

**TOWN OF NEW DURHAM**  
***Board of Selectmen Meeting***  
**March 7, 2024, 10:00 AM**

**New Durham Town Hall, New Durham, NH 03855**

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*DRAFT: These minutes are strictly a draft copy and are awaiting amendment or approval at a subsequent, duly noticed public meeting. Amendments to these minutes will be noted in the minutes of said meeting. The draft will be posted on the website as a draft copy for public informational use only.*

**PRESENT**

David Swenson, Select Board Chair  
Dorothy Veisel, Select Board Member – via Zoom  
Marc DeCoff, Select Board Member

**ALSO PRESENT**

Cecile Chase, Interim Town Administrator  
Cathy Orlowicz, Boodey Farmstead Committee  
Celeste Chasse, Parks and Recreation Director  
Jack Widmer, Governor Wentworth Regional School District  
Fred Quimby, New Durham Water Quality Committee

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

**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; (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee; (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 the 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 Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman DeCoff-aye; Chair Swenson-aye. Motion passed 2-0-0.**

The Board entered non-public session at 10:02 AM.

The Board reentered public session at 11:13 AM.

Selectman Veisel joined the meeting via Zoom.

**MOTION: To seal the minutes of the non-public session of the March 7, 2024 meeting for reasons it may adversely affect the reputation of one other than the Board. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman Veisel. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel -aye; Selectman DeCoff-aye; Chair Swenson-aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

None.

#### **Town Administrator Report**

Interim Town Administrator Chase stated over the last few weeks, they have continued with the reorganization in Town Hall and staff needs have been addressed. She stated the Finance Office is still working on the 2023 budget reconciliation. She has been in touch with Primex to create an employee training program to address various issues.

There is going to be a vacancy on the Cemetery Trustee Committee but they are working on getting a write-in; information is also being posted for the purchase of available cemetery lots.

Interim Town Administrator Chase stated they have met with pest control companies for contracts.

Stormwater management plans have been discussed with the Highway Department and Department of Public Works as well as the Town Engineer.

Winter Carnival took place recently and there was great attendance and participation.

Training sessions are being held for poll workers and preparations are being made for next week's Town elections.

Interim Town Administrator Chase stated she attended the Cable Consortium meeting yesterday in Franklin.

#### **Report from Chair**

Chair Swenson stated the Town election is Tuesday, March 12 and encouraged everyone to vote.

#### **Agenda Review**

Chair Swenson suggested reordering items on the agenda.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

***Chairman Jack Widmer, GWRSD***

Mr. Widmer gave a presentation of the 2024 school district budget as well as the warrant articles. He stated school board elections are also coming up.

Chair Swenson noted the first warrant article doesn't affect the tax rate and asked the plan for funding in future years. Mr. Widmer stated the funding is proposed to come from the unanticipated fund balance; these funds are typically returned to taxpayers. He stated there is no new taxation for Article 4; the final article is for an additional SR officer for a one year position. Mr. Widmer explained the budget items which are prioritized for funding as well as how the budget is developed based on prior budget year expenditures. Chair Swenson expressed concerns about the significant increases in various budget lines and stated justification is lacking. Mr. Widmer explained some of the services such as special education, need to be budgeted for but won't necessarily be use; the breakdown of the per pupil price is \$23,201. Chair Swenson noted the Town tax rate for the school is \$10.69 per thousand, which is a 4.8% increase over last year. Chair Swenson asked how impact fees are applied. Mr. Widmer stated it goes into the general fund and there is no specific line for the use. Selectman DeCoff noted that if impact fees aren't used within six years, they are supposed to go back to the person who paid it. There was discussion about the unassigned fund balance but details of the Annual Report are not available at this meeting.

***Competitive Bids Required – Shaws Pond BMP Matrix***

???, New Durham Water Quality Committee, gave a summary data collected from 2018 to 2023 provided by UNH of water testing for Shaws Pond. It was noted there has been a significant increase in contaminates in that time period.

Fred Quimby, New Durham Water Quality Committee, stated there are funds in the Water Quality CRF and suggested using the funds for mitigation measures on Shaw Pond for this year. He suggested the work could be done by the Town and a conceptual design be done by the Town Engineer, Weston and Sampson. A contract proposal was presented for review by the Board. It was agreed additional cost information is needed for a conceptual design.

**MOTION: To approve the contract with F&D Environmental per the information provided in the memorandum of March 6, 2024 from Fred Quimby for up to \$11,800, for the work defined in the memo with the understanding the funds will be coming from the Milfoil Treatment CRF. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

***Zechariah Boodey Farmstead Committee, Appointment – Cathy Orlowicz***

Cathy Orlowicz, Chair of the Zechariah Boodey Farmstead Committee, stated a committee member's term will be expiring soon; at the January meeting the committee voted to recommend the reappointment of Scott Drummey to the committee.

**MOTION: To nominate Scott Drummey for reappointment to the Zechariah Boodey Farmstead Committee. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

***Parks & Recreation Committee – Celeste Chasse***

Celeste Chasse, Director of the Parks and Recreation Commission, presented an application for an appointment to the Committee.

**MOTION: To appoint Nikki Nash to the position of Parks and Recreation Commission for a three year term. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

Ms. Chasse asked the Board to consider permitting alternates for the Committee. Chair Swenson noted there were in the past and suggested she check the charter to confirm the provision.

***DPW Trucks – Purchase vs Lease, New vs Used; Maintenance Costs***

The Board reviewed and discussed information presented regarding the purchase and lease of Department of Public Works trucks.

***Property Issues – O’Brien / Lopiano***

Chair Swenson noted there have been multiple public meetings regarding these property issues and the Board of Selectmen worked to provide reasonable solutions. Interim Town Administrator Chase gave an update on the cases, noting the O’Brien case has been settled to satisfy the property owners and meet zoning requirements. She stated they are still working through the case with Mr. Lopiano; a conceptual plan was done by the Town Engineer in 2022 and Mr. Lopiano also presented a plan which has been reviewed by the Town Engineer. Interim Town Administrator Chase stated it will be up to the Board to decide the next steps going forward.

***Impact Fees – Status for Next Tax Billing***

Chair Swenson asked for an update on the impact fees for action by the Board.

**NEW BUSINESS**

***Election Coverage (March 12, 2024) – Selectman Pro Tem Delegation (Veisel)***

Chair Swenson stated Selectman DeCoff and himself will be covering the election polls; however, since Selectman Veisel is a candidate on the ballot, a pro tem delegate needs to be appointed by the Board. Selectman Veisel stated Ron Uyeno has agreed to cover for her during the Town Election.

**MOTION: To appoint Ron Uyeno as a Board of Selectmen Pro Tem to cover the election day of March 12, 2024 for Selectman Veisel given that she is a candidate for re-election. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

***Police Cruiser Repurposing***

Interim Town Administrator Chase stated the Board previously discussed the option to repurpose the police cruiser based on the condition; the estimate for repairs is around \$3,000. The registration has been transferred from the Police Department to the Town; it was assessed again for work that is needed which was determined to be minor, totaling about \$800 for repairs. It is expected to last for many years with the current usage by the Building Inspector and the Parks and Recreation department. Interim Town Administrator Chase suggested obtaining decals for the vehicle to indicate it is being used by these departments.

**MOTION: To approve the repurposing of the police cruiser for use by the Code Enforcement Officer and Parks and Recreation Department for miscellaneous uses and approve up to \$1500 additional cost to make repairs and obtain signage to identify usage. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

***Tax Credits / Exemptions / Abatement***

The Board reviewed the tax credit, exemption and abatement requests presented. Chair Swenson confirmed these were reviewed and approved by the contract assessor.

**MOTION: To approve the solar energy exemption for Map 240, Lot 046 in the amount of \$31,500. Motion by Selectman DeCoff. Second by Selectman Veisel. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

**MOTION: To approve the abatement request for Map 261, Lot 006 with a revised assessed value of \$149,900 which is an assessment change of \$20,000; 2023 total tax abatement plus interest. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Selectman DeCoff. Discussion: Selectman DeCoff noted the home was purchased for \$280,000 in March 2023 and questioned why the owners believe value should be reduced so much. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – no; Selectman DeCoff – no; Chair Swenson – no. Motion passed 0-3-0.**

The Board reviewed an Intent to Cut as presented.

**MOTION: To approve the Intent to Cut for Map 261, Lot 007, 008 and 010 per the application received March 7, 2024. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second Selectman DeCoff. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson – aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

***New Durham Fire Department/ Paramedic Services – Postponed.***

***TOTF – Computer and Office Equipment & Town Building Improvement***

Interim Town Administrator Chase presented invoices for the placement of workstations setup in the second floor conference room as well as for the replaced of the hip cap on the Town Hall roof. The Board reviewed and discussed the information presented.

\*\*\*\*\*video/audio ends\*\*\*\*\*

***New Hire & Minute Taker***

***Policy Review – PTO & FMLA***

***BMP / PB / Code Enforcement – Fine Collection***

212 **MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. Motion by Chair Swenson. Second by Vice Chair**  
213 **Veisel. Roll Call Vote: Selectman Veisel – aye; Selectman DeCoff – aye; Chair Swenson –**  
214 **aye. Motion passed 3-0-0.**

215

216 The meeting was adjourned at ???

217 Respectfully Submitted,

218 *Jennifer Riel*

219 Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary