

TOWN OF DEERING

762 Deering Center Road
Deering, NH 03244

Board of Selectmen
Final Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 21, 2024
7:00 P.M. – Public Session

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

Opening of the Meeting at 7:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Item 1: Consent Agenda – Payroll (3/13/2024 & 3/20/2024), Accounts Payable (3/13/2024)

Selectman Smith pointed out that the Consent Agenda includes a Transfer of Trust Funds and a Delegation of Deposit Authority to allow the new Town Clerk/Tax Collector to make deposits.

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

Selectman Smith announced that at the last Non-Public Meeting on March 7, 2024 the Board moved the following personnel hires and changes:

Michael Dumas Jr. as a part-time Police Officer at the rate of \$40/hr.

Dale Green as an on-call Deering Firefighter at the rate of \$10/hr with a vote of 2-0-1 (Selectman Watson abstained).

Cherie Smith as a part-time per-diem at the rate of \$22/hr.

Approved rolling back the hourly rate of Murdough and Rousseau to their prior rates now that Chief Richards is in place.

NEW BUSINESS

Item 2: Reconstitution of the Board of Selectmen – election of Chairman & Vice Chairman

Selectman Diers moved to nominate Selectman Watson for Chairman.

Results of the vote was Watson-no, Diers-yes and Smith-no

Selectman Watson moved to nominate Selectman Smith for Chairman.

Results of the vote was Watson-yes, Diers-no and Smith-yes

Selectman Diers moved to nominate Selectman Watson for Vice-Chairman.

Results of the vote was Watson-yes, Diers-yes and Smith-yes

Selectman Watson said he would like to waive his Selectmen's salary for his 3-year term. Chair Smith and Selectman Diers agreed to also waive their Selectmen's salary.

Item 3: Zoski Road – Henry Bozek to review property line and Town road

Henry Bozek, owner of 12 Zoski Road came to talk to the Board about a couple of issues. He said there had been a discrepancy on his tax card that changed when he had it surveyed two years ago and his acreage went from 1.19 acres to 1.6 acres as well as he was told that his property extended out to the center of the road. He said when he first purchased the property the road on the hill was split into two, one going up and one coming down and in the 1980's it was made into one road.

Chair Smith asked what he was looking for from the Board.

H. Bozek answered to either move the road off the property line or he could annex that piece to the town and would like his taxes owed reduced.

The Board looked at the map showing the road and the surveyed property lines.

Chair Smith asked if TA Kerris had anything to add?

TA Kerris asked if the move of the road was gradual or did it happen all at once?

H. Bozek answered that it was gradual.

Chair Smith asked if Zoski was a Town Road.

Interim Road Agent Martin answered that he was not sure.

Chair Smith said that Avitar, the Town's Assessor said that they could not grant an abatement. She also said the Board would need to gather more information in order to make a decision.

H. Bozek said his second issue was that at the bottom of the hill at his driveway it used to be flat and over the years it has been filled in and now has an incline that causes water to run into his driveway.

Interim Road Agent Martin said he went out and looked at the road and he said the road may not have been correct when the property was purchased and he talked with H. Bozek about solutions involving a bigger culvert and lifting the driveway. He offered to come out and take another look to see if there are any other alternate solutions.

H. Bozek asked if the Town will help pay to have the driveway lifted?

Interim Road Agent said that the road is the Town's responsibility and the driveway is the owner's responsibility.

Chair Smith agreed and said we will need to seek legal advice and still would like Interim Road Agent Martin to go and take a look at it again.

Item 4: Highway - Interim Road Agent Brett Martin

- **Fleet Updates & Quotes**

Interim Road Agent Martin reported that the 2005 International truck has metal in the oil which is coming from a failing part in the motor. He said he has looked into the cost to repair it which will be approximately \$8,500 plus a lot of time involved to get it running again as well as this doesn't include the other issues it has.

Interim Road Agent also said that the 10-wheeler is still out of service and he needs to have the Board start thinking about what they want to do. He handed out one potential solution which is a used 2011 Freightliner for \$49,950 which could be less with a trade-in of approximately \$6,000. He said this comes ready to work and needs very little to fit the town's needs.

Selectman Watson asked what a new 6-wheeler would cost?

Interim Road Agent Martin answered approximately \$265,000. He said buying the used vehicle would buy the Town about 3-5 years.

Chair Smith said she needs to have a better understanding of all of the current vehicles, what they do and where they are at as far as what their maintenance needs are. She asked if both T2 and T3 are winter vehicles?

Interim Road Agent Martin answered T2 is year-round and T3 is not reliable so it is saved for winter. He said he recommends waiting to reassess whether to fix T3 until later this year.

Selectman Diers said they need to be careful this year with spending and he is happy that Interim Road Agent Martin is coming to them with proposed solutions. He asked if \$8,500 was based on parts?

Interim Road Agent Martin said if all 5 gears are bad it will be \$8,500 as well as it will make sense to replace the water pump at that time as well.

Selectman Diers asked if the thought was to replace the T3 and fix T2?

Interim Road Agent Martin said initially it was to get rid of the Paystar and purchase a 10-wheeler and retire the T2 for little jobs.

Selectman Diers said it sounds like the best option is to repair T2 and purchase the used truck.

Chair Smith asked the Board to allow her to create a spreadsheet of the fleet with current age, # of hours and miles, known problems, usage, estimated repair costs, estimate trade price and estimated cost for a new and used vehicle.

The Board agreed by consensus to allow Chair Smith to work with Interim Road Agent Martin on a fleet spreadsheet.

The Board also agreed to have Interim Road Agent Martin reach out to Reed Truck to ask if it is possible to hold the truck with a small refundable deposit.

- **Surplus**

Interim Road Agent Martin let the Board know that the Highway Department has items they do not need and still have some value. He said he would like to do a silent auction/sealed bid sale for them.

Chair Smith said she likes the idea and would like to know the process while following the disposal policy.

Selectman Diers said let's get it going.

Chair Smith asked TA Kerris to work with Interim Road Agent Martin to facilitate the best way to dispose of the surplus property.

Item 5: Designation of Representatives – Ex-Officio for Planning Board, Conservation Commission, CIP

After discussion, the Board agreed on the following Ex-Officio assignments:

Planning Board – Selectman Watson

Conservation Commission – Chair Smith

Zoning Board – Selectman Diers

CIP – Chair Smith

Budget Advisory Committee – Selectman Diers

250th Committee – Selectman Watson

Solar Committee – Selectman Diers

Item 6: Selectmen's Meeting Schedule

TA Kerris suggested moving the 1st April meeting to the 2nd week to include Selectman Watson.

Chair Smith asked if the Board wanted to consider moving their meetings to a different night which would allow the staff to accomplish requests of the Board quicker than they can now with having them on Thursdays.

There was a brief discussion and the Board agreed by consensus that they would move their meetings to Tuesday night at 6:30pm. They decided April regular meetings would be on the 9th and 23rd and they would have a workshop meeting on April 16th.

Item 7: Existing Committees Review – reaffirm/dissolve existing committees previously established by the BOS

Chair Smith made the following suggestions:

- Move the 250th Committee page to the Community tab on the website since it is no longer a Town Committee anymore.
- Dissolve the Deering Co-op Study Committee and the Hillsboro-Deering School Board Study Committee and to move them to an archive page on the website

Selectman Watson made a motion to dissolve the Deering Co-op Study Committee and the Hillsboro-Deering School Board Study Committee and move to an archive page on the website. Seconded by Selectman Diers. Motion Passed 3-0.

Chair Smith made the following suggestions:

- Advertise vacancies for the Heritage Commission
- Move the Historical Society page on the website to the Community page
- Dissolve the Fire Department Study Committee and move to an archive page on the website
- Dissolve the Town Common Committee and move them to an archive page on the website

Selectman Watson made a motion to dissolve the Fire Department Study Committee and move to an archive page on the website. Seconded by Selectman Diers. Motion Passed 3-0.

Selectman Watson made a motion to dissolve the Town Common Committee and move to an archive page on the website. Seconded by Chair Smith. Motion Passed 3-0.

Item 8: Appropriations Voted – apply & finalize line-item application of Town Mtg’s voted budget reduction

Chair Smith handed out the updated final line-item spreadsheet for the operating budget where it reflects the change of Town Clerk/Tax Collector’s salary back to the prior year’s amount as well as the reduction to the Health Insurance line. All of the calculations carried over to FICA, Medicare and Retirement as well.

Selectman Watson made a motion to approve the line item changes for the budget of 2024 in Deering as specified in the document entitled “2024 Deering Post Town Meeting Proposed Line-Item Allocation March 21, 2024” Seconded by Chair Smith. Motion Passed 3-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 9: Minutes Approval – 2/15 & 3/7 (Public); 3/7 (Nonpublic)

Chair Smith asked that the March 7th Non-Public Minutes be removed from approval because of some corrections being needed.

Chair Smith proposed to amend the February 15, 2024 minutes as follows:

- Page 1 under Executive Budget, change the Board of Selectmen recommendation from \$239,797 to \$232,797
- Page 9, change “Selectmen Watson asked if the Feasibility Study Committee has been disbanded?” to “Selectmen Watson asked if the School Cooperative Apportionment Study Committee has been disbanded?”

Chair Smith made a motion to approve the February 15, 2024 public minutes as amended. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion Passed 3-0.

Selectman Watson made a motion to approve the March 7, 2024 public minutes as presented. Seconded by Selectman Diers. Motion Passed 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Item 10: Town Administrator Updates

- We have a list of Steering Committee Members; Lou Ellen Beard, Peter Beard, Bob Compton, Gary Smith, Gary Samuels, and Jason Fiske. I sent out an email to see what days/times would work for them to hold an initial meeting.

Chair Smith asked if there are any conflicts with any members and the applicants.

TA Kerris answered yes.

A brief discussion ensued.

Selectman Watson suggested those with conflicts should submit correspondence instead of being seated on the Committee.

- I had Back Bay Networks (our IT company) come in this week and sit with met to go over our immediate IT needs. I am waiting for one last quote to come in for servers. They have been really helpful. Also getting conflicting feedback from Primex versus what our IT company is telling us.
- Carol's audit is complete, Plodzik & Sanderson were in yesterday. I will let you know when we get the report. The 2023 audit is scheduled for an earlier time this year.
- Solution for the cut out of the streams. We have spent time trying to figure out why the feed keeps dropping and the recommendation is to hard wire the camera versus having it connect via Wi-Fi. We are getting quotes for wiring.
- Meeting minutes to the Deputy Town Clerk. Both draft and final meeting minutes must be sent to the Deputy Town Clerk as soon as possible after each meeting.

Chair Smith said she would like to tackle looking at the current Investment Policy, Fund Balance Policy and Selectmen's Bylaws and said we should put together something for the Boards and Committees that has instructions for them on what is required for their meetings.

Selectmen Diers said these items need to be simple, durable and visible.

Item 11: Selectmen's Reports

Selectman Watson said other than still wanting to get policies updated, he has nothing to report.

Selectman Diers said the first Solar Committee meeting is on March 26, 2024.

TA Kerris asked if she should be coordinating getting Bid Requests out for paving or should it wait for a new Road Agent to be involved in a road evaluation and plan first?

Chair Smith said she thought the list Interim Road Agent Mertin put together was what was going to be done this year.

Selectman Diers recommended waiting until the new Road Agent is in place.

After a discussion regarding how to proceed with a road plan and paving bid the Board agreed by consensus to put paving out to bid now.

Chair Smith said painting of the final side of Town Hall needs to be completed prior to the 250th Celebration.

TA Kerris said she plans on going out to bid for heating fuel and Road Side Mowing.

Chair Smith said she would like to have the Investment Policy and Fund Balance Policy at the next meeting and also to start looking at the Selectmen's Bylaws.

Chair Smith thanked the rest of the Board for entrusting her to be again this year.

Item 12: Public Comment (MAXIMUM-3 Minutes)

Public Comment is a time for the public to speak with no expectation of a Board response. To request an appointment to discuss a topic with the Board at a future meeting, email the Town Administrator at dministrator@deeringnh.gov. Requests should be made 5 days prior to the next meeting and include any relevant documentation for review. Maximum time 3 minutes per speaker.

There was no one left in the room to comment.

Chair Smith made a motion to go into Non-Public Session at 9:50pm per RSA 91 A-3, II, (a) & (c). Seconded by Selectman Watson.

Vote by Roll Call: Chair Smith – yes, Selectman Watson – yes, Selectman Diers - yes

The Board of Selectman came out of Non-Public Session at 10:14pm

Chair Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:15pm. Seconded by Selectman Watson. Motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy Baker

Wendy Baker
Recording Secretary