

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Hugh Curley  
Virginia Drew  
Cheryl Gilpatrick

Approved: **Cheryl / Hugh**  
**Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.**

1 Staff Present: Nancy Wheeler, Dawn Calley-Murdough, Dawn Blackwell

2 Other Attendees: Alison Parodi, Katrina Amaral, Meadow Wysocki, Lisa Gately, Dan Lapolla,  
3 Sheila Swanson, Rick Swanson, Scott Elliott, Kate Champney, Charles Decker, Celeste Decker

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

6 Virginia reviewed the agenda and amendments included signatures for accepting Old  
7 Meetinghouse donations and a donation to welfare. Virginia stated there is also a request for the  
8 Board of Selectmen to consider approval for a new grant program for the Old Meetinghouse.

9 **Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the December 16, 2019 agenda as amended. **Second by:** Hugh.  
10 **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

11 **Finance Report:** Nancy stated the auditors were in the office to start preliminary work on the  
12 audit. Nancy asked the board to sign the new three-year contract with the auditors Roberts and  
13 Greene. The cost of the new contract is slightly higher with the need for the review of benefit  
14 liability. Hugh asked if the auditors would need additional time for the audit with her upcoming  
15 retirement. Nancy stated the auditor management letter for 2018 also needs the board signature,  
16 which will complete the process for 2018.

17 **Motion by:** Hugh to sign the agreement with Roberts and Greene dated December 12, 2019, for  
18 a three-year term for the 2019, 2020, and 2021 audits. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

19 Nancy presented a preliminary worksheet with information on the default budget.

20 Nancy stated the current A/P includes the last payroll of the year and there will be A/P for the  
21 next two weeks as it is the end of the year wrap up.

22 Nancy stated in regard to the upcoming topic of the Old Meetinghouse, anyone who administers  
23 a CDFA grant will need to be specifically trained. The position is typically held by a town  
24 employee and she has been responsible for administration in the past. Meadow stated she and  
25 Valerie Long will attend training for writing the grant.

26 **Appointments:**

27 **6:15 pm: Public Hearing for Consideration of Town Purchase Conservation Land:** Virginia  
28 opened the hearing at 6:15 pm. Katrina, from Bear Paw, updated the board with new purchase  
29 expenses, with a grand total cost of \$157,800.00.

30 Katrina informed the Selectmen that the purchase price for the land for the Barton Property was  
31 \$130,000.00 and the transaction costs would total \$27,800.00, for a total of \$157,800.00. Bear

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Paw received a \$47,000.00 LCHIP grant, a \$10,000.00 Merrimack Conservation donation, and also expects to receive another donation towards the purchase. Alison stated this reduced the amount of money needed from the Conservation Commission to \$90,800.00.

Lisa Gately from the Getaway presented Bear Paw with a donation of \$10,000.00 to assist with the costs of the purchase of the Barton property to increase the size of the Town Forest. Lisa stated many guests from the Getaway utilize the forest with many very positive comments. In addition, as an Epsom resident she also happily utilizes the property.

Hugh asked if there was an update for the Zwesper purchase. Alison stated she does not have any updated costs for the Zwesper property at this time, as it is undetermined if an additional survey is needed and there may also be additional costs with the needed lot line adjustment with the Planning Board that still needs to be determined.

Alison explained the purchase of the Barton and Zwesper parcels will encompass all the current trails within the town forest area and also will provide the Conservation Commission the opportunity to increase the number of trails.

Virginia stated she and her family also happily utilize the Town Forest trails.

Kate Chapney supported the purchase of the parcels as her family also happily uses the trails.

Discussion took place about the Zwesper property and it was stated the process will move forward once the board can offer their final approval.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Virginia asked for the board to receive the top three recommended applicants. Hugh asked to discuss the top recommendations together with Dawn Blackwell.

**Non-Public Session: 6:27 pm Motion by:** Cheryl to enter into Non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (b). **Second by:** Hugh.

**Roll call vote:** Hugh – Aye, Virginia – Aye, Cheryl – Aye.

**6:38 pm Motion by:** Virginia to exit the non-public session and to seal the non-public minutes.

**Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Virginia stated the board did make a decision.

**6:15 pm: Public Hearing for Consideration of Town Purchase Conservation Land,**

**Continued:** Virginia asked if there were any additional comments or questions and there were none.

**Motion by:** Hugh to close the public hearing. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

Dawn let the board know they did not need to discuss the purchase if they did not want to, as they will have one more public hearing on December 30 and a meeting on January 13 to make a decision on the purchase.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

**6:39 pm Scott Elliott Highway Truck Update:** Scott stated he finally received the truck after an extended period of time and unauthorized repairs. Scott stated he and Cheryl met with the dealer and reduced the purchase price to \$45,149.00 from their increased amount from the dealer due to their additional repairs. Scott stated the town did receive an extended warranty for the labor.

The Selectmen expressed their appreciation to Scott for his work on getting the truck.

Scott asked when the board considered encumbering funds. Hugh and Nancy responded the town must have an existing signed contract dated before December 31 in order to encumber funds. It was stated a purchase order would be needed to encumber the remaining funds for the 2019 crack sealing contract.

Nancy clarified encumbering funds for a contract should be for work that was planned for completion in 2019, but the work could not be finished because of certain situations, such as weather or a delay in delivery of a previously ordered number. Nancy stated funds could not be encumbered for a contract signed in December for work to take place in 2020.

**Discussion:**

**Signature/Approval Items:** the board signed the Old Meetinghouse proposed septic letter, Management Representation Letter for the 2018 audit, the PSNH/Eversource settlement agreement, and the previously approved Purchase Policy.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to sign to representation letter from Roberts and Greene for the 2018 audit.

**Second by:** Hugh **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

It was stated the final settlement amount with PSNH/Eversource was less than originally agreed upon. Nancy stated there was a delay in getting the agreement an additional abatement will be needed as PSNH deducted a portion of the settlement amount from their 2019 property taxes. This abatement will reduce the amount of the refund provided to PSNH/Eversource.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to sign the GIS Internet Services Annual Maintenance Agreement with CAI Technologies dated December 6, 2019. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

The board reviewed the prior changes to the Purchase Policy. Cheryl asked to receive the changes electronically.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the Fort Mountain Trailwinders Snowmobile Club request to renew town permission to continue operating a snowmobile trail on the list of properties provided on their December 2019 cover letter. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the welfare donation from Epsom Chichester Lions Club. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Virginia stated she received a cash donation along with photographs and an old church bulletin for the Old Meetinghouse.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to accept the donations of \$200.00 for the Old Meetinghouse fund. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**Assessing Signature/Approval:** None

**Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee Charter Renewal:** Nancy stated if the town applies for a CDFA grant there will be required newspaper postings and public hearings, and the grant administrator will need to be certified because of the number of rules that must be followed if they are awarded a grant. All paperwork will need to be kept at the town offices and the board will be responsible for making sure all steps are completed.

It was stated the town could hire an administrator if the board chose to do so, rather than using town staff. There is a one day no cost administrator training in January 2020, for chapters one through four. Nancy stated the board previously made a decision to hire an administrator when considering the Kingstowne CDFA grant.

Virginia stated she wanted to discuss the grant along with the charter renewal because the committee is seeking permission to start the process for applying for a grant program.

Hugh recommended separating the duties of applying for the grant and administering the grant. It is also important for the town to monitor what grants are being applied for, as the town will need to complete special grant audits if total grants over \$750,000.00 are received.

**Motion by:** Hugh to encourage members of the Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee to attend the CDFA trainings to pursue grant opportunities through the CDFA for renovations of the Meetinghouse. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

The board discussed changes to the Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee Charter. It was determined there may have been edits in 2018 that were not documented in the town files. Cheryl suggested paragraph one be adjusted to remove parts that no longer pertain to the charter.

**Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee Charter, as amended December 16, 2019. **Second by:** Hugh. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**Motion by:** Virginia to reappoint the Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee members Valerie Long, Chuck Driesbach, Meadow Wysocki, Norman Yeaton, Deborah Sargent, and Virginia Drew. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**CIP Update Agreement with Central NH Regional Planning:** The board signed the agreement to update the CIP Report for 2020.

**Gauthier Drive Acceptance Review:** Cheryl reported that suggested changes to the bond were received by the Cobblestone Attorney to adjust the duration time of the bond which the Planning

**TOWN OF EPSOM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

Board did not accept . The Planning Board is now waiting to receive the final agreement signed by the developer. Once complete it will come to the Selectmen for approval.

**Salary for Tax Collector/Town Clerk:** Virginia stated the board will need to determine the starting salary rate for the appointed Town Clerk/Tax Collector after their training period, which was a request by the Budget Committee. Nancy stated the Selectmen can make a decision to change the salary amount with the appointed position, where they would not have the option if the position is elected. Nancy stated the Budget Committee questioned why the board is budgeting for the same salary amount if the board did not plan to pay the new Town Clerk/Tax Collector the same as someone who has 20 years of experience.

The board discussed salary rates and the reasons they would consider decreasing the starting rate versus keeping it the same.

Cheryl asked why the Selectmen would consider lowering the starting salary rate if they hire a person that has current experience as a Town Clerk/Tax Collector.

Hugh stated the Selectmen need to consider hiring someone with the capabilities of doing the work of the position and paying them accordingly, which is what they have done with Nancy's position. Hugh expressed interest in determining what other communities are paying their Town Clerk/Tax Collectors.

The board did not make a decision about the salary rate for the new Town Clerk/Tax Collector. Nancy would reduce the salary line by approximately \$1000.00 for the additional audit.

Hugh stated he would review some information about salary, communicate it through Dawn, and the board decided a meeting would be scheduled for December 23 at 5:00 pm to discuss establishing a salary rate.

Virginia stated she may need an alternate to sit in for her at the Budget Committee Public Hearing due to personal matters.

Nancy reminded the board they will need to determine what funds will be encumbered for the 2019 tax year, such as bills that won't be delivered until January 2020, and they will also need to finalize their Warrant Articles. The board also agreed to meet on January 6, 2020, at 6:00 pm.

**Consider Creating Salary Scale:** Virginia stated the Budget Committee asked the Board of Selectmen to consider adopting a salary scale. Virginia expressed concern about adopting a salary scale and then having a default budget where raises can't be given. The other board members agreed with that complication and believe they could not adopt a scale. The board utilizes the Thornton Salary Scale as they consider changes in employee salary changes.

Nancy reminded the board the Thornton salary scale is updated annually for the current cost of living adjustments and how the employee ranges can be used. The Selectmen can't follow a

**TOWN OF EPSOM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

salary scale because the employees don't have a contract or bargaining agreement. The town citizens would have to adopt a scale at town meeting to provide for raising salaries on an annual basis per an agreement. The NHDRA does not allow personal agreements with employees to be considered as part of the default.

**Salary Adjustment for Federal Law Changes:** Virginia asked how the board would address the federal law changes regarding overtime hours and pay. Nancy stated the person agreed to find a way to track their hours or the board can decide to increase their salary to move him out of the overtime pay changes.

The board questioned whether or not they may have made a decision during a non-public session. Nancy stated if the board made a decision, it needs to be communicated to the person affected. After the discussion, the board decided they would continue to review salary changes because of the law changes.

**PD Server Quote:** Virginia stated she spoke to the Police Chief and he indicated the police department 2019 budget did have enough funds to purchase a new server, as recommended in the MRI report.

**Motion:** by Hugh to order the server. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 3 – 0 in favor.

**Warrant Articles & Default Budget:** The board reviewed the preliminary default budget information and considered warrant articles.

Nancy reminded the board she did receive the opinion that the 27<sup>th</sup> pay period could be included in the default budget.

Hugh presented his idea for an Old Meetinghouse warrant article to create a fund financed with town tax dollars to provide the committee money they might need to seek grants that require matching fund amounts. Hugh stated at some point, the building will become the responsibility of the town and will need to be financially supported by the town. The committee is doing a great job trying to raise funds, but they are limited in grants they can seek by not having available funds.

Virginia stated the OMRC discussed the proposed warrant article and they expressed concern that utilizing town funds opposes what the committee has expressed to the public for the last couple of years.

Nancy stated the board has a historic structures trust fund that could be used for the Old Meetinghouse.

Virginia stated the committee was considering asking to use the Lillian Morrison Town Fund, although those funds were previously set aside for a possible new office building, the purpose

**TOWN OF EPSOM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

199 possibly could change. Virginia stated she is supporting the idea of this fund that could be used  
200 toward renovations for any building.

201 Cheryl stated though it would be a good idea to have a fund, it would be hard when the  
202 committee has specifically stated they wouldn't use town funds. Cheryl also stated it would be  
203 great to have some town funds designated for Old Meetinghouse renovation purposes so the  
204 committee can seek grants but doesn't see how that would be possible and doesn't agree with  
205 using tax dollars or from a fund not intended for that purpose, at this time.

206 Nancy recommended considering a specific warrant article to install a septic system at the Old  
207 Meetinghouse. Discussion took place about a failed warrant article despite the possible  
208 downfalls in doing so.

209 Virginia stated she wanted to have a warrant article to use funds from the Lillian Morrison Town  
210 Fund for Old Meetinghouse renovations.

211 General discussion took place about the different funds that might be used to help support the  
212 renovations of the Old Meetinghouse. Cheryl asked if the town could use undesignated fund  
213 balance money and add it to the Historic Maintenance Fund. Nancy stated she would need to  
214 determine if money could be transferred from one fund to another fund.

215 Hugh stated the Fire Department needed repairs on the Unimog and the Fire Chief would be  
216 dropping off a purchase order for signature. Virginia and Cheryl supported the purchase order.

217 Hugh left the meeting at approximately 8:30 pm.

218 The board reviewed the preliminary default budget and Nancy provided the purpose and  
219 calculations permitted for the default budget. Nancy stated the 2020 default budget can include  
220 the 27<sup>th</sup> pay period, retirement payouts, and the BCEP increase. Nancy stated she would have  
221 the default budget form available for the board soon.

222 **Renovate Old Town Hall:** Virginia stated she does not feel the town could come up with or  
223 would approve raising funds for renovating the Old Town Hall at this time without a definite  
224 plan for renovation. Nancy expressed concern about trying to raise funds to renovate the Old  
225 Town Hall for office space while also trying to raise funds for the Old Meetinghouse and stated  
226 the amount of money needed to renovate the Old Town Hall may be significant and could be  
227 better spent on other more functional town office space.

228 Virginia stated she has concerns about the Old Town Hall not being utilized while it is also being  
229 supported by tax dollars. She would like to explore ways to utilize currently owned town  
230 buildings.

**TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

231 **Mitchell Municipal Group Legal Representation:** Virginia and Cheryl discussed the matter of  
232 whether the town should follow Attorney Steven Whitely to his new firm or if they would keep  
233 the Mitchell Municipal Group as the town attorney.

234 Cheryl suggested remaining with Mitchell Municipal Group and requesting proposals for new  
235 municipal council in 2020.

236 Virginia and Cheryl agreed they would continue discussing the matter with Hugh at their  
237 December 23 meeting.

238 **Town Handouts:** Dawn presented a new handout with town office contact information as part of  
239 the Welcome to Epsom packet changes. Cheryl and Virginia requested additional changes,  
240 which would be made.

241 **Approval of Minutes:**

242 **Motion by:** Cheryl to approve the November 25, 2019 public minutes as amended. **Second by:**  
243 Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

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

246 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the November 18 session 1 non-public minutes as written.  
247 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

248 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the November 18 session 2 non-public minutes as written.  
249 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

250 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the November 25 session 1 non-public minutes as amended.  
251 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor. The minutes are not sealed.

252 The board did not take action on the November 25 session 2 non-public minutes and is pending  
253 approval.

254 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the November 25 session 3 non-public minutes as amended.  
255 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

256 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the November 25 session 4 non-public minutes as written.  
257 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

258 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve the December 2 non-public minutes as amended. **Second by:**  
259 Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

260 **Selectmen Reports:**

261 **Cheryl:** The Highway Department stated plowing is going well and has received a few  
262 compliments. The F550 broke down again, but was repaired and appears to currently be running  
263 well. The Highway Department also continues working on constructing the new hanging shed



**TOWN OF EPSOM**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 16, 2019 AT 6:00 PM**

264 for the town-owned salt/sand spreaders. The department also has moved the sand pile to increase  
265 the amount of available parking to the public. They have also moved the security gate. The new  
266 guard rail was installed on New Orchard Road.

267 There is an upcoming water main meeting. Work will continue with the expectation to finalize  
268 installation in the spring of 2020.

269 **Virginia:** The Police Department's part-time officer, Kyle, pass the required physical tests and  
270 he will enter the academy in the spring of 2020. The Police Association had a successful toy  
271 drive. The Police Chief asked if he should move forward with the repairs on the generator with  
272 Generator Connections, feeling he should do so and that he does have the funds available.

273 **Motion by:** Virginia to approve moving forward with the service maintenance on the police  
274 generator as recommended by Generator Connections. **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

275 The Budget Committee is meeting tomorrow.

276 The Old Meetinghouse Stewardship Committee is working on the stewardship report, as it is due  
277 by December 31.

278 **Public Comments:** None

279 **Other Business:** None

280 **Non-Public Session: 9:52 pm Motion by:** Cheryl to enter into Non-public session per RSA 91-  
281 A:3 II (a). **Second by:** Virginia.

282 **Roll call vote: Virginia – Aye, Cheryl – Aye.**

283 **10:07 pm Motion by:** Virginia to exit the non-public session and to seal the non-public minutes.  
284 **Second by:** Cheryl. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

285 A decision was made to increase the salary of a Police Officer. The minutes were not sealed.

286 **Correspondence – FYI:** Dawn reviewed the correspondence. The board received the 2020  
287 county budget, the November 30, 2019 trust fund balances, a received wetlands permit  
288 application for Map U08 Lot 82-3, and the NH Department of Transportation 10-year road  
289 construction plan.

290 **Adjourn the Meeting**

291 **10:13 PM Motion by:** Cheryl to adjourn the meeting. **Second by:** Virginia. **Vote:** 2 – 0 in favor.

292 Respectfully Submitted,

293 Dawn Calley-Murdough