



# **Town of Amherst, NH**

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**

**Barbara Landry Meeting Room**  
**2 Main Street**  
**Monday, February 12, 2024, 6:00PM**

Attendees: Chairman Peter Lyon, Selectman Bill Stoughton, Selectman John D'Angelo, Selectman Danielle Pray, and Selectman Tom Grella

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Peter Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance – led by Police Chief Ciampoli.**

### **3. Badge Ceremony**

Police Chief Ciampoli led a ceremony celebrating the promotions of Captain Derek Mahoney, Sergeant Justin Gerome, Sergeant Kevin Kelly, and Berry (K-9). A pinning ceremony by family members followed administration of the oath of office by Town Clerk, Nancy Demers.

*The Board took a brief recess to host the ceremony reception until 6:36pm.*

### **4. Board Appointment**

#### **4.1. Thomas Murphy, Recreation Commission, Term ending 2027**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to appoint Thomas Murphy to the Recreation Commission for a term ending 2027.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

### **5. Citizens Forum**

None at this time.

### **6. Scheduled Appointments**

#### **6.1. NRPC/DPW Presentation of Amherst Roadwork Plan**

Eric Slosek, DPW Director, and Tyrel Borowitz, NRPC, presented on the Road Surface Management System project. Mr. Borowitz explained that NRPC drove all the roads in Amherst that the Town is responsible for maintaining to consider various aspects of the roads. Of the approximately 115 miles of Town-maintained roads, 46% were in excellent condition and 27% were in poor condition. NRPC and DPW then discussed two different scenarios: rebuilding roads in poor condition and cost-effectively using the budget to keep excellent roads in excellent condition or repairing the worst roads first and focusing the budget on the bad roads. DPW Director Slosek noted that the DPW has been working under a worst roads first for some of the past years. However, more roads will be repaired under the balanced

approach than the worst-first approach. Mr. Borowitz explained that the worst-first approach means chasing the roads that continue to fall into disrepair, leading to increased costs per mile over time. DPW Director Slosek explained that it is most cost effective to spend money when the road is still in fairly good condition, than waiting until it is in disrepair.

Mr. Borowitz stated that crack sealing is one of the best techniques to use on roads to keep them in good shape. The roads are one of the Town's most expensive assets and cannot be neglected.

Selectman Stoughton asked if there are recommendations from this study. DPW Director Slosek stated that the recommendation is to pause, consider the information, and wait another five years to reevaluate the roads to see how much the budget needs to be changed, if any. Selectman Stoughton noted that the proposal is to increase the budget by \$100,000 each year until the budget line reaches \$1.7M, at which time it will remain flat. He stated that he does not like sticking with a plan that leaves the Town worse off 5-10 years from now, although the cost of changing this is yet unclear.

Selectman Grella asked about the mix of salt/sand during winter treatment and how it impacts the condition of the roads. DPW Director Slosek stated that he believes the method has helped roads overall.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that it appears the originally set seven-year Road Plan will not achieve the original goal of 90% good/excellent/fair roads in Town. Capping the budget at \$1.7M will also likely lead to deterioration in the end. He asked what it will cost to get to the original figure of 90% within the next 4-6 years. If that is cost-prohibitive, he asked what maximum figure could be achieved. He expressed disappointment that unless the budget is increased there will be a slow deterioration of the roads over the next 5-10 years.

In response to a question from Selectman D'Angelo, Mr. Borowitz stated that most towns in the NRPC region have a budget of around 50%-60% of the annual depreciation value of the roads.

Selectman Pray asked if there is a standard that NRPC likes to see. Mr. Borowitz stated that this depends on the town, how expansive their network is, and the condition of their network at the time of assessment.

Chairman Lyon stated that he believes good progress has been made on the roads in the last 10 or so years and he would like to see this progress continue. He stated that he looks forward to hearing during the Strategic Plan process about how to potentially implement the recommendations.

## **7. Administration**

### **7.1 Administrative Updates**

Town Administrator Shankle explained that Sanborn Head will be sending out a new report to DES soon regarding the PFAS item on Thornton Ferry Road I. He noted that the Town has

received the deed for 34 West Street. The Board could sign off on this, while holding it in escrow pending receipt of payment and a signed release.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to sign the deed, contingent upon receipt of payment and the signed release.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

## **7.2. Discussion of Deliberative Meeting**

Chairman Lyon suggested that the Board review its vote on the operating budget, due to disagreement on the budget motions made during the Deliberative Session. He asked for a show of hands regarding which Board members are in favor of the budget as amended. All Board members indicated their support.

## **7.3. BOS Action Items**

The Board reviewed its list of action items.

Regarding improved cell service in the Village, Chairman Lyon explained that this item was discussed with a company that erects towers while leasing space to cell carriers. There was interest on behalf of the company to build a tower at the emergency services complex. This would cost the Town nothing out of pocket to erect. The company would then allow the Town a long-term lease on the top 10' of the tower. Chief Ciampoli noted that a representative from the company reviewed three potential spots on the site.

Selectman D'Angelo asked how much cell service would improve for those in Town. Chief Ciampoli stated that most individual carriers want to lease space on a pole, and it is likely that they will be interested in this opportunity. This would drastically improve service for most in the Village area. A second tower may be needed in order to improve service throughout Town.

There was discussion regarding talking to Sanborn Head about the potential location for the tower on the site. There was also discussion regarding speaking with the Town attorney regarding the potential lease terms.

## **8. Staff Reports**

### **8.1. New Hire - Parks and Recreation Department - Regular Part-Time Grounds Keeper Position**

Chairman Lyon explained that the Department would like to hire Arthur McCann as the regular part-time Groundskeeper. This position has been vacant since the end of the summer of 2023. Due to Mr. McCann's experience, the suggestion is to hire him at Grade 4 Step 10 (FY24 Step 10).

*A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to hire Arthur McCann as the regular part-time Groundskeeper at Grade 4 Step 10 at \$24.45 per hour.*

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

### **8.3. Highway Safety Grant Award Amendment**

The Board reviewed amended grant paperwork for the FY24 Amherst Police Department Highway Safety Grant, which increases the amount from \$11,600 to \$23,214.70. This grant will allow for the purchase of two new radars and two mobile data terminals with a minimum 75% reimbursement.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to accept the amendments to the FY24 Amherst Police Department Highway Safety Grant as proposed by the Chief and authorizing the Chair to sign the associated documentation.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

### **8.4. New Hire Dispatch- Noah Saunders**

Police Chief Ciampoli explained that Noah Saunders recently participated in a selection process for a communications specialist. He will be filling the anticipated full-time vacancy of Noemi Goohs, who will transition to part-time on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Pray and SECONDED by Selectman Stoughton to accept the appointment of Noah Saunders to the position of Communications Specialist effective February 19, 2024 at Grade 6/Step5 which is \$25.13.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

### **8.5. New Hire Police**

Police Chief Ciampoli stated that Marc Frederick is currently employed by the New Ipswich Police Department as a Patrol Officer. His employment contract with New Ipswich will terminate the first week of March and he intends to start at the Amherst Police Department on March 11, 2024.

The Board discussed proposed changes to the contract associated with this hire. The Board agreed to allow the changes to be worked out by Staff.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to accept the appointment of Marc Frederick effective March 11, 2024, to the position of Patrolman at Police Union Grade 9/Step 4 of \$30.10.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

### **8.2. DPW- Stormwater Utility update**

DPW Director Slosek stated that the DPW seeks direction from the Board regarding the MS4 Stormwater Utility item. The DPW advocates for the development of a stormwater utility as the funding mechanism to pay for MS4 compliance in Amherst. There are costs associated with the development of questions and answers necessary to make informed decisions on this matter. A first critical step is to conduct an impervious surface parcel analysis of all properties in Town, and to use this information to develop a rate structure. The Town's engineer sent a

proposal for this work. Without this information, the DPW will not be able to assess the viability of the funding mechanism. The engineer submitted a cost proposal for these tasks which was presented to the Board on December 4<sup>th</sup> for \$18,513.00. The Board decided that the DPW should consider reducing this expense by utilizing NRPC for the GIS component of the proposal. The DPW has since received a quote for the GIS services from NRPC, and an updated quote from Weston & Sampson removing the GIS component. The updated combined quotes total \$13,390 to complete these tasks.

In response to a question from Selectman Stoughton, DPW Director Slosek stated that there is funding for this within his budget. Selectman Stoughton noted that this information is needed but the end decision may be that the funding mechanism may still be best done through taxation versus a stormwater utility.

Selectman Pray asked if the impervious surface data is needed for other additional uses or for the rate structure proposal only. DPW Director Slosek stated that it would be useful data to have, but he is not sure how it would be used toward MS4 compliance. Selectman Stoughton stated that he believes one requirement of the MS4 permit is that the Town has to inventory at least the Town-owned impervious surfaces.

Selectman Pray stated that she is unclear if she wants to move forward with the funding for the development of associated stormwater rate structures. DPW Director Slosek stated that DPW believes this is the most fair and equitable way to fund MS4 compliance. If the Board is interested in considering the rate structure, this information would be helpful to make a more informed decision. NRPC is not able to complete the rate structure analysis. Selectman Pray stated that she believes NRPC should be able to give a basic breakdown of some of the information to get a sense of the impervious surfaces for commercial versus residential areas in Town, prior to voting for the funding of the development of associated stormwater rate structures.

Town Administrator Shankle suggested doing the impervious parcel analysis first before determining if the Board would like to move forward with funding the development of associated stormwater rate structures. DPW Director Slosek agreed that these were intended to be separate steps.

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Pray and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to accept a proposal from NRPC in the amount of \$3,500.00, to complete an impervious parcel analysis of Amherst properties.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

## **9. Approvals**

### **9.1. Town Common Request: AJWC Easter Egg Hunt**

*A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the request for use of the Common for the AJWC Easter Egg Hunt on March 23, 2024, from 8am-12pm.*

*Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

224 **9.2. Assessing**

225  
226 **Current Use Application**

227 **Item A.**

228 The Assessor has reviewed the application and determined the applicant qualifies for one acre  
229 to be placed in Current Use under RSA 79-A and CUB 304.01 and recommends approval.  
230 This lot is contiguous with Map 003, Lots 060-002, and 060-003.

231  
232 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to*  
233 *approve the Current Use application for Map 003, Lot 061-001 commencing in Tax Year*  
234 *2024.*

235 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

236  
237 **Solar Exemption Application**

238 **Item B.**

239 The Assessor has reviewed the application for the solar exemption under RSA 72:62 and  
240 recommends approval.

241  
242 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to*  
243 *approve the solar exemption in the amount of \$20,000 for Map 002 Lot 163-062 commencing*  
244 *in tax year 2024.*

245 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

246  
247 **Veteran, All Service, Service-Connected Disability Tax Credit**

248 **Item D.**

249 The attached application has been reviewed by the Assessor and the Assessor recommends  
250 granting this credit.

251  
252 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to*  
253 *approve the All-service Veteran Tax Credit for Map 007, Lot 017-035 commencing in Tax*  
254 *Year 2024.*

255 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

256  
257 **Item D-1.**

258 The attached application has been reviewed by the Assessor and the Assessor recommends  
259 granting this credit.

260  
261 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to*  
262 *approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 005, Lot 025-006 commencing in Tax Year 2024.*

263 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

264  
265 **Item D-2.**

266 The Assessor has reviewed the application for the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax  
267 Credit under RSA 72:35 and recommends approval.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax Credit for Map 005, Lot 025-006 commencing in tax year 2024.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

**Item D-3.**

The attached application has been reviewed by the Assessor and the Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 004, Lot 124-001 commencing in Tax Year 2024.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

**Item D-4.**

The Assessor has reviewed the application for the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax Credit under RSA 72:35 and recommends approval.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax Credit for Map 005, Lot 070-000 commencing in tax year 2024.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

**Item D-5.**

The attached application has been reviewed by the Assessor and the Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 005, Lot 070-000 commencing in Tax Year 2025.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

**Item D-6.**

The Assessor has reviewed the application for the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax Credit under RSA 72:35 and recommends approval.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Service-Connected Total Disabled Tax Credit for Map 004, Lot 112-018 commencing in tax year 2024.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.

**Item D-7.**

The attached application has been reviewed by the Assessor and the Assessor recommends granting this credit.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve the Veteran Tax Credit for Map 002, Lot 166-054 commencing in Tax Year 2024.

Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.



316 **9.3. AP, Payroll, Minutes**

317  
318 **Payroll**

319 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
320 *approve one (1) Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$269,909.40 dated January 25, 2024,*  
321 *subject to review and audit.*

322 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

323  
324 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
325 *approve one (1) Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$258,774.68 dated February 8, 2024,*  
326 *subject to review and audit.*

327 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

328  
329 **Accounts Payable**

330 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
331 *approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$33,673.15 dated January 16,*  
332 *2024, subject to review and audit. (NH DMV)*

333 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

334  
335 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
336 *approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$31,488.74 dated February 1,*  
337 *2024, subject to review and audit. (NH DMV)*

338 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

339  
340 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
341 *approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$381,536.89 dated February 1,*  
342 *2024, subject to review and audit. (Vendors)*

343 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

344  
345 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Pray to*  
346 *approve one (1) Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$3,149,219.00 dated February 1,*  
347 *2024, subject to review and audit. (Schools)*

348 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

349  
350 **Minutes**

351 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Stoughton and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to*  
352 *approve the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of January 22, 2024.*

353 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

354  
355 **10. Action Items**

356  
357 The Board reviewed potential new action items.

358  
359 **11. Old/New Business**

360  
361 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella and SECONDED by Chairman Lyon that the*  
362 *Town send an invoice to the German Market for services supplied by the Amherst Department*



of Public Works for \$3,007 and the Amherst Fire Rescue for \$2,080 during the December 9, 2023, weekend.

Discussion:

Selectman Grella stated that a number of citizens asked if the Town made any money from the Amherst German Christmas Market and asked why the Town allowed for it to occur. He does not like to see budget funding supporting this type of item. The Department's need to be made whole for their service to the public good for this event.

Chairman Lyon stated that the Board previously discussed whether to bill for these fees. The Board found it would be appropriate for them to be billed for but, as it was not part of the original agreement, thought it would be difficult to do so.

Town Administrator Shankle explained that he has not been provided copies of the German Christmas Market's non-profit financial information, as previously requested. If a bill is sent to them, maybe this would open the conversation.

In response to a question from Selectman Pray, DPW Director Slosek explained that the DPW costs included 53 hours of labor and equipment usage. Selectman Pray expressed interest in the breakdown of the DPW and Fire Rescue bills for the event.

Chairman Lyon stated that he does not believe the Town should foot the bill for this event. However, this was not made clear to the German Christmas Market in the first place. There is a difference that should be considered between damages made within the Village from the event and other billed services.

In response to a question from Selectman Stoughton, Chairman Lyon stated that he believes the Town would seek reimbursement from anyone who held an event and damaged Town property. DPW Director Slosek stated that he reviewed damage to Town property after the event and the Civil War Common may have had ruts from vehicles. This could have occurred from those attending the event and not necessarily anyone directly associated with the event. The damage was mostly negligible and could be handled by minor raking and maintenance.

Selectman D'Angelo stated that there was no indication given that the organizers would be billed for DPW or Fire Rescue hours and to do so after the fact seems a bit low class. It can be made clear in the future that this would occur.

In response to a question from Selectman Stoughton, DPW Director Slosek stated that a week before the event it became clear this would be a significant event. The DPW, Fire, and Police Departments met to discuss what would be needed to make the event safe. The German Christmas Market organizers were not directly involved in those meetings.

Selectman Pray stated that she would like this motion to be run by Town Counsel. The Board agreed to table this item until hearing from Town Counsel.

Selectman Grella tabled this motion in order to hear from Town Counsel first.

410  
411 *A MOTION was made by Selectman Grella that the Amherst Department of Public Works be*  
412 *paid \$3,007 and the Amherst Fire Rescue be paid \$2,080 for service at the German Market*  
413 *from the Town Contingency Fund.*

414  
415 *Selectman Grella also tabled the motion in order to hear from Town Counsel first.*

416  
417 Selectman D'Angelo stated that the SAU39 Board is meeting on February 19, 2024, at 6pm at  
418 Souhegan High School.

419  
420 **12. Adjournment**

421  
422 *A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Stoughton to*  
423 *adjourn the meeting at 8:39pm.*

424 *Vote: 5-0-0; motion carried unanimously.*

425  
426 **NEXT MEETING: February 26, 2024**

427  
428  
429 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Selectman Bill Stoughton*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*