

# **TOWN OF DEERING**

762 Deering Center Road  
Deering, NH 03244

## **Board of Selectmen Final Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 18, 2024 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Chair Jill Smith, Selectman Roy Watson and Selectman Steve Diers  
Also Present: Recording Secretary Wendy Baker

### **Opening of the Meeting by the Chair at 7:00pm**

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Smith made an announcement that Chief Philibert is back and was offered a new contract with a salary of \$78,000/year and he has accepted and signed the contract.

**Chair Smith made a motion to seal the minutes from the January 11, 2024 non-public session. Seconded by Selectman Watson, because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.**

**Vote by Roll Call: Chair Smith – yes, Selectman Watson – yes and Selectman Diers – yes.**

#### **Item 1: Consent Agenda**

Payroll – 1/10/2024 Monthly (\$4,263.99), Weekly (\$10,598.48); 1/17/2024 (\$18,504.54)  
Accounts Payable – 1/10/2024 (\$172,194.29)

**Chair Smith made a motion to approve the items in the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion Passed 3-0.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Item 2: Police Department – Wage Review for Officers**

Chief Philibert proposed staffing and payroll budget changes for 2024. He passed out supporting documents and explained that he would like to eliminate the full-time patrol position and proposed increasing the part-time patrol pay to \$40/hour for certified officers to incentivize current officers to come to Deering and stay, which is closer to a detail rate. He said the full-time budget line, State Retirement and some insurance lines would be decreased as well as the overtime line would be eliminated because he is salary and part-timers would not be eligible for overtime. In the end, the 2023 budget would be up by \$23,000 for 2024 which is contributed by vehicle maintenance and adding \$15,200 for hiring a part-time administrative assistant.

Chief Philibert handed out a proposed schedule of coverage for the department. He said Officer Anctil would remain with 20 hours per week and then he would offer 10-hour shifts for other potential officers.

Selectman Watson inquired what an officer on a detail call would look like.

Chief Philibert explained that the officers wouldn't be on a detail call but for a part-time shift, if Deering pays closer to a detail rate, it is more attractive for someone to take the guaranteed position.

Chair Smith asked how it would improve response time.

Chief Philibert answered that when the State Police and Hillsborough is covering it takes 10+ minutes for either to respond and having part-time officers on a schedule there would be an immediate response.

Chair Smith asked how he came to the \$40/hour.

Chief Philibert answered that most full-time positions in the area are close to \$30/hour and the \$40/hour would entice someone to come take a part-time shift on their day off.

Selectman Diers asked if we structured the pay at \$30/hour and added benefits, what would that cost?

Chair Smith answered health insurance would be a cost of up to \$30,000/year and are required to pay 31% of their annual pay into NH Retirement.

Chief Philibert said he is confident he can fill the part-time positions and most will come outfitted as well as use their own equipment which makes it more comfortable for them and less expensive for Deering.

Chair Smith said she likes the proposal and thinks it would be good to try.

**Selectman Diers made a motion to approve the rate of \$40/hour for part-time police officers recommended by Chief Philibert. Seconded by Chair Smith. Motion Passed 3-0.**

A discussion ensued about panic buttons, security cameras and active shooter training.

Chief Philibert agrees with having panic buttons and the current buttons are outdated and do not work properly, cameras are needed as well.

The Board asked Chief Philibert to get a quote for new panic buttons and try to find training for the employees for active shooters.

### **Item 3: Lou Ellen Beard – 250th Funds**

250<sup>th</sup> Committee member Lou Ellen Beard requested \$5,000 from the Celebration A Trust Fund for set-up and up front costs for the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration. She said the trust fund currently has \$7,039.70 in it and was funded thru taxation.

Chair Smith asked who the check should be made out to?

L. Beard answered to the non-profit 501C3 group Hillsborough Area Community Services Corp.

L. Beard asked that the Board think about how they want to participate in the 3 day 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration event. She said Friday is a Historical day, Saturday is the concert and Sunday is Family day.

Selectman Diers said he would be open to hear what the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee suggests the Board be involved in.

L. Beard said the committee encourages all town boards and committees to be involved in the weekend and that the merchandise will be rolled out for Town Meeting.

The next 250<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting is on January 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at Deering Fish and Game and anyone can attend.

**Chair Smith made a motion to approve \$5,000 to be expended from the Celebration A Trust Fund for the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee to use towards the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration with the check made out to the Hillsborough Area Community Services Corp. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion Passed 3-0.**

Selectman Diers said the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration is a big undertaking for the group and it is appreciated.

#### **Item 4: Ed Cobbett – Zoski Road Drainage**

Ed Cobbett gave an overview the history of Zoski Road (see attached document). He said there were drainage issues because some of the land was underdeveloped in 2006 and NHDES got involved and had the Town install drop culverts. He said the Town agreed to clean the catch basins and the sump and they have not been cleaned in years.

E. Cobbett also talked about sand and silt disposition, damage to Mr. Ives property and proposed remedial actions (see attached document).

Chair Smith said the Board needs to research everything more and asked E. Cobbett for a copy of the history he read earlier.

Selectman Diers said this is not a denial but to move forward we need more information.

#### **Item 5: Highway Department – Status updates on vehicles & garage doors**

Interim Road Agent Martin reported that one of the plow trucks is out of service and the parts to fix it are about 3 weeks out.

Interim Road Agent Martin said they are having issues with the garage door openers, they were not replaced at the time the doors were and they have found they are undersized and are causing safety issues. He has gotten a quote from Crawford for \$1,800 per door opener, 4 are needed.

Discussion regarding the purchasing policy ensued.

Interim Road Agent Martin agreed to get more quotes right away.

Selectman Diers would like to see if door pushers would work and fix the problem for a lot less money.

Discussion ensued regarding the safety issue of the doors falling and door pushers versus new door openers that would be sized correctly for the doors.

Chair Smith suggested the Board meet next Thursday to come back and make a decision once more research has been done, as well as discuss the budget.

The Board authorized by consensus for Selectman Diers to work with Interim Road Agent Martin on finding the best solution for the doors.

### **Item 6: Budget Schedule**

Chair Smith said there is one more batch of 2023 expenditures to be made and she is hoping to have better numbers for next week.

She said the last date to hold the Public Hearing for the Budget is February 16<sup>th</sup> and she would like to propose having it on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

Selectman Watson suggested having the Public Budget Hearing on their regular meeting night of the 15<sup>th</sup> and having regular Board business done on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Smith suggested asking the Budget Advisory Committee if they would like to present their suggested budget at the Public Hearing.

The next agreed upon meetings are as follows:

January 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm to discuss the budget.

February 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm regular Board of Selectman meeting

February 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm regular Board of Selectman meeting

February 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm Public Hearing for the Budget

### **Item 7: Consideration of a Road Agent Hiring Committee**

Selectman Diers said after hearing residents speak at the Special Town Meeting, he feels they want resident involvement in selecting the Road Agent and suggests the Board consider a Hiring Committee.

Selectman Watson agrees that is good idea.

There was a discussion around who would make up the hiring committee.

Selectman Diers said that an outside professional is needed, but not one from a surrounding town.

Chair Smith suggested having a highway employee and asked how many members?

Selectman Watson suggested a committee of 5, 1 highway employee, 1 road expert and residents.

Chair Smith asked if the Town Administrator should be a voting member on the committee.

The Board agreed to put a calling out for residents and see how many sent in interest.

### **Item 8: Discussion on Monthly Department Reports**

Selectman Diers has been concerned about receiving department reports and rather than having a

report submitted each month he would like to see the Department Head bring their report to a meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding how often and when to meet with department heads and go over their reports.

Chair Smith Proposed to have a workshop meeting on the second Tuesday of each month to meet only with department heads and discuss their monthly report. This will also be a great way for everyone to get together and collaborate.

Selectman Diers said he would like to see each of the reports attached to the minutes.

The Board decided by consensus to start these workshops after Town Meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Item 9: Minutes Approval – Public & Nonpublic minutes for 1/4/24 & 1/11/24**

**Selectman Watson made a motion to approve the January 4, 2024 and January 11, 2024 public minutes and non-public minutes as presented Seconded by Selectman Diers. Motion Passed 3-0.**

### **Item 10: Town Administrator Updates**

Not present.

### **Item 11: Selectmen's Reports**

Selectman Watson said the Conservation Commission has an interest in the salt usage around the reservoir.

Selectman Diers said the Planning Board had a meeting for Ordinance changes and he was unable to attend but watched it on streams.

Chair Smith said there were items omitted in last year's annual report that they are working on making sure get in this year. The following is a list of the omitted pieces and items needing formatting:

- Charts in Warrant
- Management Letter portion of the Audit
- Detailed expenditures
- Capital Area Mutual Aid Report
- Budget Advisory Committee Report
- Cemetery Report
- Library Report
- List of employees at the end needs formatting

Chair Smith asked if anyone noticed anything else that needs to be added or changed to please email the Town Administrator.

Chair Smith asked the Board if they would approve of her helping to format the rest of the Annual Report since both Meagen and Nicole have extra on their plate right now.

The Board agreed by consensus to allow Chair Smith to help format the Annual Report.

**Item 12: Public Comment (MAXIMUM-3 Minutes)**

*The Board always welcomes public comment and feedback. This is the only opportunity for public comment. If there is any need for the board's response a request should include an appointment on a future agenda, to include supporting documentation. Forward your request to the Town Administrator at least five business days beforehand. When speaking please state your name and address.*

Peter Beard said he was disappointed that the town paid for 4 garage doors at the Highway Department and the door closers are underpowered to handle them.

**Item 13: Nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II (b) – Potential new hire**

Non-Public not taken.

**Chair Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:16pm. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion passed 3-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Wendy Baker*

Wendy Baker  
Recording Secretary