

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Hugh Curley - Absent  
Virginia Drew  
Cheryl Gilpatrick

Approved: **Cheryl / Hugh**  
**Vote: 2 in favor.**  
**Hugh abstained**

Staff Present: Nancy Wheeler, Dawn Calley-Murdough

Other Attendees: Linda Hodgdon, Joni Kitson, Valerie Long, Deb Sargent, Alison Parodi-Bieling

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

**6:00 pm Moose Plate/Meetinghouse Stained Glass Windows Grant Hearing:** Virginia opened the public hearing to accept the \$17,940.00 awarded with a NH Moose Plate Grant to repair three of the stained glass windows at the Historic Meetinghouse.

Val provided information about the three windows that would be repaired and stated others also need to be repaired but aren't as critical. Tom Driscoll was awarded the bid for repair work, was the low bidder, and the windows would be repaired at his shop. The grant does not need a matching fund and will need to be completed in approximately 5 1/2 months.

**Review and Accept/Amend Agenda:** Virginia reviewed the agenda and no changes were needed.

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

**Finance Report:** Nancy stated the board will need to accept and sign the insurance renewal contracts, reviewed the rate of increases and decrease, and reviewed how employees can participate in the different insurance offerings. The Open Enrollment period for insurance changes would take place in the next few weeks. Nancy reviewed the premium costs for the town versus employees.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the benefits through HealthTrust as presented in the letter and documents dated October 10, 2019. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

The board agreed to grandfather the highest cost health insurance plan.

Nancy stated the Budget Committee Chair is scheduling meeting dates with Department Heads.

Town Office and Highway staff have completed harassment training. The Library, Police Department, and Fire Department will hold training in November.

AP contains a school payment, as well as a check for the resigning Fire Department employee.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

**Signature/Approval Items:**

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the donation to the Old Meetinghouse Fund in the amount of \$1,047.35. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Assessing Signature/Approval:**

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the abatement refund for Map and Lot R03 - 16. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the abatement credit for Map and Lot U09 – 2 Sublot 81. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the abatement credit for Map and Lot U09 – 2 Sublot 80. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the Intent to Cut for Map and Lot R14 – 16. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Conservation Property Purchases /w Conservation Commission:** Alison acknowledged the passing of Elsie Fife, who was a conservation supporter, on behalf of the Conservation Commission and Virginia asked for a moment of silence.

Alison stated the Conservation Commission wants to purchase approximately 40-acres for an estimated \$56,000.00 that she is asking to be funded partially from the Land Conservation Fund that needs Selectmen authorization and the Conservation Reserve Fund that needs a warrant article and voter approval. This property would be owned by the town, will abut the Town Forest, and is part of the Town Forest trails system.

Discussion took place about how the 40-acre parcel would be funded. The board recommended using \$35,000.00 from the Land Conservation Fund CRF and \$21,000.00 from the Conservation Reserve Fund. The board will hold a public hearing to authorize spending funds from the Land Conservation Fund CRF.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to support the request of the Conservation Commission for the purchase of the 2019 Zwesper property, pending any required sub-division or lot line adjustment. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**6:00 pm Moose Plate/Meetinghouse Stained Glass Windows Grant Hearing, cont.:** Virginia closed the hearing at 6:42 pm.

**6:42 pm Municipal Aid Acceptance/Expenditure Hearing:** Virginia opened the public hearing to accept and expend \$16,000.00 of Municipal Aid from the NH Legislature per 2019 HB4 to assist with the purchase of a police cruiser for the Epsom Police Department.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

**Conservation Property Purchases /w Conservation Commission, cont.:** Alison stated the second parcel is approximately 190 acres for an estimated \$173,550.00, which is being funded with a \$47,000.00 LCHIP Grant and the remaining funds from the Conservation Fund. The property would be owned by the town, will abut the Town Forest, and is part of the Town Forest trails system.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to support the Conservation Commission to move forward with the Barton project with consideration to spend money from the Conservation Funds. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

The board determined they would hold a public hearing on December 2, 2019, for the Barton land purchase.

**6:00 pm Moose Plate/Meetinghouse Stained Glass Windows Grant Hearing, cont.:**

**Motion by:** Cheryl to resolve that the Town of Epsom shall enter into a contract with the State of New Hampshire, acting by and through the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources providing for the performance by the Town of Epsom of certain services as documented within the foregoing grant application, and that Virginia Drew, on behalf of Epsom, is authorized and directed to enter into the said grant agreement with the State of New Hampshire, and that they are to take any and all such actions that may be deemed necessary, desirable or appropriate in order to execute, seal, acknowledge and deliver any and all documents, agreements and other instruments on behalf of Epsom in order to accomplish the same. **Second by:** Virginia.

**Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl that the signature of the above authorized party or parties of the Town of Epsom, when affixed to any instrument or document described in, or contemplated by, these resolutions, shall be conclusive evidence of the authority of said parties to bind the Town of Epsom. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 -0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl that the Town of Epsom accepts \$17,940.00 to support the restoration of stained glass windows in the Old Meetinghouse. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Budget Review:** Virginia stated it is a large budget, but part of the amount also includes the additional two week pay period for all employees.

Nancy stated Hugh emailed information that the BCEP is currently unable to provide the documentation needed for the additional funds proposed for the BCEP capital improvement projects. Hugh recommended the Board of Selectmen reduce the previously approved increase from \$56,000 to \$18,000 increase. Further adjustments to the amount will be received after the BCEP budget hearing in December.

Virginia stated additional funds to repair/replace the library roof needs to be added to the operating budget or a warrant article. The Library Trustees received an estimate of \$35,600.00

**TOWN OF EPSOM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

to repair the roof and replace all roofing materials. After the discussion, the board agreed to seek funding for the library roof repairs as a warrant article.

Nancy expressed concern about getting the current proposed operating budget passed by the voters in March 2020 and reviewed the mandatory 2020 expenses. This includes payment to BCEP, extra pay period, 2020 revaluation, extra elections, increases in insurances, as well as retirement payouts and hiring of new staff with a paid training period.

Cheryl asked what the average annual overall budget increase has been over the past few years and Nancy answered it is typically less than 6%; with a currently proposed increase of approximately 15%.

Discussion took place about how the board could reduce the proposed operating budget, including transitioning a road project to a warrant article.

**Motion by:** Virginia to decrease Reconstruction of Highway 01-4312.4-450 by \$285,000.00 and to encourage the Road Agent to consider the project as a warrant article. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

Cheryl recommended reducing the Parks budget for Forest Reforestation

**Motion by:** Cheryl to lower line 01-4520.5-4700 Forest Restoration to \$3,500.00. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to reduce Conservation Land Acquisition 01-4612.1-310 to \$10,800.00. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

The board considered changes to the Planning Board budget.

**Motion by:** Virginia to cut line 01-4191.1-150 by \$200.00, line 01-4191.1-310 by \$200, line 01-4191.1-550 by \$200, and line 01-4191.1-625 by \$100, for a total decrease of \$700.00. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

The board discussed salaries for the Highway Department, Town Office staff, and Police and Fire Department staff.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to reduce the amount of salary increase for the Highway Laborer from \$1.50 to \$1.00 for the first 14 pay periods and upon performance review to increase it another \$0.50 after the 14<sup>th</sup> pay period. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Virginia to reduce the Police Department's salary increase from \$1.50 to \$1.00 across the board. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

The board agreed they would not change the raise amount of \$0.50 per hour for regular office staff and the other people considered separately at their prior meeting.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

The board determined they would consider implementing raises after the March elections, and whether or not the board would make those raises retroactive to the beginning of the year. Concern was expressed about recommending raises for employees and then not giving them to employees due to what has happened in the past.

Nancy reviewed the proposed changes for the board, stating before the salary changes the budget was reduced by \$325,000, which is an approximate overall percentage increase of 8%. The board agreed to a tentative meeting for Friday, November 8 at 8:00 am to review the changed budget, if it was needed.

**Motion by:** Virginia to approve the budget as amended during the November 4, 2019 meeting to go forward to the Budget Committee, pending any questions from board members once an updated budget was received. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**6:42 pm Municipal Aid Acceptance/Expenditure Hearing, cont.:** Virginia closed the hearing to accept and expend the Municipal Aid at 8:13 pm.

**Motion by:** Cheryl that the Epsom Board of Selectmen will accept \$16,000.00 of Municipal Aid as unanticipated funds to be combined with money in the operating budget to purchase the Police cruiser in 2019. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the October 15, 2019, public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 - 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the October 21, 2019, public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the October 22, 2019, public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the October 24, 2019, public minutes as amended. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

**Selectmen Reports:** Virginia stated the board received a letter from Senator Reagan identifying the Municipal Aid payments for all district towns and expressed concern about the difference in payments. It was stated the payment distributions were based on student population and the number of eligible free and reduced lunch students in each town. Virginia may ask for additional details.

**Cheryl:** The highway truck is broken again and the Road Agent will ask for additional mileage reimbursement as he is utilizing his own vehicle, as well as the Expedition to complete work around town. Scott continues to reach out for a final delivery date for the new truck.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
November 4, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

The Economic Development Committee is encouraging the Selectmen to submit a letter of support to include Route 4 in the state corridor study, and after discussion, Virginia agreed to sign a letter. The EDC is considering changes to their meeting schedule to try and increase member and community participation.

The Planning Board received and reviewed the Gauthier Drive bond. It was sent to the town attorney for final revisions, and there is hope to bring it to the next Selectmen's meeting. The Planning Board is considering some changes to the town ordinances and regulations.

**Virginia:** The PD participated in the Drug Take Back event, and collected approximately 155 pounds of prescription drugs. The private information listed on pill bottles is kept private in a bag to be incinerated by the state.

The Budget Committee will be meeting on Tuesday and Thursday with the scheduled department head meetings.

**Public Comments:** Linda asked if the board determined the answers to prior questions about how some of the expenses could be shown in the default budget, such as retirement payout expenses.

**Other Business:** None

**Correspondence – FYI:** Dawn stated the board received correspondence regarding the Municipal Aid amounts, a notice from NHDES regarding application price increases, and who should vote at the Annual NHMA Meeting.

**Adjourn the Meeting**

**9:08 PM Motion by:** Cheryl to adjourn the meeting. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough