

**Town of Epsom
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
March 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM**

Cheryl Gilpatrick, Chair
Virginia Drew, Vice Chair
Meadow Wysocki

Approved: **Drew/Wysocki**
Vote: **In favor, 3-0**

Call to Order:

Ms. Gilpatrick called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Ms. Wysocki led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Staff Present: Andrea Novotney, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board; Deb Sullivan, Finance Administrator

Others Presents: Deb Sargent, Betsy Bosiak, Nancy Claris, Penny Graham, Cashlyn Powers

Review and Accept or Amend the Agenda

Ms. Gilpatrick added the Epsom Village Water District posting on the Town website.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to accept the agenda as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Finance Administrator Report

Ms. Sullivan requested authorization to attend the annual Government Finance Conference in May, it was the consensus of the Board to authorize this. Ms. Sullivan stated the GASB 75 audit was completed and presented the Board with their copies. She noted that invoices for the portable toilet pumping from Mike Roberts from 2022-2023 have been received and they will need to be paid from the 2024 budget.

Administrative Assistant

Ms. Novotney presented an updated Citizen of the Year nomination form for review. It was the consensus of the Board to have the other members of the nomination committee review the updated form as well. Ms. Novotney noted she will be updating the physical key list and has ordered a new key box. She also informed the Board she has been working on reducing SPAM emails being submitted via the website and updating Planning Board applications. She noted the office has received back the signed re-assigned assessing contracts along with the updated insurance forms from Mr. Northcott.

Letter of Resignation

The Board discussed the letter of resignation from Danielle Byrne who wishes to stay on with the Fire Department as a per diem employee. Ms. Wysocki noted she believed Ms. Byrne's new job offer provided continuing education incentives and Ms. Byrne has expressed disappointment in the Town's lack of a similar program.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to accept with regret the resignation of Danielle Byrne from the Fire Department and gratitude for her service. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Tricentennial Committee

The Board considered the possible make-up of the committee and subcommittees and how the public would be notified, and members solicited. Noting to include members from the Historical Association, Economic Development Committee, Epsom Public Library, and the Epsom Old Home Weekend Association was also discussed. The Board considered several fundraising ideas and discussed with Ms. Sullivan how revenue collection over multiple years would work.

Scheduled Appointments:

Public Hearing

Ms. Gilpatrick opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 PM.

Per RSA 31:95-b, the Epsom Select Board is holding a Public Hearing to receive public input on the acceptance of unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$25,000 from the Department of Environmental Services 2024 Local Source Water Protection Grant Program.

Public Comment:

Cashlyn Powers

Ms. Powers explained she had received notification concerning the Public Hearing but wasn't sure what it was about. She has been experiencing flooding at her property on Echo Vally Farm Road that is impacting her driveway. She stated she contacted the Road Agent who informed her it was a private matter and she then contacted NH DES who said they are only able to assist property owners if DES receives funds from FEMA. Ms. Gilpatrick explained that the Public Hearing is regarding a grant received for the water expansion project and not regarding Ms. Powers issue. Ms. Wysocki noted she had a similar issue at her property and had been informed by NH DES that it was due to natural run off, and the former Zoning Compliance Officer could not find any work being done in the area that could account for it. Ms. Gilpatrick stated she would follow up with the Road Agent concerning the issue.

Village Water District Posting on Town Website

Ms. Gilpatrick noted her concerns about posting a message on behalf of the Village Water District on the Town website and if the Town is assuming any liability by doing so. There was also a discussion regarding more information and transparency from the Water Commissioners. The Board discussed wanting to make it clear to the Village Water District that they should not become dependent on requesting to use the Town website as a notification system to their district users. The Board discussed with Ms. Novotney the limits of the eAlert system and that it does not have the capabilities to be an emergency notification system. Ms. Wysocki noted she would like to discuss with the Commissioners the hydrants as the Commissioners currently do not want the Fire Department using them for training purposes. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested contacting the Commissioners for a meeting in April.

Ms. Gilpatrick closed the Public Hearing at 6:55 PM.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to enter into and approve a grant agreement with DES in the amount of \$25,000 to Epsom and to authorize the Finance Administrator, Ms. Sullivan, to sign paperwork associated with such grant on behalf of the Town. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Historical Association

The Board and the Historical Association members reviewed the previous agreements that had been in place regarding the Historical Association's use of the Old Library. Ms. Graham explained the Association is having an upcoming election of new members/officers and they will be updating their 501(c)(3) paperwork after that takes place. Ms. Novotney was provided a copy of the current paperwork for the Town Office files and updated paperwork will follow. Ms. Drew detailed the historic easement on the property and how that impacts work that can be done on the interior and exterior of the property. The Board and the members of the Historical Association discussed cleaning and groundskeeping duties and the drafting of the formal agreement between the Town and the Association, as well as setting hours when the building will be open to the public. Ms. Novotney and Ms. Drew will work on drafting the formal agreement. Ms. Novotney will contact the Town's insurance agent regarding insurance liability questions. The Board requested that the members of the Historical Association contact the Town Office staff with any building maintenance or pest control issues. It was the consensus of the Board that Ms. Graham be provided with the key to the Old Library, as well as Mr. McKechnie, as the Town's maintenance person.

Signature / Approval Items:

- **Resident Complaint (continued) Response Letter** - signed
- **Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed (corrected) / Abatement R4-1,2,4,5,6** -signed

Public Comment

Deb Sargent

Ms. Sargent noted that while trying to find the School Warrant Articles on the School website she contacted Principal Connors who helped her locate them, but she can't find the School ballot on their website. Ms. Novotney noted there had been an issue with the printed School ballot so they may have had it up on the website but have since removed it while it was being corrected it. Ms. Sargent also asked about the search for Jay Hickey and if the Town will be requesting help from the public in forming a search party. Ms. Drew stated this is an ongoing investigation and if anyone has any information they should contact the Police. The NH State Police are currently performing the search and they have made no request for assistance from the public regarding a search party.

Select Board Reports

Ms. Drew

Zoning Compliance Officer: The ZCO left a message early last week for Attorney Driscoll concerning the property on Black Hall Road and will be following up with him again today. The ZCO has been very busy with several residents, businesses, and complaints that have come in.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: The Board has a public hearing this Wednesday concerning a variance and has received an appeal for a recent decision.

BCEP: The BCEP is currently advertising for a new director. Ms. Drew noted she continues to bring up her concerns for their accounting practices. Ms. Drew stated she may not be able to attend the next BCEP meeting and Ms. Wysocki will attend in her place, if needed

Library: Ms. Drew noted the grounds are still dug up from the work done this winter to address the drainage issues around the Library and Ms. Gilpatrick stated that Mr. Elliott will be coming back to continue working on this issue.

Police Department: The Department has been dealing with some identity theft cases. They have received twenty-one applicants for the open position and scheduled three oral boards. Officer Mullins is now patrolling on his own and Officer Konig is half-way through the Academy. The light trailer has been transferred to the Parks and Recreation Commission inventory. The Chief is looking into seeing if some inmates can do yard work and cleaning around the Police Station this Spring.

Ms. Wysocki

Economic Development Committee: The Committee rescheduled their most recent meeting to this Thursday and they will be doing their annual officer elections and discussing Community Power. The Committee plans on looking at creating a project punch list.

Conservation Commission: The Commission received an email from the Common Man Roadside regarding a possible volunteer clean-up project within the traffic circle. This request was referred to NH DOT District 5 as the Town does not have authority over the traffic circle. NH DOT District 5 engineer Rich Radwanski responded to Bill Boynton at the Common Man Roadside that the NH DOT *“is responsible for maintaining the pavement, curbing and drainage, but I think there is an agreement between the Department and the Town of Epsom regarding maintenance of the inner part of the circle. I think the town has been managing and authorizing local garden clubs or similar organizations to maintain the inner circle.”* It was the consensus of the Board that there is no MOU on file and that previous permission granted has been done so by NH DOT District 5.

Ms. Gilpatrick

Town Clerk: The absentee ballots have been mailed, the School ballot was printed incorrectly so paper ballots had to be sent out and about twenty-five will have to be hand-counted at the end of the night. The School is working on getting her office the ballots as soon as possible. She has enough volunteers for the Town Election and she will be picking up two wheelchairs from the nursing home on Monday night and will be dropping those back off on Wednesday. The Clerk and the Moderator are supposed to test the ballots this week, but they are waiting on the memory cards and the new School ballots. Gary Matteson will not be present at the Town Election and Keith Cota will be acting as the Moderator. Dog license postcards have been sent out and they will send out a reminders sometime in April. The new credit/debit card machines are up and running along with the new EB2Gov for registrations

Tax Collector: The impending lien notices will be sent out on March 22nd and deeding notices on June 4th. She will prepare the list for the Board to review. Interware is still working on getting the tax collector link ready to be placed online but that should be done soon.

Highway Department: The Road Agent reports that so far this mud season is the worst he has seen since becoming the Epsom Road Agent. The rapid thaw and rain have done a lot of damage to the dirt roads and he and Jesse are working on this every day. Aside from this, they are prepping and maintaining equipment for the upcoming work season.

Planning Board: The Board's next meeting is March 13th. They hope to begin reviewing the final draft of the Master Plan, now that the Zoning Amendment season has wound down, and a plan has been put in place to hold the public hearing sometime in April. There are currently no public hearings on the Board's schedule.

Parks and Recreation Commission: The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for March 14th and the Commission will continue planning and scheduling the projects list.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 3/2/24 public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.
Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 3/1/24 public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.
Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 2/20/24 public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.
Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 2/20/24 non-public as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 3/1/24 non-public as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to approve the 3/2/24 non-public as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Non-Public RSA 91-A:3 II(c)

Motion by: Ms. Drew to enter into non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) at 8:55 PM. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Drew – Aye, Ms. Wysocki – Aye, Ms. Gilpatrick – Aye.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to exit non-public at 9:15 PM. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Drew – Aye, Ms. Wysocki – Aye, Ms. Gilpatrick – Aye.

A decision was made.

Motion by: Ms. Drew to seal the minutes. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Drew – Aye, Ms. Wysocki – Aye, Ms. Gilpatrick – Aye.

Adjournment

With no additional business to come before the Board at this time,

Motion by: Ms. Drew to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously:** 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Novotney
Administrative Assistant