

**Town of Epsom  
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
August 8th, 2022 at 6:00pm**

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 6:00pm.

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

Others present: Lieutenant Brian Michael

Ms. Gilpatrick led the pledge of allegiance.

**Review and Accept or Amend Agenda:**

Ms. Wysocki added a donation approval for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the agenda as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.

**Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Finance Administrator Report:** Ms. Sullivan inquired if the Board would like to continue using the current auditing company, or bid out for a new one. She recommended continuing with the current company, as they have all the Town's procedures and information on file. She also noted that a one-year commitment is an option instead of three years, and the contract can be re-assessed in 2023. The Board gave consensus to continue with the current auditing company. They requested Ms. Sullivan obtain a quote for a one-year and a three-year contract, and the Board will decide between the two options.

Ms. Sullivan received notification regarding the Highway Block Grant for the upcoming year. The amount is \$132,886, which is \$5000 more than last year's grant. She also has received the second payment from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in the amount of \$249,528.

**Administrative Assistant Report:**

Ms. Johnson noted the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was requested by the School. They would like it by the end of next week, or before school starts. She is currently working on reformatting the EOP, and noted the only changes to it are personnel and inventories. She noted the formatting will take a while, and Ms. Drew noted the School will get it when it's ready. Meanwhile, all important parts are still the same, so they can refer to the old one for now.

Ms. Johnson heard from the couple who would like to renew their wedding vows for their 20-year anniversary on the front porch of the Old Meetinghouse. The date they requested is

September 28, 2022. The only people who will be in attendance are the couple and their Justice of the Peace. The Board gave their consensus for the couple to use the porch, but noted they need to be aware there may be construction happening.

Ms. Johnson updated the Board on the owner of a property that was previously involved in a deed to the Town that was sold in 2016, and is in the process of being sold again. She reached out to NHMA for instruction, as advised by the BOS. NHMA has advised Ms. Johnson to contact Town Counsel for further instruction. The Board gave permission for her to do this.

Ms. Johnson noted the Police Department has been having intermittent issues with their phones. She requested the Board's permission to have Gail Quimby added to the phone account, so she can handle such issues on the Police Department's behalf. Lieutenant Michael recommended having the PD Department Head added to the account as well, in case any phone issues come up on weekends, and no one is in the office to address them. The Board agreed.

Ms. Johnson presented her research of a Town-owned property on New Rye Road. The Board asked if the sale of the property would have to be publicly noticed. This discussion is tabled until Ms. Johnson finds more information regarding the potential sale of this property.

**Scheduled Appointment:**

**6:30PM Update from Police Department, Lieutenant Brian Michael:**

**Requested Non-public per RSA 91-A:3 II ( a ):**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to enter into non-public session at 6:30pm. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously via roll call vote: Meadow, aye; Cheryl, aye; Virginia, aye.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to exit the non-public session at 6:35pm. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously via roll call vote: Meadow, aye; Cheryl, aye; Virginia, aye.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to seal the minutes. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0. No decision necessary.**

Lt. Michael discussed scheduled overtime while the Police Department is down two officers. The overtime hours are twelve hours a week currently. Those hours are divided among all officers. He further discussed what tasks are considered overtime, such as time in court, etc., and the logistics of officers attending court hearings. Ms. Sullivan discussed areas of the PD budget that could cover the cost of the overtime.

Lt. Michael reviewed general Police Department operations while the Chief is absent from duty, and expressed concern regarding the shortage of officers in general. He looked into using Indeed.com to advertise that Epsom is looking to hire for officers, but generally he's been spreading the information by word-of-mouth. He also noted that this month marks the 25-year anniversary of the loss of Epsom Police Officer Jeremy Charron. Lt Michael departed at 7pm.

**Signature/Approval Items:**

Raffle Permission Request for the Fort Mountain Trailwinders Car Show:

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the Raffle Permission Request for the Fort Mountain Trailwinders Car Show. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Hebert Oil Contract: The Board reviewed and signed the contract for Hebert Fuel Co.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the contract for Hebert Oil Co. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

The Board reviewed and signed the BCEP Town Refuse disposal form.

**Assessing Signature Approval:** None.

**Discussion:**

Webster Park Ordinances Preliminary Review: Ms. Gilpatrick reviewed the draft copy of the ordinances for Webster Park with the Board, and highlighted the proposed changes made by the Epsom Police Department. She noted the Park Commission is meeting on Thursday night, August 11<sup>th</sup>, and will review the suggested edits during the meeting.

SB401 & HB1221 Grants: Ms. Wysocki discussed the SB401 Grant for bridges and highways. She noted that there have been additional appropriated allocations, which could possibly be used for equipment for the Town. Ms. Sullivan noted additional funds allocated are \$100,722 for bridges, and \$110,775 for highways. These amounts are in addition to the regular Highway Block Grant.

Ms. Sullivan explained that the HB1221 Grant is a one-time payment of 7.5% of the employer match for retirement for the employer portion of the Fire and Police Departments. She discussed how the percentage is calculated. She also noted that a public hearing would be needed to accept the funds when they are paid to the Town. She will update the Board as she gets more information.

General Protocol and Practices: Ms. Drew discussed her preferred protocols regarding email communication between the office staff and the Board, and vice versa. Ms. Gilpatrick agreed that cc'ing the appropriate Board members on emails that pertain to their respective Departments, Committees and Commissions is a prudent process. Ms. Drew reviewed the process of adding items to the BOS agenda in Google sheets. Ms. Johnson noted it is easier to manipulate in a Word document. Discussion ensued regarding pros and cons of using Word versus Excel or Google Sheets.

Election Day Plans: Ms. Gilpatrick discussed various trainings that are available from the Secretary of State's Office for election updates. Both the Town Moderator and the Town Clerk have expressed interest in attending these trainings. Ms. Gilpatrick inquired if the trainings are to be recorded and published later, so everyone could view them. Ms. Drew noted there will be additional trainings and online options. Ms. Gilpatrick noted the first election is the Primary

election on September 13<sup>th</sup>, and suggested having the same set up times as last year. She will contact the Epsom Bible Church to confirm the use of their facility for voting. The Board discussed possibly having a pot luck during the election instead of ordering food.

The Town Clerk has received absentee ballots, and some have been already been requested. Sample ballots are also available. The State election will be held on November 8<sup>th</sup>, and the Board will be seeking Selectmen Pro-tems to assist at both elections.

Letter for Fire Proration: Ms. Johnson drafted a letter for the Board to review regarding the proration of property taxes for residents who have lost their home to fire, or have had their homes damaged by fire. Residents would have 60 days from the date of the fire to apply for this proration. Ms. Gilpatrick inquired if the Board will agree to the proration letter. Ms. Drew expressed concern with not having done this in the past, and recommended having a procedure put in place to make sure it gets done consistently going forward. Ms. Johnson noted she had reached out to the Fire Department to get their input, and they are willing to help by reporting fires to the Town Office.

BCEP Disposal Forms: Ms. Drew would like to make all the Department Heads aware of the proper procedure for disposing of refuse at BCEP. There is a Town Refuse Disposal form that will need to be filled out and signed by the BOS, and submitted to BCEP before the items can be disposed of.

Meetinghouse Structural Support: Ms. Drew reviewed the structural assessment that was provided by Milestone Construction. The cost of structurally securing the floor of the upper level came in higher than anticipated. The Board discussed getting a second opinion. Ms. Drew noted that the engineer is willing to seek additional quotes for the steel that is needed as part of the structural support system. The Board expressed concern about the extent of the needed structural support, and would like to review the structural engineering from when the Meetinghouse was moved.

Ms. Sullivan discussed options for funding this unanticipated expense. The Board would like to schedule a meeting with the construction manager.

Donation Approval for the Parks & Recreation Commission:

**Motion by:** Ms. Drew to accept the donation from the Old Home Weekend Association to the Webster Park Revolving Fund in the amount of \$1000. **Second by:** Ms. Gilpatrick. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

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

Ms. Gilpatrick:

Highway Department: The Highway Department is currently performing routine maintenance. They are working on cutting down some hazardous trees, as well as roadside mowing, which should be done by the end of next week. They are also still working on some ditching.

Election Planning: The Town Clerk has sent out an email to all election volunteers about the two and a half-hour election planning training that is available. Ms. Gilpatrick does not know if she is able to attend, as most of them require traveling out of the area, but she has asked about remote access or a recorded training to listen to, and Ms. Searbo is checking on it.

Planning Board: There is no Planning Board meeting this week, as some members are either away, or cannot attend, but there isn't anything scheduled for any applications currently ready to be reviewed.

Park Commission: The Park Commission has completed the new basketball fence after two Saturdays of very hard work. The Commission wishes to thank Cheryl Gilpatrick, Eric Reid, Gary Perry, Mike Tisbert, Joe Wysocki, Scott Elliott, Tim Riel, and Bob McKechnie for all their efforts. The gazebo has been painted by Terry Riel and Ms. Gilpatrick, and there are plans to possibly do a second coat of paint in the fall, and paint the stage as well. Old Home Weekend is the weekend of August 12 through the 14<sup>th</sup>. The reservation schedule continues to be very full, and has had a record number of reservations so far this year.

There continues to be folks who are leaving quite a bit of broken glass in the large pavilion, and the Commission members work diligently to get it cleaned up.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: The Clerk has processed quite a few dog licenses since notices were sent out. A few people paid their 2019 taxes since the deed notices were sent out.

She has received the absentee ballots and sample ballots. She has received eight requests for absentee ballots, and they have all been sent out. Three overseas/military, and there were also sent. The sample ballots will be posted on the Town website, and they are hanging in the Town Office as well. She also plans to put some at the Post Office. The Secretary of State informational session for election laws is now available with several dates, and she is going to find out if they will post it after the fact, so people that couldn't make it can watch the video. There are plenty of volunteers so far, some repeats and some new people this time around.

Ms. Wysocki:

Budget Committee: Ms. Wysocki noted that the first meeting with the Budget Committee and the School Board won't be held until September. The Chair of the Budget Committee will likely be reaching out to the School again to arrange a date for the meeting.

Conservation Commission: The Conservation Commission has a Wetlands Permit to review and sign with the applicant. The property owner has submitted the application to the Town Office. A site visit will be scheduled for the Chair of the Conservation Commission to meet with the property owner to go over the plans. Ms. Gilpatrick noted this needs to be reviewed by and voted on by a quorum of the Commission, and not decided by one person.

Emergency Management: The Emergency Management Director has been looking for a generator for the Fire Department, and would like to utilize grant funds from the Homeland

Security Office of Emergency Management. The EMD is in the process of getting quotes. Due to the cost of the generator, it may have to go out for bid.

Fire Department: Ms. Wysocki noted that new ambulance likely has a blown engine, and will be out of commission for up to six months. In the interim, the old ambulance has been put back on the road. The engine repair/replacement will be covered under warranty. There have been a few untimely deaths recently, and the Department has been continuing to deal with drug overdoses, and there was a fire recently at one of the campgrounds in town. The Department is still looking to fill some vacant positions. They were also awarded the GOFER Grant that was applied for.

Ms. Wysocki noted that the Library had an alarm system trip that might have to do with excessive heat in the attic spaces. The alarm company will be looking into what caused the false alarm.

Ms. Drew:

Library: The Library is still concerned with the drainage issue. Matt Moore has been addressing this. The site plan was supposed to have been submitted to the State. Ms. Drew has not received confirmation on this as of yet.

ZCO: The Deputy Zoning Compliance Officer has begun working under the direction of the Zoning Compliance Officer.

Perambulation: The Perambulation has been put on hold for the time being.

Police Department: Ms. Drew visited the Chief on behalf of the Board. She commended Lieutenant Michael for being very responsive and for keeping everyone in the loop.

Old Town Hall: Ms. Drew expressed thanks to the group of residents that helped move the remaining Town-owned furniture in the Old Town Hall to the upper level of the Meetinghouse. She would like to look into a historic preservation grant to assist in the cost of restoring and framing the maps that were in the Old Town Hall.

OMRC: The OMRC has taken inventory of the dismantled unusable pews in the lower level of the Meetinghouse. Ms. Drew reviewed the remaining parts that are not damaged, and could be repurposed. The OMRC suggested having a sign-up list at Old Home Weekend for people who would be interested in the parts, and possibly use a bidding process for each part of the pews.

ZBA: The Zoning Board of Adjustment has a meeting on Wednesday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

Ms. Drew requested Board permission to post the notices for Old Home Weekend on the Town website and the Town Facebook page. She would also like to post the 25-year anniversary of Jeremy Charron's death. The Board agreed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Public 7/25/2022.

**Motion by:** Ms. Wysocki to approve the public minutes of 7/25/2022 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Drew. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

The Board discussed insurance requirements for Webster Park. Ms. Johnson will consult with the Town's insurance agent for clarification.

**5 minutes for public discussion:** None.

**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 9:52pm. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Rheaume  
Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary.