

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

Virginia Drew  
Hugh Curley - Absent  
Cheryl Gilpatrick

Approved: **Cheryl / Virginia**  
**Vote: 2 – 0 in favor.**

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Staff Present: Nancy Wheeler, Dawn Calley-Murdough, Mike Hoisington, Wayne Preve, Rick Bilodeau, Scott Elliott, Stewart Yeaton, Alison Parodi, Jay Hickey, Glenn Horner, Dawn Blackwell

Other Attendees: Joni Kitson, Meadow Wysocki, Deb Sargent

Virginia called the meeting to order at 5:50 pm and asked Jonathan Ebert to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Virginia reminded the public the meeting was a Department Head meeting and updated the department heads on the change of format for the meeting.

Virginia reviewed the agenda and indicated the board would sign a report of cut at the end of the meeting.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the agenda as amended. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

**Appointments:**

**PD Introduction:** Wayne introduced Jonathan Ebert as the new full time certified Epsom Police Officer and stated his start date with the department will be October 5, 2019. He is full time certified and will be completing his field training in Epsom over the next eight weeks.

Virginia stated the board is very excited to welcome Jonathan to town.

**Discussion:**

**Planning Board:** Mike Hoisington reported the Planning Board is finalizing information to recommend that Gauthier Drive be accepted by the town, the bond is waiting on legal review and approval. The plans for the Care Pharmacy site have been approved and construction can begin after two more permits from the state are received by the town. The Selectmen had signed two new contracts with Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, one to assist the board with Planner experience when it is needed, and the other to audit and update Planning Board processes and forms. Letters have been sent to the developers regarding proposed acceptance of the Cobblestone Road cistern and the Wimbledon Road/Windsor Road fire pond and the Planning Board is waiting for their responses. The Planning Board is also going to work with the Zoning Board to establish a Hawkers Permit.

Stewart stated the Fire Department will be inspecting the dry hydrant, but there are concerns about the Cobblestone cistern, as paving took place before acceptance. Stewart stated the Fire Department wants to verify that dry hydrants, cisterns, and water ponds will hold water before paving takes place and acceptance by the town. Stewart asked to delay acceptance for a few

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

months to make sure it holds water with the most recent patches. Mike stated if additional steps need to be considered before approvals, there is time in the process.

**Police:** Wayne stated the Police Department preliminary budget was turned into the office, and he also delivered updated mileage and call log reports. The call log reports look different from what was provided in the past and is due to the new online reporting process.

The department will host a Drug Take Back Day on October 26 from 10 am to 2 pm and the has already collected over 100 pounds with the new box in the lobby.

The department will participate in the upcoming Trunk or Treat at the Epsom Bible Church from 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Halloween Trick or Treating will take place October 31st from 5 pm to 7 pm. Wayne expressed concern about it being dark at that time, but also tries to select times that work with the schedules for both kids and parents. Scott asked if the Highway Department should participate in the Truck or Treat and Wayne thought it was a great idea.

Wayne stated officers are trying to take their vacations before the time expires, which means overtime will be taking place, and trainings are also in process.

**Emergency Management:** Rick asked how the new phones are working. Virginia stated she personally isn't a fan of the automated system, but she understands the reason for it and will get used to it. Nancy stated it has reduced some calls into the office having the hours available on the phone system, as well as need to redirect callers. Wayne stated it allows him to reach staff more quickly and leave a voicemail if needed. Cheryl asked to include a name directory, in addition to the department director.

Rick thanked the Highway Department for their help installing the new phone wires at the town office and fire department. There is the hope to have Emergency Operating training in the next couple of months. The Fire Department had their phone training on Monday, September 23, and the new system will be up and running this week.

Rick stated new grants are opening up and there is some thoughts and research about replacing the Fire Station generator; ideas have been mentioned to Stewart.

**Highway:** Scott reported DBU Construction declined the awarded bid to repair the headwall on Leighton Brook Road, and Busby Construction has agreed to complete the work instead and can do so when their schedule opens up.

Pike Industries completed the underdrain work on New Orchard Road, with great results, and work will continue with the graveling portion next week. After the gravel work is finished, FEMA can complete the needed inspection, and paving can begin. During the job it was determined an additional metal culvert needed to be removed and replaced.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

Scott stated he was notified of public concerns regarding material contamination as he worked on the ditching work on the dirt roads. After several phone calls with NH Department of Environmental Services, it was determined the town is currently exempt from any requirements. However, to be safe, some of the material was tested and the results from Analytics determined they were without contaminants. Nancy stated the requirements have been in effect for larger communities and are only now working down to smaller towns. Scott stated the town could apply for a hardship exemption and newly proposed rules that will take effect in 2020 will allow the town to do so with an easier application process.

Paved swales and seal coating will be completed by November 1<sup>st</sup>. An excavator to complete work around town was rented for a second time this summer, and Scott stated he estimates a savings of approximately \$11,000.00 by renting the machine versus hiring a sub-contractor.

The F550 has broken down three times in the past month, but the new truck should be ready soon.

Scott stated he received a call about the town accepting Windsor Road and Wimbledon Road, and it was referred back to the Planning Board. He is not recommending accepting the two roads this year, and has requested additional requirements and repairs be done before acceptance is considered.

Scott stated he expects to purchase salt soon. He has received the state contract price but is concerned that the product is of a lesser quality than what he could receive from Morton Salt. He will contact Morton Salt to determine their price before making a final decision.

Wayne asked if the Highway Department had funds for speed limit signs. He would like to have consistent signage as it helps the Police Department with speed enforcement. Wayne stated he has officers surveying the roads and will be supplying recommendations for locations and asked for the board to also consider establishing speed limits for the different types of roads. Scott stated he hoped to have funds left in his budget in December for more road and speed limit signs.

Wayne stated he is also communicating with the state for signs to notify travelers of the Route 4 school bus stops; Scott stated he would help get the signs up if help was needed.

Discussion took place about posting and receiving information via Facebook and Virginia reminded department heads about also posting information on the town website.

**Fire Department:** Stewart stated the Fire Department will have quarterly reports for the Select Board in the next week. Truck and ambulance inspections were completed last week, and oil changes have been or will be completed soon. The department recently participated in the Manchester Airport emergency drills.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

The department experienced their first lost hikers from the Getaway houses, but they were easily found. Alison stated the trail was well marked; Stewart stated the hikers got confused and the rescue was easy.

Stewart expressed concern about town budgets and stated staffing for the department is becoming harder, as Epsom has salary rates that are up to \$5.00 less per hour than other towns. Stewart stated he cannot continue to make promises to current staff about salary changes, and the department may not survive another default budget. Current members are stepping up but are getting burned out, some have had to step down, and the training period is too expensive to hire someone only to lose them to another town that pays more money.

Epsom assisted with a recent structure fire in Northwood, and the building was lost due to a lack of water. He would like to make sure the Fire Department works more closely with the Planning Board to make sure there are adequate water sources set up with the new developments.

The department continues to see drug issues, even with fewer recent deaths. The department continues to work with Concord agencies to try and get individuals help to get sober. The department has held training regarding organ transplants and trauma treatment for these patients.

Stewart stated he is still trying to get the renovations and repairs at the station started and he will continue to wait for the one bidder he does have.

Cheryl asked if the Fire Department has concerns about any of the new hydrants that were installed with the new sections of the water lines. Stewart stated the department does have a few concerns, but can work with them as they are and most are considered as secondary sources. Some hydrants aren't as far back as they should be, but will still be helpful if there is a fire.

**Conservation Commission:** Alison stated she is working with Scott for road repairs on the access road to the Town Forest, and the requested work to clean out the culverts needed to be done by hand. Scott stated he is willing to work with Alison to help with the road and has about 100 yards of mixed materials that would be perfect for the road.

Alison asked the Selectmen for permission to use the materials on the road. After discussion the board supported the use and Nancy stated the highway materials are town property and it is being used on town property.

Stewart stated the Fire Department is responsible for the Class XI road to the Town Forest and there is \$2,000.00 available. Stewart supported the repairs as it will allow the department better access to the parking area in case there is an emergency. Alison stated prior parking concerns have improved with new and additional signage from The Getaway to identify where the parking area actually is located.

The Conservation Commission received a Moose Plate Grant to repair the McClary Cemetery Gate, and the paperwork would be turned into the office for all needed signatures.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

The Conservation Commission continues to work with owners of property and Bear Paw for conservation easements or land purchases on parcels of land that are in town and some that are near the Town Forest. Alison asked to meet with the Selectmen for permission to use some of the conservation capital reserve fund monies for offered easements and purchases, as she also seeks grant funds. Alison was asked to meet with Nancy to establish a list of available properties with available funds.

Bear Paw is working on the Harkness-Nelson easement.

**Zoning Compliance Officer:** Jay stated he is receiving fewer calls from the Getaway rentals, with the recent recommendation to renters to hike from the houses and the updated signs. Stewart stated they have met with him and is happy with the results as they work together.

The town has distributed over 100 permits and he continues to remain busy. The Windsor and Wimbledon developers have stated they are finishing existing construction and have expressed an interest in an additional cluster development at the bottom of the hill, and they have been referred to the planning and zoning boards. They have indicated they may be willing to install a new cistern if more houses are allowed.

The town has a number of older mobile homes in the parks that are starting to be replaced with newer models; Kingstown has replaced seven to eight and Griggs Enterprises is working to replace some of theirs as well.

Jay stated he has also been busy referring cases to the Zoning Board of Adjustments.

Wayne asked the Planning and Zoning Boards to consider how emergency and town services will be maintained and funded with the increase in populations with new developments. Stewart stated the Fire Department is finding they are responding more frequently to the elderly housing units, which is hard on the department with limited staff.

**Zoning Board of Adjustment:** Glenn stated the round table is good to hear both sides with the ability to own and keep land in its natural state to prevent developments. Mike expressed the concern with the legislature passing rules for ADU requirements. Glenn stated there is also concern about short term rentals, such as Air BnB; Stewart stated the FD is working with the NH Fire Marshall on inspection criteria for short term rentals.

Glenn stated the board has been busy with newer cases; one noteworthy case being a property request for large storage containers for oil and propane. Stewart stated the applicant reached out to the Fire Department for any hazmat issues and it was determined the department needs an accessible water source.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Dawn stated she is seeing a lot of new people registering vehicles. There is no final date set for the NH Presidential Primary election, with a total of four elections taking place in 2020.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

There are still 47 unregistered dogs, but Wayne is working on tracking down the owners. This is a lower number than in prior years but it is still frustrating to have to track them down. Virginia stated it is tough when people who don't inform the Town Clerk when they have moved or the dog has passed away.

Dawn stated she has received 95% of the 1st issue 2019 property taxes.

Virginia expressed her appreciation with what appears to be a successful meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Nancy stated she did receive all department budgets, and returned to department heads the budget worksheet. Nancy asked that people contact her if any budget changes are needed, and to do so as soon as it is determined. Nancy also asked for information about possible warrant articles, if they are being considered. This will provide the Selectmen with a preliminary list and will help them as they develop the final operating budget.

The auditor at the DRA was contacted and there is the hope they will start setting tax rates the 2nd week in October, and it has been determined that the town has all required paperwork into the state and should be near the top of the list.

General discussion took place about what date department heads would meet with the Selectmen for their budget presentations, which will take place on October 15 and 22.

Nancy felt the departments were in fairly good position with the 2019 budget and asked for the department heads to submit their request for any larger purchases earlier versus later. The Selectmen were asked to determine a specific deadline for purchase orders at their next meeting.

Virginia expressed her appreciation for the work done by department heads and elected officials during the year and on a default budget. Cheryl stated she felt the new meeting format was positive and was happy with the communication between department heads.

Nancy asked to have department heads verify they have hung up the correct personnel posters. The Town employees should expect to take the online back safety class. Dawn is working on getting information about how to sign-on for everyone. The Safety Committee should also plan to update the Harassment Policy. Nancy stated these steps help the town receive a small discount on their property liability insurance.

**Public Comments:** Joni and Meadow appreciated the new format.

**Other Business:** Virginia stated the board needed to sign a Report of Cut for a timber yield tax for Map U2 Lots 8, 8-1, and 8-2.

**Motion:** by Cheryl to accept the Report of Cut for Map U2 Lots 8, 8-1, and 8-2. **Second by** Virginia. **Vote** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Correspondence – FYI:** None

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2019 AT 5:45 PM**

**Adjourn the Meeting**

**8:05 PM Motion by:** Cheryl to adjourn the meeting. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough