

Select Board Meeting
Monday January 6, 2025
7 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Vice-Chair Molly Cowan, Clerk Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, Nancy Belanger, Town Manager Russ Dean, and Finance Director Corey Stevens were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 7 PM. He thanked Mr. Jordan's PEA class for attending.

2. Proclamations/Recognitions: National Law Enforcement Day

Ms. Gilman read the proclamation:

Whereas annually January 9th is nationally recognized as National Law Enforcement Day upon its creation in the year 2015;
And Whereas multiple organizations worked in collaboration in the creation of National Law Enforcement Day to promote a positive portrayal of Police Officers among communities and in the news media;
And Whereas the day recognizes, appreciates, and supports the over 900,000 Officers throughout the United States who have chosen the difficult career path of Law Enforcement Officer;
And Whereas Law Enforcement Officers of every rank and file have chosen a profession that puts their life on the line every day for their communities and answering all calls to public service, are often taken away from their families for long hours, and work with local, State, and Federal organizations, making communities safer through commanded dedication;
Now, therefore, the Chair of the Town of Exeter Select Board hereby proclaims and affirms January 9, 2025 as National Law Enforcement Day within the town of Exeter New Hampshire. All people are hereby called upon to promote gratitude, respect, and support for the Law Enforcement Officers who serve and protect our citizens and uphold the law.

Mr. Papakonstantis thanked members of the Police Department, some of whom were present, for their efforts.

3. Bid Opening - Chemical Purchase

- a. Harcros Chemicals of Nashua NH: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, \$2.1384 per gallon; 2) Activated Carbon, no bid; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.46 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, \$1.60 per gallon.
- b. Azelis of Sterling, MA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, no bid; 2) Activated Carbon, \$0.01 per pound in 4.8001 pound bags; 3) Potassium Permanganate, no bid; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, \$3.315 per gallon for 1,000 gallons or \$2.25 per gallon for 3,000 gallons prepaid.

- c. United Mineral and Chemical Corp of Lindhurst, NJ: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, no bid; 2) Activated Carbon, no bid; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.75 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, no bid.
- d. Carbon Activated Corporation of Compton, CA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, No bid; 2) Activated Carbon, \$1.35 per pound; 3) Potassium Permanganate, no bid; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, no bid.
- e. Univar Solutions of Morrisville, PA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, \$2.031 per gallon; 2. Activated Carbon, no bid; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.46 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, \$1.6381 per gallon.
- f. Coyne Chemical of Croydon, PA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, no bid; 2) Activated Carbon, \$2.1488 per pound; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.5237 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, no bid.
- g. Borden & Remington Corp of Fall River, MA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, \$2.08 per gallon; 2) Activated Carbon, no bid; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.980 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, \$1.4510 per gallon.
- h. Pencco of San Felipe, TX: No bids
- i. Shannon Chemical Corporation of Malvern, PA: 1) Sodium Hypochlorite, no bid; 2) Activated Carbon, no bid; 3) Potassium Permanganate, \$2.33 per pound; 4) Sodium Hydroxide 25%, no bid.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to forward the bids to the DPW for review. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

4. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this time.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: December 23, 2024

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Select Board minutes of December 23, 2024 as presented. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

6. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments made at this meeting.

7. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Town Hall Assessment Update

Tracy Kozak of Arcove was present to give an update on Town Hall. Ms. Gilman said the priorities are accessibility, adding HVAC, adding backstage areas for performers, and additional bathrooms. Mr. Dean said the Board should consider whether to add this to the next round of the CIP. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the Facilities Committee has reviewed this. Mr. Chartrand said no, they have not met since November. Ms. Belanger said the Arts & Culture Committee discussed it.

Ms. Kozak said Arcove and a preservation company did a deep dive into the historic significance of the building and the intrinsic historic value of the different parts of the building. They also looked at the infrastructure and ranked and categorized those elements. In general, the building has been cared for well. The uses of the building have evolved over the years and it doesn't quite serve the needs of the town today.

Ms. Kozak said we received input from a group of different stakeholders in the town. Ms. Gilman said we went through years of permits for the building in identifying these stakeholders. Ms. Kozak said the group identified areas that needed work. For accessibility, an elevator is required. The bathrooms on the lower level are not accessible from the inside of the building. There are areas where safety is a concern, and which were flagged by OSHA, such as the balcony level. We've found ways to make these areas safe. There should be two ways out from every space, proper railings on the balcony, and stairways that are safe. For the stage and backstage, there's a solution that allows a greater diversity of activities on the stage by increasing the backstage and making the stage handicapped accessible. We increased the efficiency of the second floor office areas by filling in very tall ceilings to create new office and rental space. We looked at a new mechanical system and new insulation. We found that the roof was recently insulated, and adding more wouldn't help much. We recommend a heat pump that would provide air conditioning and allow events to take place all year.

Ms. Kozak suggested that the work could be phased. The elevator work in particular would be disruptive. Mr. Papakonstantis asked what step would be first in the phasing. Ms. Kozak said usually we recommend stabilizing the building, but this one is in good shape. A quick fix would be to upgrade the air sealing that stops drafts around the windows and doors. The big item is handicapped accessibility.

Mr. Chartrand asked about HVAC - can the space be cooled? Ms. Kozak said it will be about 25% of the overall cost of the project, \$530,000 - \$584,000 in 2024 dollars. That doesn't include soft costs like insurance, fees, and contingencies. That would be for the HVAC in the whole building. Mr. Chartrand asked if ductwork is a historic concern. Ms. Kozak said they could be mostly concealed under the mezzanine and there are some chases we could repurpose for the auditorium.

Ms. Belanger asked if Ms. Kozak recommended starting with the elevator. Ms. Kozak said yes, the elevator has to be done, because the bathrooms are in the basement. We are proposing one handicapped bathroom on the first floor but it's not enough. Ms. Belanger asked about the cost for the elevator, and Ms. Kozak said \$300,000, but the excavation cost is unknown depending if they hit ledge. It would be \$150,000 - \$200,000 just for the demolition.

Mr. Chartrand asked about the balance between the historicity of the building and making it more usable. Ms. Gilman said there wasn't much conflict. Some of the work is returning it to what it might have been. The back-of-house

space has been changed and it doesn't affect the exterior of the building. Ms. Kozak said there are original doors in the back of the stage which show a time when there wasn't a stage. We're keeping that and not restoring it to the original condition. Overall there's nothing visible that will change. The current elevator is the worst intrusion, but we're not making it worse.

Ms. Belanger asked if the building would need to be closed while the elevator is being replaced. Ms. Kozak said not the whole building, but the work area would need to be screened. That whole corner of the building would be off-limits. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if EXTV would have to relocate, and Mr. Dean said they may have to, temporarily.

Mr. Papakonstantis said that Arcove's report should be sent to the Arts & Culture Committee and the Facilities Committee for review and recommendations.

b. Window Dressings Update – Energy Committee

Amy Farnham and Stephanie Marshall of the Energy Committee were present to discuss this initiative. Ms. Marshall said there will be a community build at the Town Hall, January 18 - 23. There will be two sessions a day where volunteers construct inserts. This is a program that allows residents, businesses, and non-profits access to low-cost window-insulating inserts. The average cost is \$40 - \$75 per insert; it's kept low because the labor is done by volunteers. A crew has been out in the community measuring their windows for the inserts. The build will be done by volunteers and the people who have purchased them. This is neighbors helping neighbors. The inserts will be very effective in insulating against heat loss. We raise funds so that $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ of these inserts are for folks that pay nothing for them. Ms. Farnham said we've taken orders for 200 inserts across 22 residences and one non-profit. We got \$2,500 in grant money to cover those who couldn't afford it. 80 volunteers have come forward to help us, but we could use more participants. Mr. Chartrand suggested reaching out to Liz Reyes, the volunteer coordinator at PEA.

c. FY 25 Budget/Town Warrant

Mr. Papakonstantis asked the Board to table the review of the warrant until next Monday when the draft warrant will be available. He asked for any further comments on the budget. Ms. Belanger said health and dental insurance is huge this year. We had the revaluation, and three union contracts. She added that the Budget Recommendation Committee did a very thorough job of vetting the budget.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked Mr. Stevens to discuss the increase. Mr. Stevens said the BRC handed off the \$24,164,000 budget. The open enrollment for health benefits resulted in some savings, and we found additional areas to get it to \$23,983,000, or 4.91% over last year's budget. We don't anticipate too much more change.

Mr. Papakonstantis described the budget process for the benefit of the PEA civics students who were present.

Mr. Chartrand said regarding Warrant Article 24, it should be contingent on the grant per the BRC's recommendation. On Article 31, the TIF amendment, there are details left out that we need.

8. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

- i. There were no abatements or exemptions considered at this meeting.

b. Permits & Approvals

- i. There were no permits or approvals considered at this meeting.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Mr. Dean said we had a recent senior luncheon which was a great event. Town staff assisted. The next one is Friday, January 10.
- ii. Parks and Rec is updating the website with lifeguard and summer camp positions.
- iii. There's a meeting with COAST this week regarding expanding Route 7 service. David Tovey will be representing the town.
- iv. The CALEA report is in for the Police Department, it speaks highly of our PD. The next step in the accreditation is for the Chiefs to go to California in March for a hearing.
- v. There are three upcoming retirements in Public Works: Paul Estes, Paul Roy, and Bill Baptiste. He thanked them for their years of service.
- vi. The styrofoam project happened at the transfer station this past weekend.
- vii. The auditors have begun field work in the Finance Office.
- viii. Bill Keegan will be speaking to the Departments on the 13th and 14th.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Mr. Chartrand attended the styrofoam event, which collected the rigid styrofoam that takes up a lot of space in landfills. We are looking at getting styrofoam recycling equipment at the Transfer Station so we did an event to test if there is demand, and we were shocked. 62 cars showed up. We filled 12 "super sacks" of rigid styrofoam. This would have been 75 large blue bags or a \$187.50 cost to the town. We are excited about the potential for having regional collection of styrofoam at the transfer station. We pay \$1M a year to have Waste Management to take our blue bags so we are interested in any savings on that, especially one that becomes an asset to the town.
- ii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- iii. Ms. Gilman had no report.
- iv. Ms. Belanger said there's a sitewalk at 76 Portsmouth Ave on Thursday, which is open to the public. At the next Planning Board meeting, we will

also discuss a proposed change to the zoning language regarding short-term rentals.

v. Mr. Papakonstantis had no report.

e. Correspondence

i. A notice from SAU 16 regarding a survey

9. Review Board Calendar

a. The next meetings are Monday, January 13; the Budget hearing January 21; February 3; Tuesday, February 18; and March 3. Deliberative Session is February 1, and Town Election is March 11.

10. Non-Public Session

a. There was no non-public session at this time.

11. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary