

TOWN OF NEW DURHAM
Board of Selectmen
August 22, 2023, 3:30 P.M.
New Durham Town Hall, New Durham, NH 03855

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PRESENT

David Swenson, Select Board Chair
Dorothy Veisel, Select Board Vice Chair
Marc DeCoff, Select Board Member

ALSO PRESENT

Kathleen Blaney, Finance Manager
Bob Bickford, 1772 Meetinghouse Restoration Committee
Jonathan Halle, architect – via Zoom
Judy Purington
Alicia Housel, Town Clerk
Shawn Bernier, Police Chief
Cathy Orlowicz, Resident
Linda Callaway, Resident
Katrin Kasper, Clean Energy NH
Ken Fanjoy, Resident
Greg Anthes, Resident
Cecile Chase, Resident
David Bickford, Resident

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

AGENDA REVIEW

No changes were made to the Agenda.

MOTION: To enter nonpublic session pursuant to RS 91:A-3II, (a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted;* (c) *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant; (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.* Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Ms. Veisel. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel -aye; Selectman DeCoff-aye; Chair Swenson-aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.

The Board entered non-public session at 3:31 p.m.

The Board reentered public session at 4:00 p.m.

MOTION: To seal the minutes of the non-public first session of August 23, 2023 for reasons it may adversely affect the reputation of one other than the Board. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Chair Swenson reopened the public meeting at 4:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

PUBLIC INPUT

Greg Anthes, resident, made comments regarding his concerns about ongoing issues with the 1772 Meetinghouse Restoration project and the fact that the committee wants to make the structure a community use building; he stated that in his opinion it could destroy the historic nature of the site.

Rudy Rosiello, resident, gave comments about the archives on the Town website; he stated there does not seem to be transparency due to the lack of proper posting of notices and minutes. He stated he also researched school district records and suggested the Town looks at how the documents are handled and made public.

Announcements

Chair Swenson stated information was received by the Board from State Representative Mike Harrington regarding new legislation and Mr. Harrington asked the Board for input on the issue.

Vice Chair Veisel gave a statement in response to harassment allegations made, indicating an investigation was done with findings that exonerated Chair Swenson.

MOTION: To lift the interim restriction on Chair Swenson, effective today, which limited his communication with the Town Administrator by written communication through the Administrative Assistant. Motion by Vice Chair Veisel. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 2-0-1 (Chair Swenson abstained).

MOTION: To transfer all investigative charges in the amount of \$16,115 to Account 4130 rather than into the legal cost account Motion by Vice Chair Veisel. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 2-0-1 (Chair Swenson abstained).

Selectman DeCoff stated the report is digital and will be made public after Chair Swenson and the Town Administrator have had the opportunity to review the report.

NEW BUSINESS

Warren Street Architectural Firm Meetinghouse Restoration Project – Jonathan Halle

Bob Bickford, 1772 Meetinghouse Restoration Committee, stated the Committee is currently working on a grant application which would provide funding for the project through Phase 4; he stated in order to create a budget for the grant, they need conceptual drawings which can be done by Mr. Halle.

Mr. Halle stated his firm has done a number of historic projects over the last thirty years. The cost is unclear until there is a scope of work; if the building is on the historic register there is a

process that has to be followed after the drawings are done. There was discussion about the details of approval from the Secretary of State and Department of Interior.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to proceed with obtaining a proposal from Mr. Halle.

As part of the Meetinghouse project it was noted that an interpretive display to explain the Meetinghouse history be on display after renovation is completed.

Meetinghouse Commemorative Stones Invoice

The Board reviewed a purchase order for commemorative stones. Chair Swenson asked for confirmation whether the maintenance of those stones would be in perpetuity. Mr. Bickford stated he will look into that and report back to the Board.

MOTION: To approve the purchase of the 6” by 12” by 4” granite stones for the Meetinghouse from Vermont Stone Sculpture for a total of \$1,000 with the understanding a Purchase Order will be issued with funds to come from the newly established 1772 Meetinghouse Donation ETF. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Library Roofing Cost Estimate – Judy Purington

The Board reviewed and discussed the proposals for roof replacement and necessary repairs. It was confirmed the work could be completed before winter. Quotes from New England Roofing and Jabbert Contracting were reviewed.

Speed Board & Placement (ARPA Fund Usage) – Police Chief Bernier

The Board reviewed a quote for the purpose of a speed board. Chief Bernier explained how the product is used, where these could be placed, noting it is solar powered. He explained there are some residents in the Merrymeeting Lake area who would like the speed limits reduced from 25 to 20 around the lake. However, he cannot find information to indicate that is allowed. There was discussion about adding speed humps to slow traffic in the area of the Town beach.

Chair Swenson stated there are ARPA funds available which can be utilized for public safety needs. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to try the units in the Merrymeeting Lake area. It was also agreed to have Chief Bernier research costs for units which are mobile and units that have flashing lights.

Chief Bernier presented information obtained through research of speed ordinances for review by the Board. He also gave his recommendations for changing limits in different areas. The Select Board, by consensus, indicated it will review these recommendations and act on them in a future meeting.

Discussion of Energy Committee – Katrin Kasper, Clean Energy NH

Ms. Kasper gave an overview of the services provided by Clean Energy NH; she stated they work with municipalities to find funding for projects as well as looking at ways to improve

energy efficiency for the town. Ms. Kasper stated she will forward additional literature as well as a portfolio for review and discussion by the Board. It was noted that it would cost \$250 to become a member of Clean Energy NH.

Zechariah Boodey Farmstead Committee – Revisit Gravel Purchase

Ms. Orlowicz, Chair of the Zachariah Boodey Farmstead Committee, stated the Board approved a gravel purchase at the meeting of May 9, 2023; she explained since that time she has not been able to get a response from the company which was awarded the bid. She contacted other contractors for gravel materials and only Greymont was able to supply the gravel. The Board reviewed the purchase order.

MOTION: To rescind prior approval for gravel and to award the bid to Greymont Earth Materials with a cost not to exceed \$15,000 with the funds to come from the Boodey Farmstead Charitable Checking account. Motion by Selectman DeCoff. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Ms. Orlowicz presented a contract with Iron Will Contracting for the installation of the septic system for review by the Board.

Joint Select Board / Budget Committee Meeting FY24 Budget Update

Chair Swenson stated he presented the concepts discussed by the Board to the Budget Committee and there were no changes. He stated department head reports are due to Ms. Blaney by the end of September and asked that her report be to the Board as soon as possible after that.

Public Facilities Building Site Committee Final Report

The report from the subcommittee was distributed and reviewed by the Board. Selectman DeCoff read the report into the record.

Chair Swenson stated the original charge for the subcommittee was to look at all the properties previously identified as being potentially suitable and report back with the top two recommendations; he stated the two recommendations require acquisition of the property which there is not currently enough funds in the Land Acquisition CRF.

CRF / ETF Request

Chair Swenson explained the creation of ETFs and CRFs were approved by voters in March; subsequently funds were transferred from the old CRF to the General Fund and it was the consensus of the Board that those funds need to go back to the respective trust funds / CRFs / ETFs as soon as possible. Ms. Blaney stated they will be setting up a meeting with the Trustee of the Trust Funds in September and plans to have the transfers corrected soon. The Board reviewed the summary of accounts. It was the consensus that transfers were done but there needs to be documentation for verification.

Voting Booths and Poll Pads – Alicia Housel, Town Clerk

Chair Swenson stated this discussion is a follow up to a previous discussion as well as a meeting in which the various machines were reviewed by the Board, Town Moderator and Town Clerk. He stated there are a large number of elections coming in 2024 and the Town is in need of various upgrades to provide the needed election services. Ms. Housel explained the different voting booth options; noting the capability for the machines to be used at sitting or standing levels. She stated the machines can be moved and utilized as space allows. The quote presented for review is for six stations which equals 24 booths and will meet the presidential election requirements. Chair Swenson asked what is done with old machines. Ms. Housel stated many towns put them out for donation for towns in need.

MOTION: To approve the purchase of six Franklin 4 station booths and six booth curtains from Inclusion Solutions in the amount of \$8,089.18 with the source of funding to be determined at the next Board of Selectmen meeting. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Ms. Housel explained they also need approval from the New Hampshire Secretary of State for the purchase of the electronic polling pads; she explained these will be used for checking in voters; it will speed up the process and reduce errors.

MOTION: To approve the application to the New Hampshire Secretary of State for New Durham to use up to three polling pads per the information provided to the Board of Selectmen on August 22, 2023. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Tax Credit / Exemptions

The Board reviewed the requests for tax credits and exemptions; Chair Swenson confirmed these were reviewed by the contract assessor.

MOTION: To approve the All Veterans Tax Credit for Map 258, Lot 032. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 3-0-0.

MOTION: To approve the Veterans Tax Credit for Map 111, Lot 021 in the amount of \$750. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 3-0-0.

MOTION: To approve the Veterans Tax Credit for Map 250, Lot 054 in the amount of \$750. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 3-0-0.

MOTION: To approve the Veterans Tax Credit for Map 251, Lot 019 in the amount of \$750. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Land Use Change Tax

Chair Swenson noted the packet is incomplete and further information is needed.

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the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant; (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.

The Board entered non-public session at 6:37 p.m.

The Board reentered public session at 8:50 p.m.

MOTION: To seal the minutes of the non-public second session of August 22, 2023 for reasons it may adversely affect the reputation of one other than the Board. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman Veisel. Motion passed 3-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary