression? R. Charron said our Water Dept was never involved with that set up when they first came in. They were dealing with our old Fire Chief and the Fire Marshall's office in Concord. When he saw it, he knew it wasn't going to work. They put the horse before the cart. Andre is aware of the issues. A. Anderson asked if our Fire Dept. could assist with this? She asked Andre from his perspective does he have any input? There must be a middle ground somewhere. R. Charron said they have a regular sprinkler system. Now they don't want to heat the building. They fill it when they need it. We have issues up there. We shouldn't be using our potable water either.

The office building is on a meter, they use green technology, they use rainwater. A. Anderson further discussed and commented that they need to keep water in their system.

J. Weagle said the Board will look into it.

4. Requested Agenda Matters: None

5. Town Administrator Business:

a. Union Bank Letter- Library – T. Letson said the Town has an account at the Union Bank, which is for the benefit of the Library. The signers are the Trustees of the Trust Funds. The bank will only make changes if the Board of Selectmen send a letter. Is the Board ok with removing the Trustee's and giving the Library custody of the account? The balance is approximately $7,600. K. Wiles said it will continue because the Supervisors change. She recommends doing this as well. It was an endowment that was meant for Library use only. It's a permanent fund where they can't touch the interest. When the check was originally written, it was to the Town of Northumberland and not to the Library.

Motion to send a letter to Union Bank to transfer from the Town to the Public Library by: J. Weagle 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

T. Letson would like to add to the letter. They also have a checking account, which keeps getting changed from paper to electronic that shows up under the Town. They won't change it (the mailing address or to paper) unless a letter is received.

Motion to send a second letter to change the address to the Library by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

The Library doesn't have their own EIN# and shouldn't have their own EIN# which is why the bank looks to the Board of Selectmen.

b. FD Contract – Mutual Aid contract – Andre said this is for NORPAC; the one for the Ambulance is separate. Both of them have been paid for. The Fire Dept. one just needs to be signed.

Motion to sign by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

c. Train Station - T. Letson said there was a meeting on Friday with CDBG re: the train station. It looks like they have a good chance of getting a chunk of money towards it. R. Charron brought up at the meeting the possibility of W/S issues. The good news is, they actually do have active W/S sewer lines. The line comes in from this building. Discussion ensued re: the W/S lines.

T. Letson said our policy says they have to have their own service lines, but their service lines connect to this building and then to Main St. What was suggested was if the Board is willing to write a memorandum of understanding that says provided the service lines don't require any major work, they can stay piggy backed off this building. When major repair is needed then they will need to replace it and go out to Main St.

The Town owns Station Sq., so we could allow them to do that. If they can get permission from the railroad to go under the tracks and go into the mill site line, which is closer.

R. Shannon asked who is running the train station? T. Letson explained that Bob Chapman is the current owner. Rick Archer and his non-profit (Granite Guild) is looking to purchase the train station and turn it into a Community Arts Center. It's considered a Town grant, so the Granite Guild would own it. If anything happens to them, it will belong to the Town.

Motion to write a Memo of Understanding by: J. Weagle
2nd by: B, Caron, All in Favor 2-0

6. Applications/Permits and Warrants:

a. Building Permits (2)-

1. Map/Lot 256-007 – Joseph T. Keenan Trust - he's putting in solar. J. Weagle read the content of the building permit. Al has signed and they have paid.

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

2. Map/Lot 256-003 – Mark Norwalk - B. Caron read the content of the building permit. The permit fee and the late fee have been paid.

Motion to sign by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

b. Abatements (11) – Map/Lot 105-002; Map/Lot 240-027; Map/Lot 225-024; Map/Lot 229-044; Map/Lot 251-016; Map/Lot 240-029; Map/Lot 106-010; Map/Lot 102-023; Map/Lot 102-024; Map/Lot 222-003; and Map/Lot 107-129

R. Charron asked how many have been received and when they come back from the assessors what does that do to the taxes? T. Letson said we put an overlay in the tax rate to cover the differences. If it's not used, then it's put in the Unassigned Fund Balance and further discussed. During a re-evaluation year we always increase it.

A. Anderson asked how much is put in for the overlay for this year? T. Letson said approx. $75,000. The exact amount is in the Town Report. A. Anderson is uncomfortable with that - if it's not used you can use it anywhere. J. Weagle said it goes in the Unassigned Fund Balance, then at Town Meeting it is decided where we can spend it. The only thing it can be used for is to offset taxes.

Motion to send the Abatement requests shown above to the assessors by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

c. Veteran Tax Exemption (1) – Map/Lot 104-208

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

d. Notice of Intent to Cut Timber (1) – 224-007 – 750 tons of Spruce and Fir; 400 tons of hardwood and Aspen. He tried to drop it off on Friday before noon and thought there was no one in the office, so he came back today.

Kathy Wiles asked if the Board notifies the abutters or does the applicant? J. Weagle said to his knowledge the abutters don't need to be notified.

Motion to approve by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

e. Abatement – This abatement just came in today. The property owners stopped in today to fill out the application. It was due by March 1st, but they have been sick and couldn't get out to submit it.

Min commented the RSA state's March 1st, and in her opinion, you would be opening up a can of worms. A. Anderson asked if they gave a reason they didn't get in? There have been notices posted that the office is closed. She understands there is a deadline, but is this a special circumstance? Liz commented they have had months to get this done.

Motion to deny by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

7. **Public Comment:

- Al Rossetto asked if the Board has made any decision on the abatement regarding his vehicle. B. Caron said J. Tierney was going to work on this while he was in Concord. He's not sure what he has heard on this. Al said it's money the Town collected due to the value assessed at $66,000 and the retail price was $50,130, with delivery - $50,800. If this is not corrected, as long as he owns the car he will be paying taxes on approx. $15,000 more than he should. He paid mfg. suggested retail price. He proved to the Board that Kelly Blue Book was incorrect. He provided the Mfg. suggested retail price. B. Caron said if we abate his, everyone will be asking. Al further discussed; if you let it stand, we are paying more than we should. B. Caron commented this should be an issue with anyone that bought a Teslar. Min said they recently received an email from the NH Town Clerks Assoc. saying there have been other cases in the State. It's gone to the State, Min suggested waiting on this. Teslar or any MFG gives their numbers to the State. Al spoke about someone he

knows in Canterbury that didn't pay the additional assessment. The State of NH will not talk to the public. It's $15,000 that we will pay taxes on. It's not fair. He's asking the Board to do something. He's asked J. Tierney about it with no resolve. Min said she responded to the e-mail to advise that we have an incident also. She wouldn't do what the clerk in Canterbury did.

A. Anderson commented that if Min can't do anything, the Board should be doing something. She understands it's not the Boards fault, but Al has been coming to you for months. Has any of the Selectmen talked to anyone in Concord? B. Caron said he hasn't talked to our State Rep (J. Tierney) about this. She keeps hearing a lot of things that are going to happen that are not, so where is our 3rd Selectman? A. Anderson asked if the Board will have an answer by the next meeting? Al said J. Tierney is supposed to be working on this, so he will bring it up at the next meeting again. Min said J. Tierney may have an answer. She had suggested he meet with Eldora before taking it to Concord. She thinks they may have called Concord and discussed this. Min said Sean Durkin did call Eldora.

- R. Shannon asked who will be doing the Welfare position? B. Caron said we haven't hired anyone yet. Ryan was concerned about the people looking for help. The Selectmen cover any requests in the interim. Min commented that the website needs to be kept updated. J. Weagle is trying to keep the website updated as needed. K. Wiles asked about the polling hours and that they need to be put on it as well.

- N. Cotter asked about the Town Office. He wants to know what's going on, no one in there seems to be happy? B. Caron said we've had some changes and more forthcoming with the election. There has been discussion in Non-Public that can't be discussed. What he can say is that we lost the Assessing Clerk. It will be up to the new Board in a couple of weeks to make employee decisions. Min will be retiring in 12 days, she's loved working there, but it's been tough the past couple of years. She feels the atmosphere is hard not just in the office, but across the board. She hopes in the future there are team meetings to get everything back together. If not, it's not going to work and it will be revolving door. R. Shannon said it wasn't like that a few years ago, it ran pretty smooth. The Towns' people are getting fed up with the corruption. It's incredible and weaponizing the PD on top of it. Why is the Chief standing here tonight? B. Caron said anyone from any town can come in and listen. It's open to the public.

- A. Anderson said on Sept 18, 2023, she made a FOIA request and sent it to the Board. It hasn't been addressed or answered. There is an RSA on this that requires five (5) days. It was about grants. She wasn't given what she asked for. B. Caron said she was given a list of the grants. A. Anderson said they were grants that Robin applied for and she was in the process of looking for other grants for the bridge. T. Letson commented that they were grants she applied for.

  A. Anderson submitted another one on 02/23/24. It was a FOIA regarding the salaries, job positions and stuff. J. Tierney agreed to put all the positions and wages in the Town Report. J. Weagle said we decided not to do that, as it opens it up worldwide for access to the numbers. Anyone can get that information by stopping at the Town Office to request.

  A. Anderson is asking for RSA's to be followed. T. Letson stated that if you read the RSA again, it's five (5) business days to *respond* to you, which she (T. Letson) did respond to her (A. Anderson), and A. Anderson responded back to her. T. Letson said she has it done it, but wants the Board to see it before it goes out. Ryan said we were told that we can stop at the Town Office and get it on the spot. Now you are saying it needs to go back to the Selectmen. He asked many times to have it in the Town Report. T. Letson said it has to go to the lawyer, but he didn't get a response at the next meeting. A. Anderson commented Tierney said we could put it in. Ryan said Tierney indicated there were five (5) pages available. Ryan doesn't agree with J. Weagle about the worldwide comment.

J. Weagle said we don't care if you as a taxpayer has that information. We are just trying to protect the employees. T. Charron commented that the Town cares about the employee's identity. Discussion continued about positions and salaries.

- K. Wiles commented that at one of the Town Meetings, it wasn't in there and the lawyer said it shouldn't be in there. Min said hers has always been different. A few years ago her salary was on the warrant because the Town Attorney said it needed to be that way. If you look at the School Warrant, it breaks it all down. She didn't like it and thought she was being singled out, but it worked out.

- A. Anderson said we are asking for the name of the position and the salary and Tierney agreed to it. T. Letson said you can get it tomorrow and B. Caron closed Public Comments.

8. Announcements: Planning Board meeting on March 6, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Town Elections on March 12, 2024; and Town Meeting on March 16, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. (or shortly after the School Meeting)**.**

9. Next Board Meeting Date: Monday, March 18, 2024 – 6 pm

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

Motion to go into Non-Public by: J. Weagle, 2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0
Roll Call – B. Caron – yes; J. Weagle - yes

Into Non-Public session at 7:29 pm

a. Resident Matter

Motion to come out of Non-Public by: J. Weagle
2nd by: B. Caron, All in Favor 2-0

Out of Non-Public session at: 8:36 pm

Into Regular Session at 8:36 pm

T. Letson reviewed with the Board what she put together re: the positions and wages that were asked for. She suggested listing the position and salary without the names. T. Letson will explain with an * when there are stipends only and no actual wage. She will verify with J. Tierney and then will send it to the one(s) that requested the information.

11. Adjournment:

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:39

*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)

Minutes approved by Northumberland Select Board Members on_____

X_____
William Caron
Northumberland Select Board Chair

X_____
Jim Tierney
Northumberland Select Board Member

X_____
Jim Weagle
Northumberland Select Board Member

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