

**Town of Epsom  
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
July 25th, 2022 at 5:30pm**

Virginia Drew, Chair  
Cheryl Gilpatrick  
Meadow Wysocki

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

**Call to Order**

Ms. Drew called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Staff present: Megan Rheame, Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary; Jennifer Johnson, Administrative Assistant; Deb Sullivan, Finance Administrator.

Others present: Terry Riel, Deb Sargent, Norman Yeaton, Len Gilman, Henry Emele, Seth Little (virtual).

**Other Business:** The Board and the Citizen of the Year Nomination Committee discussed the nominations received for the 2022 Epsom Citizen of the Year. After reviewing the nominations, a decision was made.

**Motion by:** Ms. Riel to nominate George Carlson as the Citizen of the Year for 2022. **Second by:** Ms. Gilpatrick. **Motion passed unanimously: 5-0.**

Ms. Riel discussed new ideas for recognition of previous Citizens of the Year at Old Home Weekend. Among the ideas were embroidered shirts, and a designated seating area for previous recipients during the ceremony. She inquired if the BOS would pay for the shirts and the embroidery. Ms. Riel offered to get quotes, and the Board would then decide.

Mr. Yeaton presented a plaque to commemorate the people that have donated to the restoration of the Old Meetinghouse. The plaque is the blackboard from the old Short Falls school. The plaque would be hung in the Meetinghouse. The Board supported this idea.

Ms. Sargent led the pledge of allegiance.

**Review and Accept or Amend Agenda:**

Mrs. Rheame made a correction to a Signature/Approval item on the agenda.

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

**Finance Administrator Report:**

Ms. Sullivan discussed the renewal for the Worker's Comp insurance policy. She noted that if the Board committed to a three-year policy term, the insurance company would limit the increase in premiums to not more than 10% for the three years. She went over the increases for the

previous three years, which were 8, 8, and 9 percent. She suggested committing to the three years for cost control reasons. The Board agreed to commit.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the Contribution Assurance Program for calendar year 2023-2025 to Workers Comp not to exceed 10 percent over three years. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Resolution to enter Primex:** To hereby accept the offer of the New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex) to enter into its **Workers' Compensation Contribution Assurance Program (CAP)** as of the date of the adoption of this resolution, and to be contractually bound to all of the terms and conditions of Primex risk management pool membership during the term of the **Workers' Compensation Contribution Assurance Program (CAP)**. The coverage provided by Primex in each year of membership shall be as then set forth in the Coverage Documents of Primex. This document was signed by Chair Virginia Drew on July 25, 2022.

Ms. Sullivan requested the Board's permission to add Ms. Johnson to the Town credit card account. The Board gave consensus for Ms. Sullivan to do so.

Ms. Sullivan reviewed the Revenue Budget and the Expenditures to Date Report.

#### **Scheduled Appointment**

Heat Fuel Bids 6:30PM: The Board reviewed two bids that were submitted for heating oil for the Town-owned buildings.

Hebert Fuel Company: \$4.199 per gallon

Irving Oil: \$3.833 per gallon with a fixed rate offered only for 3,145 gallons. If consumption goes beyond the gallons stated, the price will revert to a variable rate based on the market at the time. If the 3,145 gallons is not used, the Town would have to pay for those gallons with an additional cost of \$.30 per gallon.

Ms. Johnson detailed the Town's oil consumption for last year, and listed the buildings that are heated by oil. The Board discussed the potential rate increases with Irving's bid, and decided the bid will be awarded to Hebert Fuel Company.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the bid from Hebert Fuel Company for \$4.199 per gallon from October 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

#### **Finance Administrator Report continued:**

Ms. Sullivan continued to discuss the Expenditures to Date Report with the Board. Discussion ensued regarding the Town Band being a Town entity. This is being looked into further for liability purposes. Ms. Gilpatrick expressed concern if a band member gets hurt at the Park, who covers them. If they are not a legal Town entity, they should have insurance.

**Administrative Assistant Report:**

Ms. Johnson discussed the Intent to Cut from the previous BOS meeting that needed correcting. The Board reviewed the form and signed it.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the Intent to Cut for map and lot # U6-18. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Ms. Johnson noted the key to the Old Town Hall has been returned by the Town Band for their rehearsal space. She also noted the Right-to-Know request that had been made by a reporter requesting information from a prior lawsuit has been verified by Town Counsel, and the requested information was provided to the requestor as directed by Town Counsel.

Ms. Johnson noted a letter regarding a payment plan for damage to a guard rail was sent via certified mail, but no response has been received. She also discussed various trainings she would like to attend. Discussion ensued regarding available trainings.

**Signature/Approval Items:**

Authorization for Grant Application for the Fire Department:

**Motion by:** Ms. Wysocki to approve the Grant Application for the Fire Department for the Locality Equipment Purchase Grant Program. **Second by:** Ms. Gilpatrick. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Raffle Permission Request for the Old Home Weekend Association:

**Motion by:** Ms. Wysocki to approve the Raffle Permission Request for the Old Home Weekend Association. **Second by:** Ms. Gilpatrick. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Assessing Signature Approval:**

A5 Land Use Change Tax:

**Motion by:** Ms. Wysocki to approve the Land Use Change Tax for map and lot # R3-12-2 as recommended by the Assessor. **Second by:** Ms. Gilpatrick. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Discussion:**

Meetinghouse Front Porch Use: Ms. Johnson has received a request from a resident seeking to renew their wedding vows on the front porch of the Old Meetinghouse. The Board discussed timing of the event and possible allowable scenarios. The renovation and site work may not allow for it to happen. The Board stated they would like to honor the request, but they would like to have more information before making a firm decision.

Town Hall Use: Ms. Drew noted the Town Band equipment has been removed from the Old Town Hall. Only furniture remains. Ms. Drew has put out a request for help moving the remaining furniture into the main level of the Meetinghouse. The move will take place on Tuesday, July 26<sup>th</sup> from 5pm-6pm. The Food Pantry has been downsizing and condensing in an effort to fit all their items on their side of the building.

The new site plan and septic design will likely be ready to send to the State by Wednesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. The new architectural designs were sent to NHDR. They have some concerns with the design. SMP Architecture and Milestone Constructions are accustomed to working with NHDR.

The dismantled pews in the lower level of the Meetinghouse can be removed per LCHIP. Mrs. Rheaume offered to reach out to area architectural salvage yards to see if they would want to purchase them. Mr. Gilman suggested offering them to members of the public who may want them.

Tax Concern from Constituent: The Board reviewed a letter from a concerned resident requesting the Town to create a tax freeze for elderly residents who have reached the age of 70. Ms. Gilpatrick noted the elderly tax exemption would be more beneficial. Discussion ensued regarding how to make the tax credits and exemptions more visible and available to residents.

Saleable Land R2-56-1: Ms. Johnson brought forward another Town-owned parcel that could potentially be sold. There is an abutter who is interested in purchasing the lot, but the lot would have to be offered for sale on the public market. Ms. Johnson noted that as part of a variance that has been granted, building on the lot would be permitted. The Board suggested Ms. Johnson reach out to the Chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment to find out if the variance is valid.

BTLA Update: Ms. Gilpatrick gave an update regarding the BTLA appeal for the 2021 taxes for the Epsom Healthcare Center. Ms. Johnson discussed the details of the assessed values for the property. The Town Assessor is involved in the mediation process, and has been negotiating on the Town's behalf. Settlement does not seem likely, and a hearing date has been set.

### **Selectmen's Reports:**

Ms. Wysocki:

Conservation Commission: Ms. Wysocki discussed a question from a resident regarding a Wetlands Permit application for a proposed driveway on New Orchard Road that will cross over wetlands. She asked if the Conservation Commission would have to review the plans and sign the permit. Ms. Gilpatrick believed they do have to bring it to and get ECC approval, but also suggested Ms. Wysocki reach out to NHMA and the Town of Chichester Conservation Commission for guidance. The Zoning Compliance Officer could offer guidance as well.

Fire Department: Ms. Wysocki noted the Department is seeking candidates for possible new positions. She also noted that there was a fatal auto accident on Route 28.

Safety Committee: Ms. Wysocki noted that Ms. Johnson has sent notifications to Department Heads to remind any staff members who have not completed the trainings to do so.

Budget Committee: Ms. Wysocki noted that no meeting has been scheduled for the month of July due to the School Board not being able to attend a meeting until September. Ms. Drew noted the fiscal year for the School District ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>, so meeting in July is usually scheduled. Ms. Wysocki will reach out to the Chair of the Budget Committee and the School District as well, if needed.

Ms. Gilpatrick:

Town Clerk: Ms. Gilpatrick noted that late notices for dog licenses have been sent. There are still over 200 that need to be renewed, but the Town Clerk has received responses that many have moved or that the animal has passed, so the list has been getting smaller. The Tax Collector's plan is to send out civil forfeiture notices in another week or so, giving them another week to pay the license fee before sending the Police.

Eight absentee ballots for the Primary Election have been received so far. Regular ballots are not in yet, but should be received soon. The FOO (Federal Office Only) ballots have been received for the military/overseas voters and those have all been sent out. A list has been compiled from both Republican and Democratic parties with volunteers, so we should be all set between the new volunteers and our regular helpers for both elections.

Tax Collector: Deed notices were sent on Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. A list has been prepared for the BOS to review. As the deed date gets closer, the Tax Collector plans to meet with the BOS to decide which ones are ready for deeding, and if any should be waived, etc. Many of them are campers in campgrounds. The deed date is set for August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

There is less than \$318,000 in outstanding taxes for 2022 out of \$6 million.

Planning Board: The Planning Board has several things on their agenda for this Wednesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. Four visitors are scheduled to come before the Board, so it will be a busy meeting.

Parks and Recreation: The Commission continues to work on many initiatives at Webster Park, including changing the kiosk to a letter sign board on one side, and also putting in security cameras and lights. The basketball fence posts are due to be installed on Saturday morning, July 30<sup>th</sup>, and the chain link will be added in the morning of August 6<sup>th</sup>. A FaceBook post was made to try and find some extra hands to help out, but so far, no response.

Highway Department: The culvert replacement on River Road is complete. The road side mowing has been started, as well as the ditching work in town. Getting help from the State prisoners has been intermittent. The roads held up well during the recent rain storms, and any water issues were addressed immediately. They continue to be very busy.

Ms. Drew:

Police Department: Ms. Drew noted there have been a few fatalities that occurred recently. The Epsom PD assisted the Northwood PD in recent events. There was a scheduled gathering of electric cars at the circle. The group did not get permission from the PD or anyone from the Town to do this. Lt. Michaels contacted the organizer and got more information regarding the proposed event.

Library: The Library has ongoing concerns with the drainage issues on their property, and they're being addressed with the site work plans of the Old Town Hall.

Deputy ZCO: The Deputy Zoning Compliance Officer has been in to fill out his appointment paperwork and met with the Finance Administrator to complete his hiring paperwork. Discussion ensued regarding whether or not to have a background check done. The Board agreed to have one done.

Town Hall Renovation: Ms. Drew presented the paint and carpet samples from the interior designer for the Old Town Hall. The Board reviewed the samples, and expressed appreciation to Genella MacDonald for volunteering her services.

BCEP: BCEP has a meeting scheduled for the Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Approval of Minutes:** Public 7/11/2022  
Non-public 7/11/2022

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the public minutes of 7/11/2022 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Wysocki to approve the non-public minutes of 7/11/2022 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Drew. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**5 minutes for public discussion:** Ms. Sargent discussed a recent Facebook posting. Mr. Gilman suggested temporarily storing the refrigerators from the Food Pantry in the Town Office Meeting Room.

**Correspondence – FYI:** None.

**Other Business:** None.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board at this time, **Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to adjourn at 9:12pm. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Rheaume  
Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary