

Minutes
Nottingham Select Board Meeting
October 22, 2018/6:30 pm

6:30 PM Ms. Andersen opened the meeting and asked all those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Tiler Eaton, Charlene Andersen, Anthony Dumas, Benjamin Bartlett

Absent: Donna Danis

Others: Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Steve Soreff, JoAnn Albert, Bruce Clark, Jaye Vilchock, Sandra Vilchock, Heidi Carlson, Matt Stinson, Mark Pedersen, Brett LeBlanc, Thom McGowen

Approval of Manifest:

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Eaton to approve the October 22, 2018 accounts payable and October 23, 2018 payroll manifests.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Dumas to approve the public minutes of the September 24, 2018 meeting, as amended.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Dumas to approve the public minutes of the October 8, 2018 meeting, as written.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Bartlett to approve the non-public minutes of the September 24, 2018 meeting, as written.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Select Board Department/Board/Committee Reports:

Budget: Mr. Bartlett stated the committee met but wasn't able to review the school budget due to mathematical errors in the financial reports, and they would be presented again. The School discussed upcoming expenses for the 2019/2020 budget, and it includes some items such as funds for updating the SAU financial software, road maintenance/paving of the school drop off and rear of the building area, doors and building security. Also, the school is down a bus for this year again.

Master Plan Sub-Committee: Ms. Andersen stated the sub-committee has met two times, and will meet again on November 13th to start review of the Master Plan chapters. The committee is data gathering process to determine what has been accomplished so far.

Planning: Mr. Dumas reported the board had a short meeting to review items that would be considered for ordinance changes to be on the ballot in March 2019. Also discussed was a draft proposal for consulting work on the Zoning Regulations, which might tie in with the Master Plan work.

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Town Administrator Reports, Mail, Signature Items:

Highway: The department received their new pickup truck. The paving work on Cooper Hill Road has started, with some expected delays due to the rain. The work on Cooper Hill Road includes grading and crowning of the road, culvert replacements, shoulder work, and is more engineered than prior road projects; it is not just a quick another coat over the existing pavement. Work will include trying to smooth out where the Nottingham meets the Barrington side of the road, as well as near Snow Lane to try and improve the drainage.

Recreation: The Halloween Party is Saturday, October 27th. The Holiday Parade is December 1st.

Appointments:

7:00 pm: Cable Franchise Renewal Public Hearing: Ms. Andersen opened the public hearing and reviewed that the renewal process previously happened seven years ago, and the new proposal is for ten years.

Ms. Andersen stated the agreement allows Comcast to provide access to cable, as well as the construction and installation. The agreement does not allow the town to choose the provider according to the Telecommunication Acts.

Mr. Sterndale reported most of the agreement is dictated by federal law, municipalities has little authority. The agreement gives the cable provider to use rights of ways to carry the wires and poles. The renewal agreement is to determine if the company is capable of delivering the services they indicate they are supposed to do, complete the installations safely, have reasonable policies for citizen use and cancellation of services. The agreement has nothing to do with the cost of the services, or the types of channels offered. If another company wanted to provide cable services to Nottingham, they would go through the same process, and they are not prohibited from doing so; with no other company expressing any interest. The prior agreement included creation of the local school TV channel. Changing to a ten year agreement will save the town legal expenses.

Mr. Sterndale reported the majority of complaints received by the town is regarding the price and channels, and the town has no control over that situation.

Mr. Sterndale reported the town does have the ability to negotiate the amount of the cable franchise fee, and the board determined to leave the amount at the current level of 3%. The funds are used by the town and school to purchase TV related expenses, such as new cameras, microphones, and other related video equipment.

Ms. Andersen stated the town reviewed the publically submitted comments. The town has also had the agreement reviewed by the town attorney to make sure the town is protected and asked to also consider separately an Elderly discount on a cable bill.

7:18 pm there were no additional public comments and Ms. Andersen closed the public hearing.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas to accept the renewal of the cable franchise agreement between the Town of Nottingham and Comcast of Maine and New Hampshire from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2028. Second by Mr. Eaton.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

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7:15 pm: Chief Vilchok re: Staffing: Chief Vilchok introduced Matthew Stinson and reviewed his education and qualifications.

Chief Vilchok reviewed the situation that nationally a decrease in call members is being seen, which is consistent to what is happening in Nottingham. At the same time the department has also seen an increase in service calls. As of October the department has an approximate call volume that is 23% higher than the prior year.

Chief Vilchok stated the department continue to look at ways to improve call responses with fewer members, reviewing the differences between call types and responses during the day with staff coverage versus volunteer coverage.

Chief Vilchok reviewed the items being requested through the CIP, which includes adding a sleeping area to consider doubling the full time staff for 24 hour a day coverage Monday through Saturday. Sunday's would be covered by volunteers, as well as a restructuring of their assigned coverage hours.

The town continues to help paying for training coverage to try and encourage volunteers to stay and continues to see additional volunteers.

Ms. Andersen reviewed that the department is looking to make changes in the building to hire additional staff for full time coverage. However, doesn't address some of the other issues the department has seen with staff turnover, as staff seems to leave and go to busier departments.

Chief Vilchok stated scheduling is a big reason for staff to leave, especially with the 24 hours shifts that allow them to earn more overtime and work additional jobs. The possible change to full time staff would mean having six staff members and may address some of the leaving issues. The full time staff still won't address the need for additional members to deal with any structure fires. The department can meet medical needs by having two full time staff members.

Mr. Eaton asked about another upcoming vacancy. Chief Vilchok stated the department is losing another full time staff member soon, but there is a hope to hire soon.

Mr. Bartlett asked about the number and types of calls, and the time of day those calls are received. Mr. Bartlett asked if the schedule is changed to a 12 hour shift during the days, leaving the night hours for volunteers, expressing concern about the increased cost with three new employees and the burden to taxpayers. Chief Vilchok reported the call primarily are 70% for an ambulance, with some assistance on Mutual Aide; typically when calls are received back to back. The majority of calls are seen during the day. Mr. Bartlett suggested an alternative type schedule and the Chief requested additional information.

Mr. Dumas asked if there is a service agreement to stay with the department for a specific length of time. Chief Vilchok stated he does not and isn't sure it is enforceable. Mr. Eaton stated the town would spend money in small claims court seeking reimbursement.

Chief Vilchok stated it isn't the money that is halting volunteering, it is primarily having a full time job elsewhere that is their primary income.

Ms. Andersen shared an article about outsourcing emergency services for review.

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Mr. Bartlett asked if there are any federal grants for staff. Chief Vilchock stated there are, paying for staff members over a four year period with the idea of taking the staff over when the grant is done.

Ms. Andersen asked what the next step in the process is and what is needed from the Select Board. Chief Vilchock reported the board will see an increase in per diem expenses to cover the missing staff members, and he will seek members from surrounding towns to help fill in the missing hours. There will need to be additional discussion with the board about staffing the department.

General Business:

Tax Deed Waivers: Ms. Andersen reviewed that the board previously discussed the proposed waivers, received answers to specific questions, and need to provide the tax collector with guidance in moving forward.

Ms. Andersen asked about the vacant lot parcels. Mr. Sterndale reported in one case there have been several years of non-payment, another received payment approximately two years ago, and the lots are non-conforming.

Mr. Reed asked questions about the deeding process and if the town completes property inspections. Mr. Sterndale reported the town has visited the properties for visual inspections.

General discussion took place about when the town has tax deeded properties for non-payment of taxes and the overall process of what takes place with the town takes properties in the tax deeding process. It was stated it is important for the town to take action consistently.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas that the Select Board waive the deeds and notify the Tax Collector that they will not accept the Tax Collector's deeds on the following properties, pursuant to NH RSA 80:38. Second by Mr. Bartlett.

Map	Lot	Sub	Street Address
1	2		10 Barrington Road
1	3		12 Barrington Road
1	12		Barrington Road
6	4		118 Smoke Street
8	13		288 Stepping Stones Road
12	9	1	76 Kennard Road
16	18	3	5A Haines Road
20	7	8	63 Priest Road
20	8	1	47 Priest Road
23	2	100	Cedar Waters
23	2	112	Cedar Waters
23	2	143	Cedar Waters
24	89		8 Robin Hood Drive

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24	103		Robin Hood Drive
24	141	2	209 Mill Pond Road
24	143		130 Kelsey Road
28	12		28 Gile Road
37	25	4	1 Camelot Court
39	24		32 South Summer Street
46	6		104 Stevens Hill Road
68	110		3 Seaman's Point Road

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

The board reviewed those properties on the list they were not going to consider a waiver. There was agreement to further review

Motion: by Mr. Bartlett to that the Select Board waive the deeds and notify the Tax Collector that they will not accept the Tax Collector’s deeds on the following properties, pursuant to NH RSA 80:38 and to further consider a future waiver procedure. Second by Mr. Eaton.

Map	Lot	Sub	Street Address
1	1		Barrington Road
5	2	29	Mendum's Landing
5	2	31	Mendum's Landing

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Tax Rate Setting: The board reviewed the received tax rate information from the NH Department of Revenue. Ms. Andersen stated the proposed rate is \$22.64.

Mr. Bartlett asked how Nottingham compares with other towns and Mr. Sterndale reported on the tax rates in other surrounding communities.

Ms. Andersen stated the town used some of the fund balance in 2017 to bring down the tax rate, leaving the fund lower than recommended.

Mr. Bartlett expressed the town may end up in a vicious cycle if they use the fund balance to reduce the tax rate again in 2018. Mr. Sterndale reported that 1/3 of the increase seen this year is because of the buy down payment made in 2017; the town will only see a bigger change for 2019 if a decision is made to buy down the tax rate again.

General discussion took place about the 2018 tax rate and the rates in other communities, as well as housing values in surrounding communities. Discussion also included how it is misleading to buy down the tax rate, as the budgets are increasing and not remaining level funded.

Ms. Andersen stated she supports leaving the tax rate as received and not buying it down.

Mr. Dumas stated he will support increasing commercial development on Route 4 to increase the tax base.

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Discussion took place that the amount of new construction does not increase the total town assessment at the same pace as budget increases and therefore does not make significant impacts to help slow the growth of the tax rate. .

Motion: by Mr. Dumas to set the Overlay amount at \$30,000.00 and apply zero dollars of the fund balance to offset the tax rate. Second by Mr. Eaton.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Highway Winter Operations: Mr. Sterndale updated the board on the current highway operations. The previously damaged plow truck has been returned and is ready for plowing. The new truck has been delivered and is ready for operations. The town has enough plow drivers and continues to make sure there are enough back up drivers. An RFP was sent out for contracted plowers, with only a few responses. A contractor used in 2017 is going to work for another town. Mr. Myers has established a plowing deployment plan.

Mr. Sterndale reported he is seeking board approval because one of the successful bidders is All Seasons Landscaping, owned by Selectman Ben Bartlett. Mr. Bartlett's company worked for the town in 2017, before he was on the board, with successful results.

It was stated there are no legal limitations to hiring a company owned by a board member, but it can be the appearance. However, Mr. Bartlett did provide services previously, other Selectmen have also done so in the past, and it happens in other towns.

Mr. Bartlett recused himself from the board.

Motion: by Mr. Eaton to approve the hiring of All Seasons Landscaping for winter operations, as in 2017. Second by Mr. Dumas.

Vote: 3 in favor.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: The Board entered non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(a).

8:12 PM Motion: Motion by Mr. Dumas, second by * to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(a).

Roll Call Vote: Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Bartlett – Yea. 4 – 0 in favor.

9:10 PM Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Dumas to exit the non-public session.

Roll Call Vote: Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Bartlett – Yea. 4 – 0 in favor.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Bartlett to seal the non-public minutes of October 22, 2018.

Roll Call Vote: Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Bartlett – Yea. 4 – 0 in favor.

The Selectmen made no decisions during their nonpublic session.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

9:11 PM Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Bartlett to adjourn.

Vote: 4 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted, Dawn Calley-Murdough