

**TOWN OF EPSOM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
September 9, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Hugh Curley
Virginia Drew
Cheryl Gilpatrick

Approved: HC/CG Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

Staff Present: Nancy Wheeler, Dawn Calley-Murdough, Scott Elliott, Wayne Preve

Other Attendees: Joni Kitson, Deb Sargent,

Virginia called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked Scott to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Virginia thanked those in attendance for their patience for waiting during the prior board meeting with the lengthy non-public session at the beginning of the meeting, as well as all the cards and words of condolences with the passing of her father.

Virginia reviewed the agenda and stated changes include the Police Department Highway Safety Grant, an additional Intent to Cut for signatures, and the start time for the non-public session with Chief Preve would be at 7:15 pm. Hugh requested a review of the Supreme Court verdict.

Motion by: Cheryl to accept the agenda as amended. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Appointments:

Road Agent/Bid Review/Acceptance for Crack Sealing and Paved Swales:

Cheryl stated one bid was received for Paved Swales from Manchester Sealcoating with individual prices for each of the roads. The work to be performed was a Prospect Street swale for \$2,500.00, a Prospect Street patch/change water flow for \$7,500.00, a Towle Pasture and Easy Street swales for \$1,500.00, a Leighton Brook and Prospect berm removal and swale for \$5,000.00, Old Town Road swale for \$2,500.00, the four New Orchard Road swales for \$6,500.00, and the Oak Ridge swale for \$1,250.00; with a grand total of \$26,750.00.

Hugh asked about the process for paving swales. Scott stated the process is to dig out a ditch and pave it, which can prevent wash out on the road. Scott stated the bid received from Manchester Sealcoating is in the ballpark of a previous quote he received.

Three bids were received for Crack Sealing: Freshcoat Asphalt Services at \$4,150.00, Manchester Sealcoating at \$4,700.00 per day, and Indus at \$7,995.00 per day.

Discussion took place about the crack sealing work, including the number of days the company would work in town, how many people are on each company crew, and the prioritizing of which roads would be worked on.

Scott recommended Manchester Sealcoating as the company to complete the Crack Sealing and Freshcoat for the Paved Swale job.

Motion by: Cheryl to accept the bid from Manchester Sealcoating in the total amount of \$26,750 for the Paved Swales. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 - 0

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Motion by: Cheryl to accept the bid from Freshcoat Asphalt Services in the total amount in the amount of \$4,150.00 per day, for a maximum number of 3 days. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 - 0 in favor.

Hugh asked if Scott would be re-striping the roads. Scott stated it will be something he does in the future, but given the timing of the season and road work that still needs to be completed, it probably won't happen this year. It will be something he budgets for next year.

Signature/Approval Items:

Motion by: Hugh to nominate Chad Decker to the Epsom Historic Structures Stewardship Committee as the Library Representative. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion by: Cheryl to accept the \$20.00 donation to the Old Meetinghouse Fund. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion by: Virginia to nominate Dawn Calley-Murdough to the Epsom Municipal Records Committee. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Discussion took place about the Police Highway Safety Grant. Hugh stated he is concerned about overworking the officers with the additional hours needed to complete the recommended driver safety checks, given that the department is short employees. The board decided they would discuss the grant with Chief Preve when he arrived later in the meeting.

Assessing Signature/Approval:

Motion by: Cheryl to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Map U12 Lot 7. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Dawn explained both Intent to Cut forms required a timber bond, which is a prepayment of the anticipated timber tax, and the bond is needed when property taxes are unpaid by the owner.

Motion by: Cheryl to approve the Intent to Cut for Map U17 Lot 14 and Map R01 Lot 16. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion by: Cheryl to approve the Intent to Cut for Map U04 Lot 53. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion by: Cheryl to approve the Intent to Cut Map R08 Lot 29 and Map R08 Lot 25 pending approval and signatures by all three board members after submission of the final documents, with the stipulation that no work will start until all board signatures are executed. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 - 0 in favor.

The board agreed the Intent to Cut form for Map R08 Lot 29 and Lot 25 must be received by Friday, September 13th.

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Finance Report: Nancy asked for board approval to complete some painting on the Old Meetinghouse, which was identified during the LCHIP inspection and noted in the report. The board expressed their support for Nancy to hire someone to complete the repair work on the Old Meetinghouse.

Nancy stated the MS-4 Revised Revenues form was submitted to the NH Department of Revenue. Town revenues are approximately 10% higher than originally documented on the March 2019 budget documents.

Nancy stated the board members would meet with Attorney Mullen on Thursday at 8:00 am at the town offices.

Nancy stated installation of the new office phones was completed last Thursday with relatively few issues or complaints about the new auto attendant feature. Phone options include extensions for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, the Selectmen's Office, Assessors Office, Zoning Compliance, Finance, and Welfare. People can leave messages at any time during the day or night, with a generic Selectmen voicemail that is monitored by Dawn and Donna. The telephone numbers for each board member are still available on the town website. The new system will also be finished at the Fire Station, with training in the next couple of weeks. Rick will work with Nancy to finalize information needed for the grant paperwork over the next couple of weeks as well.

Nancy stated Positive Pay is still in the works and hopes to complete another test run for the bank this week. There is the expectation to have one more test run in the next couple of weeks and then be fully up and running.

Department budget worksheets have started to be delivered and will be available to the board by September 30th and the upcoming Department Head meetings. After discussion the board selected dates for department budget presentation meetings; Tuesday, October 15 at 6:00 pm with a second date on Tuesday, October 22 at 6:00 pm if needed.

Nancy stated she could present the general town budget information to the board on September 23, and there are other items the board could discuss, such as building maintenance and the town office building lease that will end in 2020.

Police Chief Wayne Preve: Wayne stated he is looking to complete preliminary hiring work for a potential candidate in the next couple of weeks, which will include all background checks, a polygraph test, with a starting date in October, as long as all necessary information checks out.

Wayne answered questions about the Safety Grant, stating the department typically completes vehicle speeding stops, DUI checkpoint, safe commuting, and a variety of distracted driver stops. The grant activities will take place from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020, which includes some specific mandatory dates that are provided to him in advance. He verified with staff that they want to complete the additional duties before he completed the grant paperwork. He has

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never lacked volunteers in all the years the grant program has been used, and typically officers come in and complete the extra duties on their days off. He is required to notify the state if he finds the department is unable to find an officer to complete any day specific activities identifying the reasons why.

Motion by: Hugh to approve the Highway Safety Grant for Fiscal Year 2020. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Non-Public Session: 7:27 pm Motion by: Cheryl to enter into Non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c). **Second by:** Hugh.

Roll call vote: Hugh – Aye, Virginia – Aye, Cheryl – Aye.

8:04 pm Motion by: Virginia to exit non-public session and to seal the non-public minutes. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Virginia stated decisions were made and the minutes were sealed.

Motion by: Virginia to approve a part time temporary position at the Police Department from 8 hours a week to either 16 hours or 24 hours, pending discussion with the Finance Director. The temporary position is approved to December (2019), and if the employee does not pass the test, the position will be discontinued. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 in favor, Hugh objected.

Discussion:

Review Dept Head Format & Reschedule Staff Meeting: Cheryl mentioned she previously suggested a round table format. Virginia and Hugh agreed to the format change and all department heads will be notified of the change and would be asked to arrive to the meeting by 6:00 pm.

The board decided they would reschedule the staff meeting for Tuesday, October 1 at 8:00 am and job descriptions would be emailed to the board as soon as possible.

Bid Policy Review: Virginia stated she still isn't comfortable with the new process of opening bids. After completing a review of how other communities open bids, she determined many still open bids during a board meeting, and she does worry about public perception when there is a contentious bid process and wants to make sure the process is transparent. Virginia stated she feels strongly about having the board members open bids.

Hugh stated he didn't have a preference and felt the modified wording in the policy sufficiently covered the board to open bids outside of a meeting or during a meeting.

Dawn stated she understands the prior process of the board was to open the bids, read them into the record and turn them over to the department head.

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General discussion took place about how bids should be opened. Cheryl suggested asking bidders to provide multiple copies of the bid, one for each Selectmen and one for the Department Head to allow all members to look at the data at the same time.

Exemption/Credit Threshold Review: Cheryl and Hugh stated they both had been approached about the board considering changes to the income and asset thresholds and the offered exemption/credit amounts. Cheryl stated after she reviewed general information about exemptions and credits in Epsom and some surrounding towns, Epsom has exemptions and credit amounts similar to what is offered by surrounding communities, but found that Epsom has income levels that are lower.

Discussion took place about the differences between exemptions, which is a deduction off the assessment before the tax bill is generated, and a credit, which is a dollar amount removed from the total tax amount due.

Cheryl recommended changing the income levels for one or two exemptions. Virginia expressed concern about changing amounts when such a change took place in 2015, but asked to look at a possible warrant article during the upcoming budget process.

Hugh agreed to continue looking at the information.

Virginia also asked the other Selectmen to consider any other warrant articles they might consider for the budget process.

Sale of 2 B Street - Hugh reviewed with the board the proposed letter that will be sent to the former owner about the intention to demolish the property and the required legal option for the prior owner to purchase the property back. He has spoken with the park manager about the park rent and what they might charge to demolish the property.

Virginia and Cheryl asked to Hugh to determine if the park would waive the park rent because the town had the expense of removing the tenant and now to demolish the property.

Hugh stated he has researched costs to demolish the structure and the cost for dumpster rental, and felt the town could utilize the BCEP for waste disposal. He will try to finalize the amounts to demolish the property and will continue to try and negotiate how to deal with the amounts.

Hugh stated he would bring the park managers and/or owner to an upcoming board meeting to finalize plans and discuss any needed issues.

MS-1: The board signed the MS-1. Dawn stated this is the form that provides all needed property assessment information to the NH Department of Revenue, which they need to have before the tax rate can be set.

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Supreme Court Verdict: Hugh updated the board on the verdict received from the Supreme Court. The appeal was denied, which was very supportive of the town and the town was found to take the correct actions.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by: Cheryl to approve the August 19, 2019 public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 - 0 in favor.

Motion by: Hugh to approve the August 19, 2019 non-public minutes as written. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 - 0 in favor.

Selectmen Reports:

Hugh: The BCEP has received the test results of the composting piles, which had a positive outcome. While it may cost more than the BCEP hoped to remove materials, there isn't any concern about carcinogens. Budgeting for the BCEP has started and will the committee will continue to do what they can with all the changes in recycling market.

He sought information about roofing costs having concerns about tariffs increasing the price of shingle materials. He stated the costs for materials continue to fluctuate and the Library Trustees and the Selectmen should consider that before seeking long term bids.

Hugh also asked for the board to consider raising the salary amounts for the police officers to try and pull in more applicants to the department when there are vacancies. This includes the board seeking support from the Budget Committee about the increase.

Cheryl:

The highway security system is up and running and additional work will be taking place to refine the set up. The town computer support company can now assist with any needed expansion or other repairs of the security system.

DBU Construction unexpectedly withdrew from installing the headwall on Leighton Brook, but Busby Construction was able to step in and help complete the process. The New Orchard Road project should start on October 3rd and work is expected to take about a week to complete. Scott took a culvert maintenance class and now he can install culverts without DES approval.

The work on the truck purchase continues with the hope of the dealer wrapping everything up very soon. The F550 truck broke down and an emergency authorization was given for the Road Agent to rent a truck while repairs were completed. Luckily the repairs were under warranty and did not cost the town any money.

The Planning Board will present their findings regarding Gauthier Drive to the Board of Selectmen at their next meeting. The Planning Board is recommending a road maintenance bond agreement, which is being drafted for approval. The new engineer will establish the bond

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amount and the bond will be written to protect the residents and the town. The Planning Board is also seeking help from the Regional Planning Commission to update their regulations and forms. There is a proposed cost of approximately \$2,500.00, including a matching grant from Central New Hampshire Regional Planning to help with the costs, and information will be presented to the board at a future date.

The Road Agent and engineer are working together to make sure Wimbledon and Windsor Roads are being monitored.

The EDC has received permission from landowners to post three of the four Economic Development area signs, and the town can now start seeking state approval to put them up.

Cheryl stated she and Scott will attend the upcoming NHMA class, A Hard Road to Travel. Virginia:

There is a statewide issue with finding individuals who want to become Police Officers or who want to work in the security field and supports increasing salary for the police officers. The Police Department was in attendance at the Touch-A-Truck event held at the library, and they received a positive response.

The E-alert system offered through the website appears to now be working and is working well.

The Zoning Board meeting is on the 18th to review a few cases, which were supplied to the board in the FYI/Correspondence folder.

Hugh expressed concern about the length of the meeting.

Motion: by Hugh to not hold a meeting that is longer than 3 hours, as meetings aren't productive. There was not a second to the motion.

Hugh expressed concern about the length of the meetings and losing productivity after three hours and asked to try and find ways to shorten the meeting. Virginia felt the agenda was long and the time at the meeting was needed. Cheryl stated it has been an exception that board meetings have gone beyond three hours, and if the board only wants to meet every other week, sometimes long meetings will be needed.

Public Comments: Joni asked if any town employee's went through Alice Training, which requires annual updating; will town employees need to complete the update. Hugh stated he received training through the federal government. Virginia stated those who took the training are authorized to take the update to the training.

Other Business: None

Correspondence – FYI: The board did not discuss the information in the correspondence folder.

Adjourn the Meeting

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10:24 PM Motion by: Hugh to adjourn the meeting. Second by: Cheryl. Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough