

**Minutes
Nottingham Select Board Meeting
December 18, 2017**

6:30 PM Chair Danis opened the meeting and welcomed Mr. Dimitri Hadik and Mr. Owen Silsby-Belknap, two Boy Scouts learning about town government. Mr. Silsby-Belknap and Mr. Hadik lead those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Donna Danis, Tiler Eaton, Charlene Andersen, Charles Brown, Anthony Dumas

Others: Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Secretary Dawn Calley-Murdough, Dimitri Hadik, Owen Silsby-Belknap, Miska Hadik

Approval of Manifest:

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Brown to approve the December 18, 2017 accounts payable and December 19, 2017 payroll manifests.

Vote: 5 – 0 in favor.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: by Mr. Eaton, second by Mr. Brown to approve the meeting minutes of December 4, 2017 as amended.

Vote: 4 in favor. 1 abstained.

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Eaton to approve the non-public minute of November 6, 2017 as written.

Vote: 5 – 0 in favor.

Select Board Department/Board/Committee Reports:

Budget: Mr. Dumas stated the 2nd draft school budget was presented. Mr. Sterndale presented the 1st draft town budget was presented at their December 7th meeting, the committee will hold general discussion about the town budget December 21st, and will have a 2nd draft review January 25, 2018.

Planning: Ms. Andersen stated a site walk is planned for a proposed project on Stage Road to review the setbacks. There will be no second meeting in December.

CIP: The committee will meet this Thursday. Mr. Brown stated there aren't a significant number of changes expected to the updated CIP, but he has requested the Select Board consider an increase the amount the town adds to the building maintenance capital reserve fund.

Marston: No new information is available.

Town Administrator Reports, Mail, Signature Items: The Select Board reviewed mail and signed applicable documents.

Police: The department had another accident, with a deer, and is down one vehicle at this time while repairs are being completed.

Recycle Center: The department is seeking to fill a part-time position and it will be posted accordingly.

Town Office: The town office will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1, 2018 for the holidays. The next meeting for the Select Board is set for January 8, 2018 at 6:30 pm because of the holiday closings.

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NH Retirement System: Mr. Sterndale reviewed that members of the NH Retirement System can retire and receive a pension and also work part time, without making any additional retirement contributions. A legislative bill has been presented that would reduce the number of hours retired personnel can work while collecting a pension from 32 hours to 20 hours a week. The apparent intent is to try and increase opportunities for regular employees to move up in the ranks, as well as try to increase the amount of money going into the NH Retirement system by hiring full time employees. The possible problem this legislation could cause for smaller towns is blocking them from hiring experienced officers and fire fighters/paramedics, when hiring full time isn't a financial option.

Mr. Sterndale asked if the Select Board would like to submit any comments regarding the bill.

Mr. Eaton stated it is something that is also happening in the trades and although he understands the fiduciary concerns, all trades need experienced personnel and this bill may limit the ability to hire skilled staff.

Mr. Brown stated not being able to utilize experienced part time personnel could increase the town budget by needing to hire less experienced full time members.

Chair Danis stated there is trouble finding experienced personnel, and asked if there is any argument about individuals not contributing to the system.

Mr. Sterndale reported the town would end up hiring someone full time, if they were even able to find experienced personnel.

There was agreement that smaller towns that might not be able to

Ms. Andersen asked for more time to review the matter and felt the town should take a position, but expressed concern that individuals are being restricted from earning money.

Mr. Dumas stated it could impact the town negatively and doesn't see the harm in hiring experienced people who might also be pulling from the retirement system.

There was agreement to draft a response regarding the bill.

Appointments: None

General Business:

Encumbrances: Mr. Sterndale reviewed year end expenditure requests and options for possible decreases to the 2018 operating budget with the purchases, and or encumbrances.

Mr. Sterndale stated the Recreation Department has requested to purchase equipment for the Toddler Gym program, which will replace much older equipment that is currently being used. The intent is to utilize funds from the Recreation Revolving Fund and should help invigorate the program.

Motion: by Mr. Brown to authorize the Recreation Department to spend funds and update the toddler gym equipment. Mr. Dumas seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Brown offered thanks and support for the Recreation Department stating he received a packet of handmade Christmas cards for Veterans made during the holiday craft event. Mr. Brown thanked Kortney and Sam for their hard work and people were happy to receive their cards.

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Mr. Sterndale reviewed his request to change the phone system from a hard wired system to a new VoIP system. The current system is older and not easy to use, and the new system will provide the town with more phone options. There is an expectation for overall savings in the next three years while improving the system.

It is a proposed three year contact with Comcast with the expectation of having to shop for a new system once the three year term is up.

Mr. Eaton stated it could be to the towns benefit to shop around for phone service every three years, especially as VoIP services change.

Mr. Brown stated Comcast does provide good service, although they can be difficult to work with.

Ms. Andersen asked about the Cable Franchise negotiation and use of fees. Mr. Sterndale reported phones can't be paid for with the current fees and doesn't expect they could be part of the upcoming negotiation, as it is very narrow in scope.

Mr. Dumas asked about keeping two hard wired numbers for fax machines, will the internet be able to support the new system, are there other possible internet based options available to the town for future needs, such as video conferencing. Mr. Sterndale reported the two hard wired phones will be primarily for the Police Department and Town Office fax numbers, but keeping them will also provide the town with two phones that could be used during a power and/or internet outage. The current internet service is acceptable, and he determined that internet based services are currently too expensive at this time. However, it could be that prices will drop in the future and would be reviewed again at the end of the three year contract.

After discussion the Select Board agreed to the change for the phone system.

Mr. Sterndale stated the town will have an unexpected surplus with small savings seen across all departments, even with some significant unexpected costs seen throughout the year. Department vacancies play a part with that savings, as well as fewer insurance expenses, and utilities and fuel expenses were not as high as expected. It was stated the amount of surplus in 2017 is less than what has been seen in prior years.

Mr. Brown stated he does not approve of having a large surplus at the end of the year and asked the board to review the proposed 2018 budget for further trims.

The board asked for a three year comparisons of expenses to see if there are areas where the town could consider cuts to the proposed 2018 budget.

Mr. Sterndale stated he is proposing some expenses from the surplus to try and reduce the 2018 budget by completing end of the year projects and purchases. This includes equipment purchases for the Police and Fire Department, contracting for the security upgrades in the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors Office and encumbering 2017 funds, installing keyless door entries for improved building security that has been previously discussed.

Mr. Sterndale stated he is recommended a mid-grade keyless entry system, which would include interior and the front door.

Chair Danis support the upgrades to the security systems with Town Clerk Office renovations and the keyless entry.

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Mr. Dumas asked if the keyless door pads is an auditable system. Mr. Sterndale stated the mid-grade installation is not auditable, but the upgrades to the video system provides a version of an auditable system. Mr. Dumas supported installing a higher version keyless entry system.

Ms. Andersen supported installing a better keyless system and agreed to the recommended Town Clerk Office changes.

Mr. Brown supported the changes and asked for bids for both services.

After discussion the board requested additional cost information on an auditable keyless system, which might include any annual subscription/maintenance cost.

After discussion there was agreement to move forward with the security measures in the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors Office.

Mr. Sterndale presented a request from office staff to purchase adjustable sit/stand desks units and the Select Board approved the purchase.

Chair Danis asked how other board members felt about the request from the Moderator to increase election worker/ballot clerk salaries. There was agreement that the Town Administrator should review the salary history and respond to the Moderator that the amount is being reviewed.

Mr. Brown recommended increasing the salary amount by \$1.00 versus the requested \$2.00.

Mr. Sterndale asked which department the Select Board wanted to meet with to discuss the budget. There was agreement to meet with the Fire Departments. Mr. Dumas would discuss the new radio requirements with the Police Chief separately at this time.

Highway: Mr. Sterndale asked when the Select Board would want to discuss upcoming road work plans.

After discussion the board decided they would meet to discuss road work plans on January 8, 2018 and interested citizens would be notified.

The Select Board supported the direction the Town Administrator was suggesting and utilizing for determining the how roads should be maintained.

Mr. Sterndale stated he would utilize SB38 funds on some smaller 2018 projects.

Mr. Sterndale recommended the Select Board consider creating a Winter Road Expense Trust Fund, which could help balance out bad winter road plowing expenses, and will eliminate the need to pull back on other road repairs in high plow expense years.

Ms. Andersen supported the plan but recommended capping the amount that could be set aside in the trust fund to prevent having a large surplus.

Discussion took place about how to best fund a plowing trust fund and the board asked if year end surplus funds could be transferred, similar to how the school transfers funds to their reserve and trust funds. The Select Board agreed to consider such a fund, with agreement to word a warrant article that would cover not only higher than usual winter plowing expenses but also any unexpected other needed road emergencies.

Town Report Dedication: The Select Board asked for a short list of recommendations.

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Other: Mr. Dumas asked for a future discussion regarding digitizing historical town records. There was agreement to add the item to a future agenda.

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

7:48 PM Motion: Motion by Ms. Andersen, second by Mr. Eaton to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(b).

Roll Call Vote: Danis – Yea, Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Brown – Yea. 5 – 0 in favor.

8:20 PM Motion: Ms. Andersen, second by Mr. Dumas to exit the non-public session.

Roll Call Vote: Danis – Yea, Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Brown – Yea. 5 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Brown to seal the non-public minutes of December 18, 2017.

Roll Call Vote: Danis – Yea, Eaton – Yea, Andersen – Yea, Dumas – Yea, Brown – Yea. 5 – 0 in favor.

The Selectmen made no decisions during their nonpublic session.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

8:21 PM Motion: by Mr. Brown, second by Mr. Eaton to adjourn.

Vote: 5 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough