

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

Virginia Drew, Chair
Cheryl Gilpatrick
Meadow Wysocki

Approved: **Gilpatrick / Wysocki**
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; Ted Virgin, Emergency Management Director.

Others present: Richard Siek, resident

Ms. Wysocki led the pledge of allegiance.

Review and Accept or Amend Agenda:

Ms. Gilpatrick added the approval of minutes of the August 22nd BOS meeting. Ms. Wysocki added the RFP for the generator at the Emergency Operations Center, and an update from the Emergency Management Director regarding Hazard Mitigation.

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

Finance Administrator Report:

Ms. Sullivan presented the current status of the costs for the Town Hall renovation for the Board to review. She noted that the unanticipated engineering work in the lower level of the Meetinghouse will be covered by the funds in the Warrant Article if nothing else unforeseen comes up. Ms. Drew mentioned there may be an additional bill coming for the extra site work completed by Matt Moore. Discussion ensued regarding the line items in the renovation budget for site work.

Ms. Sullivan noted that Health Trust is changing their withholding procedure for the employees who are enrolled in the Flex Spending plan, and asked the Board if they would like to continue with that part of the plan, as there are just five employees enrolled. She noted the FSA (Flex Spending Account) is optional, and inquired if switching to an HSA (Health Savings Account) would be more beneficial for employees, as the money in their savings accounts would not be lost if not used by the end of the calendar year. The maximum allowable amount is also higher with an HSA. The Board would like Ms. Sullivan to gather more information from Health Trust before making a decision.

Ms. Sullivan updated the Board on information she obtained regarding background checks. She contacted NHMA and reviewed their recommendations, which include performing background checks for those who work with children and those who handle money. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested performing background checks for hired employees, elected employees, and appointed employees. The Board agreed.

Scheduled Appointment:

Public Hearing 6:30PM

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

Per RSA 31:95-b, the Epsom Select Board will hold a Public Hearing to receive public input on the acceptance of unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$110,775.00 from the State of New Hampshire.

Mr. Siek asked how the funds can be expended. Ms. Sullivan explained that it's in addition to the Highway Block Grant funds that are received by the Town on a quarterly basis, and the funds can be used in the same manner as the funds received from the Grant, which is targeted for road improvements. The Road Agent oversees which projects he can utilize the funds for. Ms. Sullivan confirmed that if the funds are not expended by the end of the year, they can be rolled over to the following year.

Motion by: Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$110,775.79 from the State of New Hampshire. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Ms. Drew closed the Public Hearing.

Finance Administrator Report continued:

Ms. Sullivan noted she has been contacted by the Epsom Village Water District in regards to the status of the ARPA funds that have been tentatively reserved for the well redevelopment project. She asked if the Board still plans on utilizing ARPA funds for this project. Ms. Drew stated she would like the Village Water District to come before the Board to discuss this. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested having the Police and Fire Departments attend to discuss expending the remainder of the ARPA funds due to their current situations noted at the Department Head meeting. Ms. Sullivan suggested the Emergency Management Director attend as well.

The Board discussed scheduling additional meetings to conduct interviews for the Finance Administrator position, as well as scheduling the department budget presentations sooner rather than later so the current Finance Administrator can assist.

Scheduled Appointment:

Hazard Mitigation Plan update from the Emergency Management Director 7PM: Mr. Virgin noted the Hazard Mitigation Plan is due in November of 2023. He discussed grants that are starting to become available that would cover the cost of hiring a professional vendor to assist the Town in completing the process. He requested Board permission to move forward with the grant process. He noted Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission is the vendor that assisted with this last year, and he would like to ask for their professional assistance again

this year. The Board concurred, and gave Mr. Virgin permission to move forward with the grant process.

Motion by: Ms. Gilpatrick for the Emergency Management Director to move forward with the Hazard Mitigation Plan grant funding plan. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Mr. Virgin discussed the option of a sealed bid for a new generator at the Emergency Operations Center. He has received estimates from two of the three vendors he approached. The Board reviewed the wording for the bid and made edits.

Administrative Assistant Report:

Ms. Johnson updated the Board regarding changing the Town website to include a citizen action center on the homepage for ease of use, as well as updating the pictures. She contacted the website vendor, and noted there may be a fee involved. The website has not been updated in a long time.

Ms. Johnson confirmed September 14th is the review of ensuring vacancy of a property. The Police Department will confirm this. She has also been working on prepping and organizing files for a Right-to-Know Request.

Ms. Johnson inquired if the Board would like to continue reviewing sealed non-public minutes to see if they can be unsealed. The Board discussed a potential schedule for the review of these minutes. She will send the list to the Board.

Ms. Johnson noted she is still waiting for a quote from the insurance company for the replacement of the slide at Webster Park.

Discussion:

Budget Planning: The Board discussed budget planning for various Department presentations and how to provide guidance to them for preparing their budgets. Wording for budget requests was discussed, and the Board looked at scheduling for the upcoming budget presentation meetings for the different departments.

The Board discussed a potential process for wage increases. Ms. Drew suggested possibly using a portion of the APRA funds for this. Ms. Sullivan will compile an analysis with the wage increase included for the departments for the Board to review at the next meeting.

Town Hall Renovation Project Update: Ms. Drew noted that work at the Old Town Hall site was due to begin today. She noted the construction manager is due to meet with Frank Lemay from Milestone Construction on Wednesday, September 7th to go over some more details. Also Laura Black from NHDR is coming Friday, September 9th to meet with Jason from SMP Architecture, Frank Lemay, Mike Cantetare, and Ms. Drew to give the final approval for the historic easement on the Old Town Hall.

Ms. Drew noted the antique organ in the Old Town Hall will need to be moved into the foyer of the Old Meetinghouse. She requested the help of some local people to help move it on Wednesday, September 7th. The old piano in the Old Town Hall will need to be moved to a new home off site.

Ms. Drew has been inquiring about a timeline for the project so as to keep the Library and Food Pantry informed, as construction may affect their daily operations. Mr. Lemay had informed Ms. Drew that the Library may lose part of the far end of their parking lot closest to the Meetinghouse, and the Food Pantry may have to open for different hours and/or days to work around the construction schedule. Ms. Drew also noted the Town Band still has their file cabinet to remove from the Old Town Hall.

Ms. Gilpatrick met with Davis Fuels regarding the removal of the oil tank at the Old Town Hall. They will be emptying the tank on either Wednesday, September 7th, or Thursday the 8th. The tank, fill spout, and the furnace will all be removed. Ms. Gilpatrick will also get in touch with Hebert Fuel to let them know not to schedule a fill up for that location.

Meetinghouse pew parts: Ms. Johnson noted there are 15 people who responded to the advertisement put out about the giveaway for the pew parts in the lower level of the Meetinghouse. She detailed the parts each of them want. The pickup time for the parts will be Saturday, September 10th at 9am.

Primary Election Day update: Ms. Gilpatrick updated the Board regarding meal planning for the Primary election, and discussed the budget available. She discussed possibly having the day's meals catered by the Circle Restaurant, and volunteers could bring their own drinks. Other options discussed were pot luck, or ordering pizza and subs from Subway. Mrs. Rheaume will pick up two cases of spring water. The Board discussed and scheduled the setup time for 6-8pm on Monday, September 12th. Ms. Gilpatrick will confirm this with the Epsom Bible Church.

Selectmen's Reports:

Ms. Gilpatrick:

Highway Department: The Highway Department is currently marking ash trees around town that will need to be removed. They have also been completing projects with the excavator rental, as they only have it for a short amount of time.

Planning Board: The Planning Board has a public hearing coming up on Wednesday, September 14th at 7pm for a non-residential site plan review. They are also starting the zoning amendment process, so there will be a subcommittee meeting on Friday, September 9th.

Ms. Gilpatrick will be meeting with Town Counsel this Thursday, September 8th.

Ms. Wysocki:

Conservation Commission: Conservation Commission has an upcoming meeting on Thursday, September 15th.

Fire Department: The Fire Department continues to be very busy. The Chief has been filling in trying to alleviate staffing shortages. He continues to advertise for a vacant position, but wages continue to be a difficulty.

Budget Committee: Ms. Wysocki noted the Budget Committee has a meeting on Thursday, September 22nd.

Ms. Drew:

Police Department: The Police Department has been keeping Ms. Drew updated with everything going on. Lieutenant Michael had previously discussed sending their 2017 cruiser to auction due to mechanical issues. The Board agreed to this.

OMRC: The OMRC will be meeting on Wednesday, September 14th. They would like to have a ring the bell donation drive now that the work on the steeple has been completed. Bob McKechnie completed the work, and has donated his labor and materials to the Town. The Board expressed their appreciation to Mr. McKechnie.

BCEP: The BCEP budget subcommittee will be meeting on Thursday, September 8th at 6pm. The BCEP facility planning committee will be meeting on October 13th at 9am.

Approval of Minutes: Public 8/22/2022, 8/29/2022 sessions 1 & 2

Motion by: Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the public minutes of 8/22/2022 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Motion by: Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the public minutes of 8/29/2022 session 1 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Motion by: Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the public minutes of 8/29/2022 session 2 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

5 minutes for public discussion:

Correspondence – FYI: Letter from Piedmont Excavation.

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