

SELECT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

6:30 pm

Nowak Room, Town Offices
10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING BEGINS AT 7:00 PM

Meetings can be watched on Ch 22 or Ch 6 or YouTube. Attendees can join in person or virtually via Zoom.

To access the meeting, click this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84821545819>

To access the meeting via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 848 2154 5819

Please join the meeting with your full name if you want to speak.

Use the "Raise Hand" button to alert the chair you wish to speak. On the phone, press *9.

More instructions for how to access the meeting can be found here:

<https://www.exeternh.gov/townmanager/virtual-town-meetings>

Contact us at extvg@exeternh.gov or 603-418-6425 with any technical issues.

AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Non-Public Session: 91-A:3II(a)
3. Board Interviews: Budget Recommendations Committee – Matt Willett 6:40 pm;
250th Celebration Commission – Karen Prior 6:50 pm
4. Public Comment
5. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting: January 21, 2025; February 3, 2025
6. Appointments/Resignations
7. Discussion/Action Items
 - a. Energy Committee Electric Rates Update – Cliff Sinnott
 - b. TIF Advisory Board – Russ Dean, Town Manager
 - c. Phillips Exeter Academy – Principal William Rawson
8. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions
9. Permits & Approvals
 - a. Parks & Recreation Donations Acceptance – Greg Bisson, Parks & Recreation Director
10. Town Manager's Report
11. Select Board Committee Reports
12. Correspondence
13. Review Board Calendar
14. Adjournment

Niko Papakonstantis, Chair

Select Board

Posted 2/14/25 Town Office, Town Website

Persons may request an accommodation for a disabling condition in order to attend this meeting. It is asked that such requests be made with 72 hours notice.

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Board Interviews



Town of Exeter
Town Manager's Office
10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025
6:40 pm
CONFIRMED

Statement of Interest Boards and Committee Membership

Committee Selection: Budget Recommendations Committee

New

Re-Appointment

Regular

Alternate

Name: Matthew Willett Email: mwillett207@gmail.com

Address: 62 Epping Rd Phone: 8602565814

Registered Voter: Yes No

Statement of Interest/experience/background/qualification, etc. (*resume can be attached*).

I'm writing to express my interest in joining the Budget Recommendations Committee. As Chairman of McGregor Memorial EMS (2017 - 2022), I managed the budget for Durham and Lee's ambulance service, presenting financial reports to town councils. This experience, along with my MBA from UNH and background in engineering, operations, and supply chain management, has strengthened my financial oversight and strategic planning skills. I currently lead the engineering team at Welch Fluorocarbon, managing budgets and resource allocation. I am eager to apply my expertise in budget analysis, municipal collaboration, and fiscal responsibility to support Exeter's financial planning. I would be honored to serve on the committee and contribute to our community's financial stewardship.

If this is re-appointment to a position, please list all training sessions you have attended relative to your appointed position.

I understand that: 1. this application will be presented to the Exeter Selectboard only for the position specified above and not for subsequent vacancies on the same board; 2. The Town Manager and Selectboard may nominate someone who has not filed a similar application; 3. this application will be available for public inspection.

After submitting this application for appointment to the Town Manager:

- The application will be reviewed and you will be scheduled for an interview with the Selectmen
- Following the interview the Board will vote on your potential appointment at the next regular meeting
- If appointed, you will receive a letter from the Town Manager and will be required to complete paperwork with the Town Clerk prior to the start of your service on the committee or board.

I certify that I am 18 years of age or older:

Signature: Matthew Willett

Date: 02/06/2025

Matthew WillettMWillett207@gmail.com

(860) 256-5814 (cell)

Well-rounded and highly motivated engineering director with both strong technical and business background. Looking to leverage technical proficiency in both engineering and leadership in a challenging and dynamic role.

PROFFESIONAL EXPERIENCE**Welch Fluorocarbon – Dover, NH****Team Leader, Engineering and Technical Services****Mar 2023-Present**

Provided director level leadership to a 15-person engineering and manufacturing support team. Teams were responsible for the R&D, new product introduction, qualification (IQ/OQ/PQ & PPAP) and production support of thermoformed and heat sealed thin, high-performance fluoropolymers.

- Drove new automation initiative to transform a fully manual manufacturing environment with a vision of a lights-out factory. This initiative involved customer alignment, the hiring multiple automation engineers and change management throughout the organization.
- Directed supplier quality initiatives for high-performance fluoropolymer products, including PPAP, APQP, and process capability analysis.
- Improved design and development On-Time-Delivery from an average of 47% to an average of 87% by improving the process of risk mitigation and project management
- Created and implemented new phase gate design and development procedure with anticipated ISO13485 certification
- Strategic strategy implementation included, technical sourcing & raw material specifications, critical characteristic identification, GD&T drawing standards, manufacturing readiness risk mitigation
- Coached and mentored new engineering managers to develop employee development programs and foster a strong team culture.

Pratt & Whitney – North Berwick, ME**2012 – 2023****Senior Engineering Manager, Engineering Support to Supply Chain****(2022 – 2023)**

Hired, trained and developed team of 4 engineers responsible for resolving technical issues that arose within the global supply chain. The creation of this new team required strategic considerations of desired skillsets and team goals.

- Developed a training curriculum for new engineers that focused on both design engineering and project management utilizing agile, six sigma and internal coaching.
- Utilized a leadership strategy that empowered employees through task ownership.
- Revised the team charter to include short- and long-term visions of the department and developed strategies, objectives and goals to achieve the vision.

Staff Engineer, Engineering Support to Supply Chain**(2020-2022)**

Helped developed a new role within Pratt & Whitney that integrated engineering and quality requirements with commercial and demand needs throughout the supply chain. Performed production sustainment activities and responsible product engineer.

- Developed product substantiation strategy that increased casting yield from 53% to 95%.
- Coordinated engineering priorities between multiple programs and discipline groups by developing a quality triage process. Decreased pending analysis tasks by 80% in 3 months.
- Onboarded new suppliers from initial quotation phase through first article approvals in support of global strategic sourcing strategies.

- Nominated and graduated from the Technical Leadership Development Program (March 2021)

Staff Project Engineer, Integrated Product Team Leader (2017 – 2020)

Led cross functional team of 11 engineers from preliminary design through prototype fabrication of high spool static airfoil compressor components. Served as primary project engineer and team leader for multiyear development engine programs. Integrated schedule and mechanical design interfaces between module teams. Reported project status to both internal and external customers.

- Planned and executed multi-year projects with near perfect on time delivery.
- Utilized PMP methods to create and manage team schedules and budgets while also managing identified risks.
- Tracked budget and schedule using earned value management system and waterfall schedule management.
- Developed business plans and executed cost reduction engineering activities

Senior Supply Chain Management Analyst (2016 – 2017)

Responsible for on time delivery of investment casting raw material, placement of purchase orders, compliance with DFAR regulations and reduction, and negotiated part cost reductions. Represented Pratt & Whitney as primary commercial point of contact and multiple suppliers.

- Decreased supplier overdue through delivery assurance and MRP realignment by 60%
- Leadership Award Recipient – Mid Turbine Frame Delivery Team

Design Engineer (2012 – 2016)

Primary design engineer during conceptual, preliminary and detailed design phases. Represented Part Family Engineering on site at suppliers while troubleshooting produce-ability and delivery issues for the Cast Stator Part Family. Provided technical support to second source suppliers in support of strategic sourcing strategies.

- Responsible for design of parts in development and production engines, with the extensive use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) and GD&T
- Completed supplier-based casting school which developed proficient and understanding of that investment casting process

Volunteer Experience

McGregor Memorial EMS

Chairman, Board of Directors

(2017-2022)

Elected by the organization's members to lead the Board of Directors and maintain consistent execution of the organization's mission. Utilized MBA techniques to develop strategical goals and execution strategics for the organization.

- Lead the board through strategic transition from a governing to mature/institutional board
- Drove nationwide search for the recruitment of a new executive director

EDUCATION

University of New Hampshire, New Hampshire

Masters of Business Administration, 2019

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, New York **Dual BS Aeronautical & Mechanical Engineering, 2012**



Town of Exeter
Town Manager's Office
10 Front Street, Exeter, NH 03833

Interview w/SB
2/18/25
6:50pm.
CONFIRMED

Statement of Interest Boards and Committee Membership

Committee Selection: 250th Celebration Commission

New Re-Appointment Regular Alternate

Name: Karen Prior Email: kcp7457@gmail.com

Address: 16 Pickpocket Rd. Phone: h: 772-0406

C: 770-5503 (preferred)

Registered Voter: Yes No

Statement of Interest/experience/background/qualification, etc. (resume can be attached).

As a member of the Board of Directors of
The American Independence Forum, I am
very interested in serving on this Commission
as it should be an integral partner in
celebrating our nation's 250th. I have extensive
community organizing background, eg chair of -

If this is re-appointment to a position, please list all training sessions you have attended relative to your appointed position.

I understand that: 1. this application will be presented to the Exeter Select Board only for the position specified above and not for subsequent vacancies on the same board; 2. The Town Manager and Select Board may nominate someone who has not filed a similar application; 3. this application will be available for public inspection.

After submitting this application for appointment to the Town Manager:

- The application will be reviewed and you will be scheduled for an interview with the Select Board
- Following the interview the Board will vote on your potential appointment at the next regular meeting
- If appointed, you will receive a letter from the Town Manager and will be required to complete paperwork with the Town Clerk prior to the start of your service on the committee or board.

I certify that I am 18 years of age or older:

Signature: Karen Prior Date: 1-21-25

To be completed by Select Board upon appointment:

Date Appointed: _____ Term Ending: _____ Full: _____ Alternate: _____

Planet Playground specifically as well
as am a nonprofit professional. As an
aside I ~~was~~ also happen, to have
my birthday on July 4th!

Approval of Minutes

Select Board Meeting
Tuesday January 21, 2025
7 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Vice-Chair Molly Cowan, Clerk Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, Nancy Belanger, and Town Manager Russ Dean were present at this meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 7 PM.

2. Public Comment

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

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: January 13, 2025

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Select Board minutes of January 13, 2025 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

4. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments or resignations considered.

5. Discussion/Action Items

- a. FY25 Budget and Bond Hearing

Mr. Papakonstantis read the public hearing notice:

The Exeter Select Board hereby gives notice of a public hearing pursuant to RSA 33:8-a on the following projects requiring bonds and notes as part of the fiscal year 2025 town warrant: 1. Drinkwater Road Groundwater Well Development; 2. Pickpocket Dam Removal; 3. Linden Street Bridge Repairs; 4. DPW Fuel Island Replacement; 5. Street Sweeper Replacement; 6. Use of \$500,000 in excess bond proceeds to fund inspecting, cleaning, and dredging of Clemson Lagoon; 7. Use of \$250,000 in excess bond proceeds to fund repairs to sewers and drains at Pine, Front, and Linden Streets; 8. Use of \$245,000 in excess bond proceeds to fund repairs to the Wastewater Facility Effluent Flume building. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 commencing at 7:00 p.m. in the Exeter Town Offices, Nowak Room, 10 Front Street, Exeter, NH. The public is encouraged to attend. Dated: December 26, 2024.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the public hearing for the Town of Exeter 2025 bonds. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 3, Drinkwater Road Groundwater Development:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,800,000 for the purpose of design, engineering, and construction of a new groundwater source off Drinkwater Road, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$6,800,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, accept and expend federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project and to comply with all laws applicable to such project; and further to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. Notwithstanding the general obligation nature of the bonds or notes, it is anticipated that debt service will be paid from the water fund. Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 Ballot Vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Dean said this project has been in our Capital Improvement Program for the last several years. We've completed pump testing on a new well source, and it's a significant project.

Mr. Chartrand said this is an important article. Developing more water sources is one of our key functions as a municipality.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend Article 3, Drinkwater Road Groundwater Development, in the amount of \$6,800,000. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 4, Pickpocket Dam Removal:
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,100,000 for the purpose of design, engineering and removal of the Pickpocket Dam and subsequent site monitoring, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$2,100,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, accept and expend federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project and to comply with all laws applicable to such project; and further to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. The Town is seeking grants to offset up to 100% of the project cost. Debt service to be paid from the general fund. Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 15-year bond at 3.09% interest: \$0.06/1,000, \$6.00/100,000 of assessed property value. Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 Ballot Vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Dean said Pickpocket Dam has been declared a high hazard dam by NHDES and the town is under a letter of deficiency to do something about that. The Board took a vote in June that removal is the preferred option. This article would raise and appropriate the moneys needed. This may be offset up to 100% but we don't know what grants we will get. We are in the running for the Great Bay 2030 grant at \$300,000 and we will likely get it.

Mr. Papakonstantis said we've worked with a consultant, done numerous studies over the past few years, and had public meetings and hearings. There are three grants that we would be eligible to receive. Removal is the least expensive option and he believes it's the cleanest, most environmentally sound way to proceed.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend approval of Article 4, Pickpocket Dam Removal, in the amount of \$2,100,00, to the voters. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 5, Linden Street Bridge Repairs:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,257,900 for the purpose of making repairs to the Linden Street Bridge, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,257,900 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, accept and expend federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project and to comply with all laws applicable to such project; and further to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. Debt service to be paid from the general fund. Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 10-year bond at 2.72% interest: \$0.05/1,000, \$5.00/100,000 of assessed property value. Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 Ballot Vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

DPW Director Steve Cronin said there are issues with settlement related to the bridge abutments. We did the design last year and went out to bid, but the bids we received were significantly higher than anticipated. We are asking for additional funding to rebid this project.

Ms. Gilman said this is necessary because it's a safety issue.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 5, Linden Street Bridge Repairs, at \$1,257,900. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 6, DPW Fuel Island Station Replacement:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$575,000 for the purpose of replacing the fuel island station at the DPW Complex at 13 Newfields

Road, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$575,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, accept and expend federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project and to comply with all laws applicable to such project; and further to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. Debt service to be paid from the general fund. Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 5-year bond at 2.89% interest: .04/1,000, \$4.00/100,000 of assessed property value. Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Cronin said Public Works conducted a site evaluation and a facility evaluation on long-term replacement of the DPW complex. While that goes forward, the fuel island has reached the end of its life, so we'd like to replace that now. The new location of the fuel island has been determined through site analysis. We can keep the existing fuel island in place while the new one is being constructed.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 6, Fuel Island Station Replacement, in the amount of \$575,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 7, Street Sweeper:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$395,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new street sweeper to be used to meet EPA nitrogen reduction permit requirements and the implementation of an enhanced sweeping program, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$395,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, accept and expend federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project and to comply with all laws applicable to such project; and further to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. Debt service to be paid from the general fund. (Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 5-year bond at 2.89% interest: \$0.03/1,000, \$3.00/100,000 of assessed property value). Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Dean said our street sweeper is old and needs to be replaced. We're anticipating that this will be an SRF loan that may have some forgiveness.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 7, Street Sweeper, at \$395,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 8, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Front, Pine & Linden Street Sewer & Drainage Improvements:
Shall the Town vote to authorize the expenditure of a portion of the unused bonds approved in 2021 for Salem Street Area Water, Sewer, Drainage Road Improvements and Utility Replacements as follows: to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 for the purpose of making sewer repairs at Pine, Front and Linden Streets, and making repairs to drainage systems at Pine, Front and Linden Streets, per RSA 33:3-a, II. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Dean said sometimes capital projects have budget surpluses at the end of the process, and they turn into an excess bond proceed which can be used for another project by 3/5 ballot vote approval. The Salem Street area project surplus is being applied to the sewer and drainage repairs at Pine/Linden/Front Street to facilitate the construction of the roundabout, which the voters approved.

Mr. Cronin said we're nearing completion of the design of the roundabout. We're still working with one abutter on an easement, which we have a verbal agreement on. We did an evaluation of these utilities and determined that replacement is the best course of action.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 8, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Front, Pine & Linden Street Sewer & Drainage repairs, at \$250,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 9, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Clemson Lagoon Cleaning and Inspection:
Shall the Town vote to authorize the expenditure of a portion of the unused bonds approved in 2021 for Wastewater Lagoon Sludge Removal as follows: to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500,000 for the purpose of inspecting, cleaning and dredging of Clemson Lagoon, per RSA 33:3-a, II. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Cronin said Clemson Pond is located on the banks of the Exeter Squamscott River and is the holding pond for our combined sewer overflow. We will be inspecting the Combined Sewer Overflow barrels, cleaning the outfall to

those barrels, and designing repairs to the tide gates. This is design and evaluation; at some point, we'd be back for more funding for construction.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend Article 9, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Clemson Lagoon Cleaning and Inspection at \$500,000. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 10, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Wastewater Treatment Facility Effluent Flume Repair:

Shall the Town vote to authorize the expenditure of a portion of the unused bonds approved in 2021 for Wastewater Lagoon Sludge Removal as follows: to raise and appropriate the sum of \$245,000 for the purpose of repairing the effluent flume at the Wastewater Treatment Facility site at 13 Newfields Road, per RSA 33:3-a, II. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Cronin said the effluent flume was part of the old treatment plant that was replaced and was repurposed as part of the new plant. The coating failed so this is to remove that coating and apply a new coating. This is where we do our mandated sampling so we need those surfaces to be clean and free of bacteria.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 10, Use of Excess Bonds Proceeds - Wastewater Treatment Facility Effluent Flume Repair, at \$245,000. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for any further public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the bond hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of public hearing:
The Exeter Select Board hereby gives notice of a public hearing on the Town of Exeter Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget and all financial and other warrant articles on Tuesday, January 21st, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices. This hearing will be held pursuant to RSA 32:5 and RSA 40:13. Dated: December 26, 2024

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to open the Town of Exeter 2025 Operating Budget Hearing. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Board does not vote to recommend Articles 1, 2, or 11. Ms. Gilman clarified that the Board is not authorized to vote on those articles.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 12, Operating Budget:

Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$23,983,368. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$23,441,313, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Estimated Tax Impact: .27/1,000 assessed property value, \$27/100,000 assessed property value). Majority vote required.

Mr. Dean briefly described the budget process. There are three separate operating budget warrant articles: General Fund, Water, Fund, and Sewer Fund, which are 2025 Articles 12,13, and 14. Each operating budget has a default budget in case it doesn't pass. The FY25 budget is a 4.91% increase, up by \$1,122,506 up over FY24.

The three largest town Departments are Police, Fire/EMS, and DPW. These budgets make up 64% of the General Fund Operating Budget. We have a Step adjustment of 3% for non-union employees in the first pay period of July. The Union contracts are separate articles that will be discussed later. There is an 18.7% increase in health insurance for all plans. Retirement for Group 1 is 13.53% of payroll through 6/30/25 then drops to 12.75% July 1; for Group 2 Police it's 31.28% of payroll through 6/30/25 and then 30.95%; for Group 2 Fire it's 30.35% of payroll through 6/30/25 then 29.15% from July 1. Group 1 is eligible for Social Security, Group 2 is not eligible for Social Security.

The Select Board budget is reduced by \$6 to \$22,462. The Chair is paid \$4,000 and the Board members are paid \$3,000. The Assistant Town Manager is now budgeted 100% in the Town Manager budget. The overall budget increase is \$144,477 or 45.9%. There's a new Human Resources Director position proposed, and the HR budget is up 4.8%. The Legal budget is level-funded from FY24 at \$100,000. In Information Technology, there's a \$51,039 increase in Contracted Services, which is a reallocation from Police and Fire. There are increases in internet services, computer software, and network supplies, but decreases in phone utilization and email archiving. The overall IT increase is \$84,461 or 24.4%. The Media Communications budget is an increase of \$7,835 or 11.9%.

The Town Clerk budget has a reduction of \$37,864 or 8.2%, mainly due to benefits changes. There is one election in 2025, so the Elections budget is decreased \$3,089 or 12.5%. Finance has an increase in wages and benefits but a reduction in audit fees, dues, and contracted services. The Treasurer budget is \$9,545, a budget decrease of \$147. In Tax Collection, there's an increase in wages and benefits, as well as education/training, postage, and tax billing services; the overall increase is \$14,603 or 12.1%. Assessing has an increase in Contracted Assessor Services of \$4,300, a wage increase of \$7,243, and a

benefits increase of \$5,178, but a decrease in postage and revaluation costs. There is an overall increase of \$5,256 or 1.9%.

In Planning, there are wage increases of \$19,768 or 9.1% and benefit increases of \$3,416 or 7.2%. There is an increase in mobile communications and dues. The overall budget increase is \$24,012 or 8%. In Economic Development, there are wage/benefit increases of \$13,490 and a \$50 increase in travel reimbursement, but a reduction in office supplies. In Building and Code Enforcement, there's a \$10,000 decrease in contracted services and a decrease in wages/benefits due to benefits changes, for an overall decrease of \$11,097 or 4%. The Conservation Commission budget has an increase of \$241. The Zoning Board has a decrease of \$105. The Historic District Commission has a decrease of \$366.

The Police Budget has a wage increase of \$82,909 or 4.2%, and overtime increase of \$10,418 or 11.3%. There is a step increase for Police Association employees which was built into the last contract negotiation. Benefits are increasing by \$144,674 or 11.2% and the Health insurance increase is \$110,159 of that. In Police Expenses, there are increases for accreditation, dry cleaning, education training, grant matching, and uniforms, and a decrease in the computer maintenance and service contract of \$16,300, as well as decreases in equipment, fuel, and the software agreement. The overall Police budget increase is 6.1%.

In the Fire Department, there's a wage increase of \$61,477 or 2.5%, and a benefits increase of \$38,209 or 2.7%. There is a one-year reduction in protective equipment of \$33,082 due to funds coming from ARPA; a reduction in cistern maintenance of \$900; a reduction in community relations of \$4,000 due to Mr. Schreiber no longer providing the same services to the Police and Fire Departments; a reduction in contract services of \$17,020; an increase in education training of \$737; and a reduction in conference/rooms/means of \$500. The expense reductions are \$51,483 or 15.6%, while the overall budget increase is \$48,203 or 1.1%.

For Dispatch, there are wage increases of \$18,881 or 1.1%. Health insurance is up \$8,917 or 8.5%. There is an overall increase to the Dispatch budget of \$30,372 or 6.4%. The Health budget has a wage increase of \$5,847 and a benefits increase of \$949. The total budget increase for Health is \$12,993 or 10%.

In Public Works Administration/Engineering, there are wage increases of \$57,502 or 9.1%, including the first full year of the new DPW Director and GIS Technician. In Highways & Streets, there are wage increases of \$13,514 or 1.7%; that doesn't include the collective bargaining. There are benefits increases of \$52,409 or 14.4%. There are increases in fuel of \$500, phone reimbursement at \$400, and safety equipment of \$1,000. In DPW Highway Road Paving, the budget is increased to \$625,000 due to additional paving in 2025 to be funded through state aid. In DPW Highway, culvert replacement is level-funded at

\$5,000. The DPW Snow and Ice budget has decreased by \$25,185, with the additional funds to come from the Snow and Ice Deficit fund.

In DPW Solid Waste, there's an increase in the disposal/recycling contract of \$112,180, an increase in blue bags of \$42,000, and an increase in supplies of \$1,000. DPW Streetlights is reduced by \$22,000 to \$147,000 due to the town purchasing the streetlights and replacing them with LEDs. DPW Stormwater is level funded at \$92,360.

DPW Maintenance wages are increasing by \$16,233 or 5.3% and have a benefits reduction of \$11,020 or -8.9%. There is an increase in contract services of \$23,500 or 50.5%, mostly due to cleaning in the Town Offices. There is an increase in fire safety expenses of \$9,000 or 60% following the Department of Labor's audit. Overall expenses are increasing \$34,113 or 6.34%. The town buildings budget, which covers electricity, natural gas, building maintenance, water/sewer bills, is at \$320,632, a \$17,021 increase or 5.6%. Maintenance Projects is level-funded at \$100,000. DPW Garage has an increase in full time wages of \$2,590 or 1.5%, and an increase in benefits of \$12,687 or 11.6%. DPW Garage has an overall increase of \$14,997 or 5%.

In Welfare/Human Services, there is a part-time wages increase of \$6,868 for the first full year of the Welfare/Human Services Administrator position at 29 hours per week. Direct relief is increasing by \$25,000. Human Services agency funding is at \$100,000, an increase of \$1,675.

In the Parks and Recreation Department, Recreation has a wage/benefits increase of \$74,481 or 17%. The request includes a new Senior Coordinator position with an impact in FY25 of \$32,125. In Parks, wages are reduced by \$6,170 or -5.8%, and benefits are increasing 1%, mainly due to staff turnover. In Other Culture/Recreation, the Special Events budget has an increase of \$2,000 for fireworks due to inflation. The total FY25 budget is \$36,500.

For the Library, the budget has increased by \$95,945 or 8.1%. The total budget is \$1,281,634.

In General Fund Debt Service, there is a reduction of \$120,699, or 5.8%. The total budget is \$1,948,573. Projects include the Solar Array, Intersection Improvements Program, Westside Drive Design and Construction, the Library Renovation and Addition, the Epping Road Improvements and Water Tank, and the Lincoln Street Project Phase 1 and 2.

In General Government, there is an increase of \$30,000 to account for the fire protection fee. This is the General Fund portion of the fire suppression system, which is supported by the public water system. This fee was introduced last year. The General Fund vehicle replacement and leases budget is \$230,317, a reduction of \$18,178. The General Fund Town-Wide expenses includes worker's compensation, the health buyout, unemployment, and insurance. In FY25 it's \$591,130, an increase of \$62,696 or 11.9%.

The total General Fund budget is \$23,983,368, a 4.91% increase over FY24.

In General Fund Revenue, which includes motor vehicle registration fees, Meals & Rooms tax, building permits, blue bag fees, other Department income, investment income, the Highway Block Grant Aid, and the prior year's fund balance, the total revenues are \$8,843,004. The total taxes to be raised for FY25 are \$15,140,364, compared to \$14,066,720 in FY24.

If the operating budget is voted down, the default budget goes into effect. The FY25 default budget is \$23,441,313, which is \$542,055 less than the proposed budget. The Water Fund default is \$4,613,401, which is \$12,044 more than the FY24 budget. The Sewer Fund default is \$8,074,074, which is \$73,653 less than the proposed budget. The General Fund default budget is a 2.54% increase over the FY24 budget.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if the presentation can be made available on the town's website. Mr. Dean said yes.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Budget Recommendations Committee thoroughly vetted this budget. The version they recommended to the Select Board was slightly higher, but the Executive Team found further areas of cutbacks and got it down to a 4.91% increase. About a year ago, the Board was presented with a report from a consultant who looked at the organization and succession planning. We've been successful in implementing many of those recommendations with zero budget impact. The request for a Human Resources Manager in this budget will allow the Assistant Town Manager to work full time for the Town Manager. This is in service of our goal of retaining employees. Mr. Chartrand said the HR position is essential. There is a retention war among municipalities and it's caused us to lose folks and then have to rehire and retrain.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment.

Jeff Gitsi of 20 Chestnut Street asked regarding the list of revenues, are tax rates the figure that makes up the shortfall? Where do bonds and borrowing come into that? Mr. Dean said bonds are considered revenue in the year that we get the money, then are considered debt service after that. The revenues go into balancing the budget. We use those to set the tax rate in November. Mr. Chartrand said revenues have never covered our expenses. We've always had property taxes. Only 23% of taxes raised goes to the town; the rest goes to the schools, the county, and the State. We've done a good job of growing revenues to reduce the town's tax obligation.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 12, the 2025 Operating Budget, at \$23,983,368. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 13, Water Fund Operating Budget: *Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as a water operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$4,601,357. Should this article be defeated, the water default budget shall be \$4,613,401, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments*

required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law. Majority vote required.

Mr. Dean said the Water Fund budget of \$4,601,357 is a decrease of \$361,417 or 7.28%. In Water Administration, there's a wages/benefits increase of \$57,391, a Consulting Services increase of \$3,250, and a property insurance increase of \$4,230. The overall budget for Administration is \$599,274. The Water Billing budget is \$222,970. Water Distribution, which includes personnel, system maintenance, natural gas and electric, and pump station maintenance, is \$930,425. The Water Treatment budget, which includes the Surface and Groundwater Treatment Plants, is \$1,148,821. In Debt Service, projects include the Epping Road Water Tank, the Salem Street Utilities Project, the Lary Lane Groundwater Plant, the Washington Street Water Line, the Groundwater Surface Water Assessment Bond, Groundwater Source Development, and Westside Drive Design and Construction. The total Debt Service budget is \$1,427,932. The Capital Outlay budget is \$271,935. The total Water Fund budget is \$4,601,357.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 13, the 2025 Water Fund Budget, in the amount of \$4,601,357. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 14, Sewer Fund Operating Budget: *Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as a sewer operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$8,147,727. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$8,074,074, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law. Majority vote required.*

Mr. Dean said Sewer Fund Administration is \$630,909. Sewer Billing is \$219,395. Sewer Collections is \$729,473. Sewer Treatment includes the operating and maintenance cost for the Sewer Treatment Facility, as well as 6 full-time operators. There was an equipment maintenance increase of \$30,000 but a reduction of \$3,000 for chemicals and a reduction in solids handling of \$25,000. The total Sewer Treatment budget is \$1,703,886. In Debt Service, the two major projects are the Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Siphons Project, and the budget is \$4,675,128. The Capital Outlay budget is paying the lease/purchase on the Vactor truck of two years ago. There's a new request for a fine bubble aeration blower repair and a 6,000 hour service for the centrifuge at \$50,000. The total Capital Outlay budget is \$188,936.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Chartrand asked about the length of the Wastewater Treatment Facility bond. Mr. Dean said it was a 20 year bond that we got in 2019.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 14, Sewer Fund Operating Budget, in the amount of \$8,147,727. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 15, Collective Bargaining Agreement – SEIU Local 1984 and Town of Exeter:

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the three-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the SEIU (Service Employees International Union) Local 1984 covering Public Works and Administrative/Clerical employees, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: in FY25, \$68,068 from the Water/Sewer Fund and \$70,451 from the General Fund for a total of \$138,519; in FY26, \$93,597 from the Water/Sewer Fund and \$105,320 from the General Fund for a total of \$198,917; in FY27, \$61,403 from the Water/Sewer Fund and \$80,643 from the General Fund, for a total of \$142,046; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$138,519 for the 2025 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. The amounts raised will be \$70,451 through taxation (General Fund), and \$68,068 (Water/Sewer Funds) as offsetting revenue. The Estimated Tax Impact is \$0.02/1,000 or \$2.02/100,000 in assessed property value. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Ms. Cowan said she knows that this took a lot of negotiation and she's inclined to support whatever the bargaining agreement was. Mr. Chartrand said there are agreements with all three unions and there were changes made to retain existing employees.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 15, Collective Bargaining Agreement – SEIU Local 1984 and Town of Exeter. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 16, Collective Bargaining Agreement – Exeter Police Association and Town of Exeter:

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the three-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the Exeter Police Association, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: in FY25, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$133,009; in FY26, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$225,370; in FY27, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$128,120; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$133,009 for the 2025 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. (Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.038/1,000, \$3.82/100,000 assessed property value). Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Dean said we went through a process of negotiations with our Unions of negotiating wage adjustments to their scale, looking at outside communities and comparing them to our wage scale, and found that a lot of communities are paying more.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 16, Collective Bargaining Agreement – Exeter Police Association and Town of Exeter. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 17, Collective Bargaining Agreement – Exeter Professional Firefighters Association Local 3491 and Town of Exeter: *To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the three-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the Exeter Professional Firefighters Association Local 3491, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: in FY25, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$158,248; in FY26, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$207,857; and in FY27, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$124,297; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$158,248 for the 2025 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.045/1,000, \$4.54/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.*

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 17, Collective Bargaining Agreement – Exeter Professional Firefighters Association Local 3491 and Town of Exeter. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 18, Replace Sidewalk Tractor #58: *To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for \$225,000 for the purpose of lease/purchasing a replacement for a sidewalk tractor in the Public Works Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$56,250, which represents the first of 5 annual payments (a total of \$258,750) for this purpose. This lease/purchase will contain an escape (non-appropriation) clause. This sum to come from general taxation. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.016/1,000, \$1.61/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote is required.*

DPW Director Stephen Cronin said this is a 1991 trackless multi-tool tractor, the oldest of all of our tractors for sidewalk maintenance such as snow removal and sweeping. We've put a lot into repairing this over the last few years.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 18, Replace Sidewalk Tractor #58 for \$225,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 19, Replace Dump Truck #33:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for \$160,000 for the purpose of lease/purchasing a replacement for dump truck #33 in the Public Works Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-thousand dollars (\$40,000), which represents the first of 5 annual payments (a total of \$184,000) for this purpose. This lease/purchase will contain an escape (non-appropriation) clause. This sum to come from general taxation. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.011/1,000, \$1.15/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.

DPW Director Stephen Cronin said this vehicle is a 2008 six-wheel dump truck that started originally in the Water Department and was shifted over to Highway. It's used on a daily basis and is part of our snow and ice operations. We're replacing this with a smaller platform truck that is more flexible and allows us to swap the type of equipment on the truck. It will have a plow. It won't require a commercial driver's license, which we've struggled with in terms of recruitment.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 19, Replace Dump Truck #33, for \$160,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 20, Purchase ADA Accessible Van for Parks/Recreation:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for \$120,000 for the purpose of lease/purchasing an ADA Accessible Van for the Parks/Recreation Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen-thousand dollars (\$15,000), which represents the first of 5 annual general fund payments (a total of \$69,000) for this purpose. The total cost of the van will be shared with the Recreation Revolving Fund which will provide 50% funding or \$69,000 for this purchase over the 5-year lease/purchase. The total sum to be raised from taxation will be \$69,000. The total amount of the lease/purchase is estimated at \$138,000. This lease/purchase will contain an escape (non-appropriation) clause. This sum to come from general taxation and Recreation Revolving Funds. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.004/1,000, \$0.43/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.

Assistant Parks and Rec Director David Tovey was present to speak about this article. He said we currently only have one 15 passenger van that we use for trips and events. We offer over 30 trips a year and we're adding to that. This van would allow us to offer trips to more people. It can accommodate people with mobility issues. We're moving into the new multigenerational center at 10 Hampton Road, and this could bring people down to participate in a program or luncheon. We would try to purchase a lightly-used vehicle, so hopefully that could save some money. We're looking to get a part-time Senior Coordinator and get the new building really busy during the day.

Barbara Desjardins, a member of the Senior Council, said the ADA van and Senior Coordinator are desperately needed. We need activities for our Seniors in Exeter. Programs now are limited because we don't have someone working part-time to develop interesting programs. Exeter is falling behind. Some people aren't able to go on any outings or can't get to the Senior Center because of their mobility issues.

Mr. Tovey said this van could be used for all ages.

Mr. Papakonstantis said when he ran for the Select Board, one of his platforms was to improve multi-generational activities. It would be exciting to have this vehicle available to anyone who needs it.

Mr. Dean said the \$15,000 is the first of 5 payments from the General Fund, which includes principal and interest. The Rec Revolving Fund is a non-appropriated fund, so not raised by Town Meeting.

Mr. Chartrand said the current van we own is not ADA accessible. Going forward, we'd have two vans, one of which is ADA accessible. This would increase the capacity of our trips.

Ms. Gilman said we still need to say we're raising and appropriating \$120,000 in the Article, according to statute. Ms. Belanger asked if they are able to buy one for less, would \$69,000 still come out of the Rec Revolving Fund? Mr. Dean said no, we'd redistribute the payments in a proportional way.

Ms. Belanger said this will help more Seniors participate in the programming we've worked so hard to offer.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 20, Purchase ADA Accessible Van for Parks/Recreation, for \$120,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 21, Public EV Charging Facility:
To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$120,000 for the purpose of purchasing and installing 2 two-port Electric Vehicle chargers, which provides charging for 4 vehicles, to be located in the Downtown Municipal Lot. This project may qualify for a DOT Charging Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Grant that provides an 80:20 grant match (federal:local) up to \$96,000. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for this grant is typically announced in May. Any additional grants obtained will offset the cost of the project. This appropriation will not take effect unless at least \$96,000 in grants is received, with the town's share of up to \$24,000 to come from the unassigned fund balance. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Town Conservation and Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy was present to discuss this article. She said the Energy Committee worked on vetting design proposals and moving this forward. They explored several locations. It needs to be very walkable to downtown, but we want to minimize impact to downtown parking. This is for 2 two-port chargers, which can charge up to 4 vehicles. It's \$120,000, but it's grant-dependent. The State applied for a Federal grant and was awarded that grant. This isn't guaranteed funding, but our project

has been vetted. The location is in the Water Street lot on the Bow Street end. The parking spots will be ADA-capable. The charging units will have safety bollards. We're pursuing removal of the parking island, which will give us two spaces, for a net loss of two spaces. These chargers have a 5-year warranty and a 5-year network service provided. We would have the ability to control what it costs users to use this space. There are currently 6 chargers in Exeter and 11 in Stratham, but the US DOE recommends 22 chargers for Exeter. This can also draw in people who don't live in Exeter to visit our town and the local businesses. The Energy Committee and Planning Department supports this because it supports movement away from fossil fuels. If there were a 10% utilization rate with a \$.35 KWh fee and a \$0.50 use fee, we would break even in 2 years and be cashflow-positive in year 3.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Chartrand said he likes that it's contingent on getting the grant. It's a good way to present this to the public.

Ms. Belanger asked what would happen if people were parked in those spots beyond the charging time. Ms. Murphy said if their car is full and remains parked there, we can charge them a fee.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 21, Public EV Charging Facility, at \$120,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 22 – Appropriate to Sick Leave Trust Fund:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Sick Leave Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 22, Appropriate to Sick Leave Trust Fund, at \$100,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 23 – Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund – Parks Improvements:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Parks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.028/1,000 assessed property value, \$2.84/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

Parks and Rec Director Greg Bisson said this fund was established several years ago and has been essential in the revitalization of our Parks program. We still have a ways to go, as we have had a lot of deferred maintenance over the years.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the Budget Recommendations Committee recommended this at \$100,000.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 23, Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund – Parks Improvements at \$100,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 24, Purchase Styrofoam Densifier Unit: *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$80,000, for the purpose of purchasing a Styrofoam densifier unit. This project is eligible for a \$50,000 grant through RecycleFoam.org with applications due in March/April. Any grants obtained will go to offset the cost of the project. This appropriation will not take effect unless \$50,000 in grants are received, with the Town's share of \$30,000 to come from unassigned fund balance. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.*

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

Town Conservation and Sustainability Planner Kristen Murphy was present to discuss this article. Ms. Murphy said this is a joint proposal between the Planning Department and the Sustainability Advisory Committee. This minimizes the waste added to our landfills and offers residents an option for styrofoam. There's a \$50,000 grant available for this, so the cost to the town would be \$30,000. It would extend the life of the Waste Management landfill in Rochester and would result in a hauling savings of \$3,000 year. We can also sell the "ingots" of condensed styrofoam. The Sustainability Committee held a trial recycling event and collected the equivalent of 75 blue bags' worth.

Mr. Chartrand, who attended the recycling event, said this is very exciting. The landfill is closing in 9 years and we don't know where our waste will go after that. This is low-hanging fruit to reduce our waste.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend Article 24, Purchase Styrofoam Densifier Unit, at \$80,000. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 25, Appropriate to Non-Capital Reserve Fund – Snow and Ice Deficit:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75,000 to be added to the Snow and Ice Deficit Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 25, Appropriate to Non-Capital Reserve Fund Snow and Ice Deficit, at \$75,000. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 26 – Replace Fire Utility Truck: *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$71,355, for the purpose of purchasing a replacement for the Fire Department Utility Truck purchased in 2008. This vehicle is primarily used for*

towing emergency and non-emergency trailers to incident scenes. It is also used to pick up used equipment after fire and other incidents. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Fire Chief Justin Pizon was present to discuss this article. Chief Pizon said this truck is a multi-purpose daily driver. Right now it's got a plow on it. This will be replacing an F350 single cab with an F350 extended cab, which will allow us to get 5 individuals into that vehicle rather than 2. It's from 2008, which is pretty old.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 26 – Replace Fire Utility Truck, at \$71,355. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 27 – Transfer Station Improvements: *To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of making improvements to the Town transfer station. This sum to come from general taxation. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.014/1,000, \$1.44/100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.*

DPW Director Stephen Cronin was present to discuss this article. He said this project was initiated by the Sustainability Advisory Committee with the full support of the DPW. This project would address safety, vehicle circulation, and efficiency of operations at the transfer station, as well as accommodate expanded recycling options. We initially requested \$100,000 but we can do the project without full paving of the site.

Mr. Chartrand said the ramp is currently a mild hazard. He would like to see some reorganization of the site. He was also hoping to have a better cover over the cardboard area. If the cardboard gets wet, it's not saleable.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend Article 27, Transfer Station Improvements, at \$50,000. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 28 – Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund – ADA Fund:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the ADA Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.0072/1,000 assessed property value, \$0.72/\$100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 28 – Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund – ADA Fund at \$25,000. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 29 – Sestercentennial Fund:

To see if the Town will vote to establish a non-capital reserve fund under RSA 35:1-c, to be known as the Sestercentennial Fund, for the purpose of planning events and celebrations for the Sestercentennial of the United States of America, and to raise and appropriate the sum of five-thousand dollars (\$5,000) to be placed in this fund and further the Select Board shall be named agents of the fund and be authorized to make expenditures from the fund. Estimated Tax Impact: \$0.0014/1,000 assessed property value, \$0.14/\$100,000 assessed property value. Majority vote required.

Ms. Gilman said the Sestercentennial Committee met for the first time today. This committee needs to have a brand or logo. The \$5,000 will get us up and running. We'll be soliciting donations that will offset the 2026 budget. The State set aside money to create a website that we can add to.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 29, Sestercentennial Fund, at \$5,000. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0. a

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 30 – Appropriate to Trust Fund – Swasey Parkway (\$3,750)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,750 to be added to the Swasey Parkway Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. This amount is equivalent to the amount of permit fees collected during 2024 for use of the Swasey Parkway. Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to recommend Article 30, Appropriate to Trust Fund – Swasey Parkway, at \$3,750. Ms. Cowan seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 32, a Citizens Petition:

On the petition of Gerry Hamel and other registered voters of the town of Exeter, NH, to see if the town shall vote to discontinue the Community Revitalization Tax Incentive Program (RSA 79E) adopted by the Town of Exeter in March 2014. The program was used to give tax incentives to owners and investors in certain districts to spur revitalization of property. With property values more than doubling in the past ten years and the lack of needing incentives to renovate, we feel the incentive program should be discontinued so that taxes on all future projects can be utilized by the town and citizens instead of investors.

Gerry Hamel of 28 Newfields Road said in 2014 this was adopted by the town. We were coming out of a recession and the economic climate was moving slowly. This plan gave investors incentive to renovate buildings in town. Since then, the housing market has taken off like a rocket. The incentive has been there for the last few years without needing help from the town. Developers

would have done them anyway. This is detrimental to the town. One developer should be paying \$175,000 a year but is paying \$10-11,000. We're losing a lot of tax money. It's time for this to be taken off the books.

Mr. Chartrand said he agrees that it's time to retire this for now. If we were to bring this back, we might tie it more closely to a district that needs revitalization. He mentioned that the tax break is for a certain number of years, not in perpetuity.

Mr. Chartrand said that typically we don't recommend Citizens Petitions that don't have dollar amounts attached. Mr. Papakonstantis said if there's no money appropriated, we don't have to make a motion on it. Mr. Chartrand said he expects this will have broad support and he would vote yes on it. This was useful initially but is no longer needed.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. There was no further discussion from the Board.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 33, a Citizens Petition:

By petition of Karishma Manzur and others, shall the town vote to call upon our Federal elected representatives to use the US Government's considerable influence to 1) support the safety and right to life of all people living in Israel and Palestine; 2) enforce US laws prohibiting weapons sales to countries that violate human rights, and 3) ensure the safe delivery of food and medical supplies to the people in Gaza? While many American struggle to live from paycheck to paycheck, many are homeless, children are going hungry, elderly people are unable to afford to heat their homes, and millions of Americans don't have health insurance, our government spent over \$90 million of New Hampshire tax money in 2024 to buy weapons for Israel. We want our government to spend our money to help ordinary Americans. As citizens, we are also concerned that our money and weapons are being used to make Gaza the most dangerous place in the world to be a child. The record of the vote approving this article shall be sent to Exeter's State and Federal representatives and the Governor of New Hampshire.

Karishma Manzur of 6 Windemere Lane said as citizens, we can't bring forward Statewide ballot initiatives, so this is our only option to try to move our government in the right direction.

Mr. Papakonstantis said this came before the Select Board previously but fell outside our purview. At that time, we talked about your right as an SB2 citizen to do this and get your message out in this form. This will go on to Deliberative Session as written.

Ms. Manzur discussed reordering the Citizens Petitions she had submitted. Mr. Papakonstantis said he will read them in the initial order tonight and they will be changed for Deliberative Session.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 34, a Citizens Petition:

By petition of Karishma Manzur and others, shall the town vote to call upon our Federal elected representatives to investigate the massive fraud and waste in the US Department of Defense, cut the vast \$900 billion defense budget, and use taxpayer funds to help ordinary Americans? While over 45 million Americans are struggling with hunger, billions of dollars will go to a few giant defense contractors that overcharge the US government and make enormous profits for their CEOs and shareholders. This is disgraceful. As citizens, we want our tax funds to help ordinary Americans. The record of the vote approving this article shall be sent to Exeter's State and Federal representatives and the Governor of New Hampshire.

Resident Patricia Yasha said we may think because there is a ceasefire, this is no longer necessary, but everything in these articles is still going to be true. It's a very tenuous ceasefire.

Ms. Manzur said we could easily cut Pentagon spending by 15% or \$140 billion dollars and use it to support schools, renewable energy, universal pre-K, eliminate hunger worldwide, and end homelessness in the United States.

The public and the Board had no further comment.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 35, a Citizens Petition:

By petition of Karishma Manzur and others, shall the town vote to authorize and direct the Exeter Select Board, our Governor, and State and Federal elected representatives to support a \$5,000 limit on contributions to political action committees (PACs) and super PACs that spend money to support or defeat candidates for office in New Hampshire? Democracy means that we elect our political leaders, and they represent us. As citizens, we are concerned that corporations and billionaires use money to make our elected officials do what they want, and most ordinary Americans do not have that power. The record of the vote approving this article shall be sent to Exeter's State and Federal representatives and the Governor of New Hampshire.

Ms. Manzur said since the ruling on the Citizens United case, the campaign finance rules that had been in place for almost 100 years were negated, which has enabled the rise of dark money in politics. Super PACs can raise unlimited money from wealthy donors, and we have no way of knowing who those donors are. We must work together to protect fairness in the State's elections.

The public and the Board had no further comment.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 36, a Citizens Petition:

By petition of Karishma Manzur and others, shall the town vote to call upon our Governor and State and Federal elected representatives to conserve and maintain New Hampshire's public natural resources for the benefit of this and future generations? As citizens, we recognize the fundamental right of people, plants, and animals to have clean air, pure water, and a healthy environment. We urge our State and Federal governments to ensure that our beautiful state

continues to have a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment upon which we all rely. The record of the vote approving this article shall be sent to Exeter's State and Federal representatives and the Governor of New Hampshire.

Ms. Manzur said our State's Constitution does not guarantee us a healthy environment. We have no avenue to ask our government to protect our State.

The public and the Board had no further comment.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 36, a Citizens Petition:

By petition of Karishma Mazur and others, shall the town vote to direct the Exeter Select Board, our Governor, and State elected representatives to disclose and divest all town and state pension funds and withdraw investments from weapons manufacturers that are profiting from gun violence? Every year, gun violence kills more than 40,000 people in America and wounds twice as many. Injury from firearms is now the leading cause of death for children and teens in America. Gun violence is costing our nation over \$557 billion in health care treatments and lost economic opportunity. The lost human potential cannot be measured. Put simply, America cannot afford gun violence. As citizens, we want to make the world safer for everyone, especially children. The record of the vote approving this article shall be sent to Exeter's State and Federal representatives and the Governor of New Hampshire.

Ms. Manzur said in other communities, when citizens cannot make a difference, they have asked the government to divest pension funds. The New Hampshire retirement system is worth \$12 billion. Some of their investments are gun-free investments but we cannot find the information for some of the others. She described the varieties and causes of gun violence.

Another resident said with these articles, we hope to send a signal to our elected representatives that these are important topics for a lot of people.

The public and the Board had no further comment.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing of the 2025 Operating Budget. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of public hearing:

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 162-K:4, the Exeter Select Board hereby gives notice that they will hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment to the existing Epping Road Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan as part of the Epping Road Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, which was approved in 2015. Copies of the amended plan are available at the Town Clerk's Office, 10 Front Street, Exeter, NH. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, January 21st, 2025, commencing at 7 PM in the Exeter Town Offices, 10 Front Street. Dated January 8, 2025.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to open the public hearing. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 31, TIF Amendment - Amend Financing Plan:

To see if the Town will adopt the provisions of the Epping Road Tax Increment District Financing Plan Amendment, dated January 6, 2025, in accordance with RSA 162-K:9 IV which allocates the use of tax increments for retirement of bonds and notes as outlined in the plan amendment. The plan amendment includes three capital projects in the Epping Road TIF District. Epping Road Widening phase 2 - estimated cost \$880,000; Industrial Drive/Commerce Way Paving - estimated cost \$180,000; and Water/Sewer improvements south of the Continental Drive traffic light - estimated cost \$850,000. Estimated tax impact: none. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Town Economic Development Director Darren Winham was present to discuss this article. Mr. Winham said in 2015 Exeter adopted a tax increment financing plan to encourage development on the Epping Road Corridor. Our first order of business was to install water/sewer that goes up to the bridge and a road that would go from Ray Farmstead Road to its conclusion in map 20, lot 12. The 2018 TIF was to put a traffic light on Continental Drive, and we realized that we didn't need water/sewer/gas on the other side of the highway, so we pulled that back. In 2020, we thought we may need a center turn lane, so we asked the voters to approve us to do the corridor study and then do the work. Then Covid hit, and by the time we were able to come back to the project, we were \$800,000 short. This would be to complete the road widening and sidewalk. None of this money is money we have to borrow, it's already sitting in an account. We have \$8.2M in the fund now. The second project is a paving project. DPW expects to pave these roads in summer 2025 at a cost of \$180,000. The third project is to replace a section of water piping that's 8 inches where the rest of the piping in the area is 12 inches. This will ensure the highest water pressure is being delivered to corridor businesses. When he wrote the TIF in 2015, he estimated that we could create \$130M in new taxable property. We've created \$160M dollars of taxable property, and there's more under construction. We're going miles beyond where we thought we would go.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none. He brought the discussion back to the Board.

Mr. Chartrand said when this TIF is wrapped up, there will be a significant amount of property added to the tax base which will relieve owners of some tax obligation. The success has gone wildly beyond what we expected. He is in favor of this article.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend Article 31, TIF Amendment - Amend Financing Plan. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to close the public hearing on the proposed amendment to the Epping Road TIF plan. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Town Moderator Kate Miller said Deliberative Session is coming up on February 1st at the High School at 9 AM. We'll go through anything that people want to talk about. We'll try to keep the conversation brisk.

Mr. Chartrand said this is not the only session that Attorney Miller moderates. Attorney Miller said she is also the Cooperative School District Moderator. That session is on February 5th at 6 PM. Christopher Hillson is the moderator for Exeter School District. Voting is March 11. Ms. Belanger said that residents should attend the Deliberative Session early to check in.

Ms. Cowan asked if HB-1569, the documentary proof of citizenship requirement, is in effect for Deliberative Session? Attorney Miller said there is not an opportunity to register at Deliberative Session. You have to be a registered voter or register in advance. For registration, there are higher requirements for documents than there used to be. Ms. Belanger said today was the last day to register for Deliberative Session.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if by Monday of next week, Select Board members can email him which articles they wish to speak to, so he can get it to the Moderator before Deliberative Session.

6. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 94/1 in the amount of \$1,000 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 101/8/4 in the amount of \$14,000 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit for 87/18/03 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit for 18/4/4 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

- i. There were no permits or approvals considered.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. Bill Keegan visited the town last week.
- ii. He attended the Tax Exemption and Credit Advisory meeting, and there was a spirited discussion on the elderly exemption and veterans credits.
- iii. He thanked Public Works for the last two days of snow removal.
- iv. This week he'll be working on explanatory information coming out of tonight's hearing so the warrant will be ready to be posted on Monday.
- v. Ms. Belanger asked why EXTV didn't televise the tax committee. Mr. Dean said there was a camera in the room. He'll check in with them.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger had no report.

- ii. Ms. Gilman said she attended the Tax Exemption and Credits committee meeting. The first step is to start with elderly exemptions because they use more money and there are questions about the extent of proof needed to receive that exemption. We want to look at income limits, asset limits, and amounts. The Energy Committee is continuing with building the window inserts. She asked Mr. Dean that when we print the warrant for Deliberative Session, we space it so that the title of the article is associated with the body of the article. Mr. Chartrand asked if the “trust but verify” approach on elderly exemptions had any pushback from members. Ms. Gilman said no.
- iii. Ms. Cowan had no report.
- iv. Mr. Chartrand attended the Conservation Commission meeting, where they discussed the 76 Portsmouth Ave proposal. They were looking at recommending denial but the applicants asked them to hold so they could revise the proposal. He also attended with the Train Committee and informed them that we want to convert that into a town committee. Mr. Hall, who is a vital part of the committee, is not a citizen of Exeter; he’s a citizen of Kensington, but we would like him included as an ad-hoc member. Mr. Dean said we can find a way to do that.
- v. Mr. Papakonstantis said he went with the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager to Riverwoods to discuss potential warrant articles and other issues. They asked a lot of good questions. He also attended a short Swasey Parkway Trustees meeting where we went over plans for 2025. Each of the members owns pickup trucks and reported that they were able to drive into the Parkway and maneuver with ease. They’re happy with the response from most members of the public. They’re planning to put some “no dogs” signs on the Newfields Road end and talk with Highway about putting up speed limit signs. He also attended the Pairpoint Park Committee meeting and went through a presentation on the input they received from folks. 900 people responded to the survey.

e. Correspondence

- i. An effort by Comcast to expand Broadband opportunities in some NH towns. Mr. Papakonstantis said he could sign this on behalf of the Board.

MOTION: Mr. Chartrand moved to instruct the Chair to sign the letter to Comcast. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

- ii. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin
- iii. A letter from resident Ryan O'Brien on a proposed zoning ordinance amendment. Mr. Papakonstantis and Mr. Sharples have spoken with him. Mr. O'Brien, who was present, asked when he could revisit this with the Board. Mr. Chartrand said he should work with the Planning Board. Mr. Dean said the Planning Board sponsors zoning amendments. They have their own public hearing process. If they vote to recommend it,

it goes on to the warrant. Mr. O'Brien said it's hard to find dates on the website associated with these hearings. He understands that he was too late to affect this year's voting.

7. Review Board Calendar

The next meetings are February 3rd, Tuesday February 18, March 3, and March 17. February 1st is Deliberative Session and Town Election is March 11.

8. Non-Public Session

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

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary

Select Board Meeting
Monday February 3, 2025
6:30 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Clerk Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, and Nancy Belanger

Absent: Vice-Chair Molly Cowan

Town Manager Russ Dean was also present at this meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:30 PM. The Board went downstairs to the Wheelwright Room for interviews.

2. Board Interviews

- a. Dean Hubbard for the Planning Board
- b. Dawn Jelley to the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Commission

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7 PM.

3. Public Comment

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

4. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations/recognitions

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. There were no minutes considered.

6. Appointments

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to nominate James Breeland to the Exeter Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee, with no term. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Dean Hubbard to the Planning Board alternate position, term to expire April 2026. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Dawn Jelley to the Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Commission as an alternate. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

7. Discussion/Action Items

- a. Hazard Mitigation Plan adoption

Emergency Management Director Erik Wilking said Homeland Security and FEMA have accepted the revision to the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Rockingham Planning Commission assisted with the updates. This applies to a number of different natural hazards. There's also a possibility of funding for the Pickpocket Dam as a high hazard dam. Mr. Chartrand asked if the Town Engineer is aware of this, and Mr. Wilking said he's not sure. We held a public hearing in June 2024 and had a 30 day comment period, but received no comments, so it was a pretty seamless process. This is a 5-year process, so we'll have to do another revision in 2030. Ms. Belanger asked when the next process would begin. Mr. Wilking said about the time that it expires. We started this one in March of 2023, but there were a number of delays due to FEMA's responses to disasters and storms. Ms. Gilman asked if we have to read the plan for adoption. Mr. Wilking said if you wish to it's fine. Ms. Gilman read the certificate of adoption for the hazard mitigation plan:

WHEREAS, the Town of Exeter received funding from the NH Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management under a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant and assistance from Rockingham Planning Commission in the preparation of the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025;

and WHEREAS, several public planning meetings were held between May 2023 and December 2024 regarding the development and review of the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025;

and WHEREAS, the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025 contains several potential future projects to mitigate hazard damage in the Town of Exeter; and WHEREAS, a duly noticed public meeting was held by the Exeter Select Board on February 3, 2025 to formally approve and adopt the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Exeter Select Board :

- The Plan is hereby adopted as the official plan of the Town of Exeter:*
- The respective individuals identified in the mitigation strategy of the Plan are hereby directed to pursue implementation of the recommended actions assigned to them;*
- Future revisions and Plan maintenance required by 44 CFR 201.6 and FEMA are hereby adopted as part of this resolution for a period of five (5) years from the date of this resolution;*
- An annual report of the progress of the implementation elements of the Plan shall be presented to the Select Board by the Town's Emergency Management Director or Town Manager.*

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Exeter Select Board adopts the Exeter Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adopt the Town of Exeter Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan 2025, and further authorize the Select Board to sign the certificate of adoption. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

b. TIF Advisory Board charge

Economic Development Director Darren Winham said he started up these meetings again a month or so ago, but found out that the group had to meet more legally, so he's come to the Board for approval. Mr. Dean said appointments were only for one year at a time, but there was not a charge formally adopted by the Board. This committee exists by virtue of Town Meeting. It was adopted when the TIF was established. It has three members plus Mr. Winham and a rep and alternate from the Select Board. Mr. Dean said the District Administrator described in the RSA is the Economic Development Director. Ms. Belanger asked if it should be Corey Stevens, and Mr. Dean said Mr. Stevens is already very engaged with the TIF. Mr. Winham said maybe it should be Mr. Dean.

Mr. Chartrand said he would be interested in being the Select Board rep. Ms. Gilman said she would serve as the alternate.

Mr. Papakonstantis said there's no other committee where a member of staff is a voting member. Should there be four members plus staff? Mr. Winham said he can recruit a fourth member. Ms. Gilman said the RSA is much more involved than just putting a name on a piece of paper for the District Administrator position. Mr. Papakonstantis asked Mr. Winham to review and revise the charge. Ms. Belanger asked him to attach a copy of the RSA.

c. Deliberative Session Recap

Mr. Papakonstantis said all the articles will go on the ballot as written, other than one of the Citizens Petition that was slightly revised by the lead petitioner. Ms. Gilman said the descriptions in the articles were well-written, so there wasn't much explaining to do. Mr. Chartrand said he was somewhat surprised there wasn't more discussion around some of the articles. The funding mechanisms became more clear over the different drafts. Mr. Dean did a good job of reinforcing that a lot of the increase was due to health insurance and employee retention. Mr. Papakonstantis said we finally have a fully staffed Police and Fire Department but we're still down 13 in Public Works. Mr. Chartrand said we felt it was important not to load up the warrant with big projects after the approval of the Public Safety Complex last year. Ms. Belanger said regarding Epping Road and bike lanes, they were looked at, but we'd have to do some land-taking to do that. We are trying to get more bike lanes and connect sidewalks. Mr. Papakonstantis said within the next couple of meetings, he'd like to get Public Works Director Cronin and Mr. Sharples on the agenda and start the discussion about Complete Streets. Mr. Chartrand said he thinks the Select Board is unanimous in wanting to pursue Complete Streets.

d. Projects/Grants/Summaries

Finance Director Corey Stevens was present to discuss recent projects and grants. Mr. Papakonstantis said this town has done an incredible job of pursuing grants.

Mr. Stevens said he's become aware of a restraining order from New York telling President Trump he can't stop grants already awarded. Any of the SRF loans will still have forgiveness according to DES. Any of the State ARPA funds, they felt fairly confident that we won't lose because the money is already in the State. Grants that could be on the chopping block is the solar array at \$1.3M, some of the Historic Preservation Grants, and the Economic Block Grant at \$200,000 which is "on pause." Items that were on the warrant on Saturday, such as the NOAA Pickpocket Dam grant at \$2.1M, may be an issue. Mr. Sharples has a recently submitted Railroad Ave improvement TAP grant; there's no reason to believe a program like that would be pulled back. Ms. Belanger asked about Planet Playground. Mr. Stevens said we've gotten correspondence that Planet Playground and 10 Hampton Road should be secure. Mr. Papakonstantis asked about the styrofoam recycling. Mr. Chartrand said that's contingent on the grant, so voters won't get stuck paying for that.

Mr. Chartrand said we've been running our local government for nearly 100 years longer than the Federal Government has been around, and we'll continue to manage our local government.

Ms. Belanger said there were a few comments from the public saying they wished the styrofoam recycling unit wasn't grant-dependent. We should apply for grants again next year if it doesn't go through. Mr. Stevens said the grant was going to come from a private source, Recyclefoam.org, so it may be ok.

Mr. Dean said the Solar Array is the biggest concern because of the program itself and the \$1.3M credit involved. We are awaiting a piece of equipment from Unitil in order to go online. Doing due diligence and keeping up with the agencies as things change is the key.

Mr. Papakonstantis said he'd like to have an update on the status of grants with the Town Manager's report at each meeting. Mr. Chartrand said we should be in touch with our representatives in Congress.

Ms. Belanger asked if we've been in this situation before. We've received confirmation of grants and now we're in a precarious situation where we may not get them. Mr. Chartrand said 2/3rds of it seems to be fairly secure.

Ms. Gilman asked about ARPA funds. Mr. Stevens said that money is almost all spent out. The biggest piece is the turnout gear for the Fire Department at \$100,000.

8. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Disabled Exemption for 99/16 in the amount of \$125,000 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 104/18 in the amount of \$6,500 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to deny a Veterans Credit for 96/2/7 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit for 80/6/4 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/1 in the amount of \$622.26 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/2 in the amount of \$611.98 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/3 in the amount of \$560.39 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/6 in the amount of \$343.35 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/7 in the amount of \$451.87 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/8 in the amount of \$1,867.95 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/9 in the amount of \$1,414.31 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/10 in the amount of \$1,855.50 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/13 in the amount of \$1,903.53 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/11 in the amount of \$816.56 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 55/61/12 in the amount of \$1,985.36 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

i. NOAA Grant

Mr. Dean said this is a letter of support for the NOAA grant for barrier removal at the Pickpocket Dam. This is a request from the Public Works Director.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to submit a letter of support for the NOAA Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grant Application for Pickpocket Dam Removal Project, and authorize the Select Board Chair to sign the letter. Mr. Chartrand seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

- i. He spent a lot of the past week preparing for Deliberative Session.
- ii. He attended the retirement party for DPW employees last week.
- iii. Principal Rawson from PEA will be here on February 18 to give an update.
- iv. We've been working with Unitil on "double pole" issues in town. They will be clearing them throughout the spring and summer.
- v. CPCNH has updated rates which will be in the next packet.
- vi. He met with Devon Skerrit and Bill Campbell to talk about Pairpoint Park. They needed to be brought up to speed on the town's CIP process.
- vii. He will be in Concord on Thursday the 6th for a Health Trust meeting
- viii. The Chamber Economic forecast is on the same day.
- ix. Meeting with the owners of 19 Continental Drive regarding a water flow issue on Thursday.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger had a Recreation Advisory meeting which she did not attend, where they heard a 10 Hampton Road update. There is a projected move-in date of mid to late September. They're still waiting on some approvals from the State before putting bids out. They're looking to expand the COAST bus service out to 10 Hampton Road and possibly Sterling Hill. There's an ARPA community challenge grant open that they are going to look into. It could be used on a pathway from 10 Hampton Road to 4 Hampton Road. Regarding Planet Playground, they've raised \$37,000 but are looking for more. At the previous meeting, one of the members brought up concerns about allergy liability at Senior Luncheons, but Primex said we were fine. She attended a Planning Board meeting with a public hearing on RiverWoods extension. We tabled it to the next meeting on February 13. Green and Company at 76 Portsmouth Ave asked to continue until February 27. 112 Front Street has a sitewalk this Thursday. She did not attend the Arts & Culture Commission meeting but watched it on TV. They talked about Town Hall and Townhouse Common.
- ii. Ms. Gilman had no report. She discussed issues on the State level.
- iii. Mr. Chartrand attended a Facilities Advisory Committee meeting, where there was an update from Dave Sharples on the 10 Hampton Road

project and Public Safety project. The committee also made a workplan for the first half of the year.

- iv. Mr. Papakonstantis had no report. He attended the Public Works Department retirement party and it was well-attended and quite a few retirees came back.

9. Correspondence

- a. A list of meetings that Selectwoman Gilman will have tomorrow.
- b. The NHMA Legislative Bulletin
- c. A letter from Robert Prior which he read at the Planning Board meeting and copied the Select Board on.

10. Review Board Calendar

- a. The next meetings are Tuesday Feb 18, March 3, and March 17. Town voting is March 11 7 AM - 8 PM.

11. Non-Public Session

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

12. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion passed 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary

Appointments/Resignations



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Resignation from Housing Advisory

2 messages

E.C. Heath <ehealth@exeterucc.org>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fri, Feb 14, 2025 at 12:09 PM

Dear Pam,

I'm writing to ask that you register my resignation from the Housing Advisory Committee effective today. I've already spoken to Nancy and Lindsay to let them know. I'm balancing a lot right now between work and outside commitments, and I want to focus my energy on the 250th anniversary committee right now as it is a time-sensitive matter. I hope this will not be too much trouble. Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve.

Emily C. Heath

Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>
To: "E.C. Heath" <ehealth@exeterucc.org>

Fri, Feb 14, 2025 at 12:21 PM

Good afternoon Dr. Rev. Heath.

Thank you for your service to the Town of Exeter on the Housing Advisory Committee and appreciate your continued service on the 250th Celebration Commission.

I will forward your message to the Select Board.

Have a nice weekend.

Pam

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Pam McElroy

Town of Exeter

Senior Executive Assistant, Town Manager's Office

603-773-6102

Discussion/Action Items

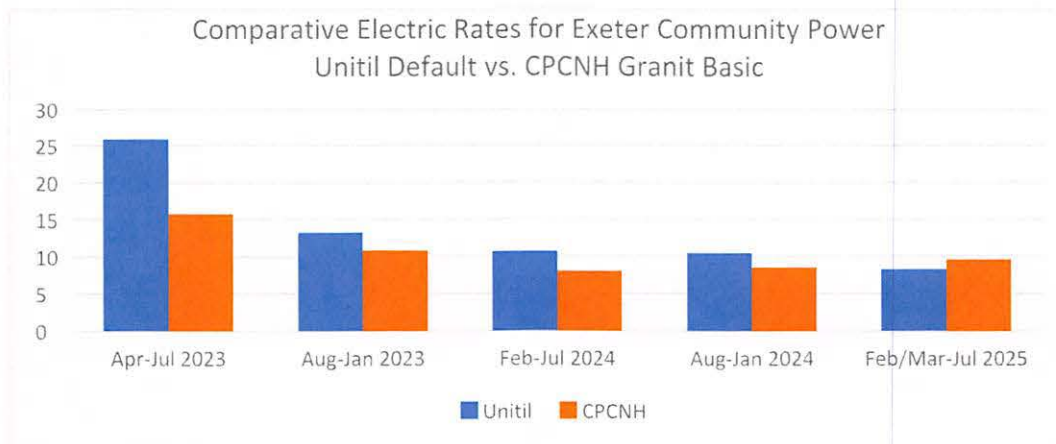
Energy Committee Electric Rates Update

MEMO TO: Exeter Select Board
FROM: Cliff Sinnott, Chair
Exeter Energy Committee
DATE: February 14, 2025
SUBJECT: Community Power Rate Increase

The Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH) announced a new rate increase on January 31st that will go into effect on March 1st. It will set the new 'Granit Basic' default electric rate for the next 5 months at 9.7 cents/kWh. This is an additional increase of 0.8 cents above the semi-annual rate (for Feb 1-Jul 31 2025) of 8.9 cents that was set in January. For the average residential customer, the new rate will raise their monthly electric bill by about \$7 compared to the prior CPCNH default rate of 8.6 cents. The purpose of this memo is to provide some additional background to these increases and some thoughts about what we may expect going forward.

According to the CPCNH statements, as well as information from Nick Devonshire, Exeter's representative on the CPCNH Board, these rate increases result from several factors. The initial increase from the prior rate of 8.6 cents/kWh to 8.9 cents was caused by higher electric energy costs due primarily to seasonal increases in wholesale natural gas prices. The second increase from 8.9 to 9.7 cents was due to a specific cause: the falling through of a significant power purchase agreement with a local New Hampshire generator. This agreement would have provided roughly 30 percent of CPCNH's total energy needs at a very competitive price for the ensuing 6 month contract period. Without it, CPCNH had to secure replacement energy supply contracts during a period of high prices driven by recent cold temperatures and high demand.

We note that, for the first time since the Town joined community power (April 2023) the new CPCNH default rate will be higher than the equivalent Unitil default rate, now set at 8.3 cents/kWh. The good news is that this relative price increase compared to the utility default was caused by a specific contracting issue and is likely to be only temporary. CPCNH's objective, and their track record, has always been to offer default electric energy rates at or below that of the utility default. We expect that this will be true again after this current 5 month rate period is over.



Over the long term we expect CPCNH to offer the lowest cost of electricity in New Hampshire, but this won't be true for every rate period. It is also a reminder that Exeter Community Power customers are free to purchase their electricity from any source and are not bound to purchase from CPCNH. Unlike with many power providers, CPCNH customers can move back to the utility default or to another energy supplier at any time with no penalty (with a 1-2 month changeover time).

Community Power through CPCNH has been a huge success both for Exeter and statewide. Since its inception, CPCNH default electric rates have consistently been lower than the utility equivalents, averaging 15.3% savings since 2023. Exeter customers have saved over \$1.3M in energy costs in the 20 months of operation and statewide the saving has been over \$20 million. As a result many other towns have joined the coalition, growing from 10 when we joined in the first group to over 50 communities now. About 200,000 electric customers in New Hampshire now get their power from CPCNH. There are other benefits for customers as well including the ability to choose a higher percentage of renewable energy in their electric supply, and freedom from lock-in contracts and 'teaser' sign-up rates. In addition, communities benefit from the establishment of a joint reserve fund which builds over time and can be used both to cushion energy price fluctuations and to fund future local renewable energy projects.

Despite the rate increase news, the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire has been a true win-win for Exeter and the State and Exeter can be proud to be one of its founding members.



January 31, 2025

CPCNH Board of Directors Approves Rate Increase

On Friday January 31, 2025, the CPCNH Board of Directors voted to raise default supply rates.

The “Granite Basic” rate for residential and small commercial customers will move to 9.7 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh), up from the 8.9 cent rate the Board approved on January 2, 2025. The 8.9 cent rate will be in effect for February. The 9.7 rate will go into effect in early March through July 2025.

CPCNH works to provide the lowest rates possible while covering costs and maintaining financial stability.

Why is CPCNH Adjusting Rates?

CPCNH has adjusted rates to ensure rates cover costs. CPCNH was negotiating a power purchase agreement with a local generator to meet a significant portion of our energy needs. This agreement did not come to fruition. CPCNH closed market hedges to manage our position and adjusted rates accordingly.

Competitive Rates and Savings Over Time

Since launching in early 2023, Community Power has introduced more competition and product options for nearly 200,000 electric customers in New Hampshire. Customers can easily choose from options including 33%, 50%, or 100% renewable energy on a month-to-month basis and can move between Community Power, utility supply options, and third-party providers.

From launch in April 2023 through July 2025 CPCNH’s Granite Basic will have averaged:

- ✦ 15.3% savings relative to Unitil’s supply rate
- ✦ 12.3% savings relative to Liberty’s supply rate
- ✦ 8.7% savings relative to Eversource’s supply rate
- ✦ Less than a percent difference from NH Electric Cooperative’s supply rate

CPCNH is proud to have generated over \$20 million in customer energy savings for New Hampshire.

Customers may make product elections by visiting www.CommunityPowerNH.gov, calling 1-866-603-7697, or by emailing info@CommunityPowerNH.gov. Additional rate options are available at: <https://www.energy.nh.gov/engyapps/ceps/shop.aspx>



Support HB 760 – Stop Utility Cost Shift to Community Power

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is proposing regulatory changes that could undermine the competitive energy market and Community Power in New Hampshire. We encourage you to reach out to lawmakers in support of House Bill 760 to safeguard fair competition in the state’s electricity market.

House Bill 760 aims to protect consumers and preserve the competitive market by preventing the shifting of utility costs to all customers through stranded cost charges. The bill seeks to reverse the PUC's recent ratemaking practices, ensuring that Community Power customers are not burdened with utility supply cost overruns.

Please urge your lawmakers to support House Bill 760 and subscribe here for action alerts and legislative updates: <https://www.cpcnh.org/community-leader-sign-up>

Community Power Rates

CPCNH Supply Rates March 3 rd – July 31 st , 2025 <i>For Residential, General Service, & Outdoor Lighting</i>			
Power Options	Renewable Content	Rate (¢/kWh)	Estimated Cost of Supply per Month *
Clean 100	100%	13.1 ¢	~ \$85/month
Clean 50	50%	11.1 ¢	~ \$72/month
Granite Plus	33%	10.4 ¢	~ \$68/month
Granite Basic	25.2% †	9.7 ¢	~ \$63/month

**Based on average household usage of 650kwh per month.*

† Total renewable content reflects the NH RPS target. In prior years, the target has been administratively reduced by the NH DOE. For example, the 2023 RPS target of 23.4% was reduced so that the actual renewable content for RPS was 15.9%.



Monthly Variable Rates for Mid-sized Commercial & Other Customers

Community Power Rates for Eversource Class GV Customers						
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	*Avg.
Community Power (Clean 100)	12.1 ¢	10.7 ¢	10.5 ¢	11.5 ¢	13.7 ¢	13.1 ¢
Community Power (Clean 50)	10.3 ¢	9.1 ¢	8.9 ¢	9.8 ¢	11.6 ¢	11.1 ¢
Community Power (Granite Plus)	9.6 ¢	8.5 ¢	8.4 ¢	9.2 ¢	10.9 ¢	10.4 ¢
Community Power (Granite Basic)	9.0 ¢	7.9 ¢	7.8 ¢	8.5 ¢	10.1 ¢	9.7 ¢

*Load-weighted average.

Community Power Rates for Liberty Utilities Class G1 & G2						
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	*Avg.
Community Power (Clean 100)	13.0 ¢	11.6 ¢	11.2 ¢	11.8 ¢	13.5 ¢	13.1 ¢
Community Power (Clean 50)	11.0 ¢	9.8 ¢	9.5 ¢	10.0 ¢	11.5 ¢	11.1 ¢
Community Power (Granite Plus)	10.3 ¢	9.2 ¢	8.9 ¢	9.4 ¢	10.8 ¢	10.4 ¢
Community Power (Granite Basic)	9.6 ¢	8.6 ¢	8.3 ¢	8.8 ¢	10.0 ¢	9.7 ¢

*Load-weighted average.

Community Power Rates for Unitil Domestic Service Customers						
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	*Avg.
Community Power (Clean 100)	12.2 ¢	10.3 ¢	9.8 ¢	11.5 ¢	13.8 ¢	13.1 ¢
Community Power (Clean 50)	10.3 ¢	8.7 ¢	8.3 ¢	9.7 ¢	11.7 ¢	11.1 ¢
Community Power (Granite Plus)	9.7 ¢	8.2 ¢	7.8 ¢	9.1 ¢	10.9 ¢	10.4 ¢
Community Power (Granite Basic)	9.0 ¢	7.6 ¢	7.3 ¢	8.5 ¢	10.2 ¢	9.7 ¢

*Load-weighted average.

Community Power Rates for Unitil Non-G1 General Service						
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	*Avg.
Community Power (Clean 100)	12.5 ¢	10.1 ¢	9.5 ¢	11.5 ¢	14.0 ¢	13.1 ¢
Community Power (Clean 50)	10.6 ¢	8.6 ¢	8.1 ¢	9.7 ¢	11.8 ¢	11.1 ¢
Community Power (Granite Plus)	9.9 ¢	8.0 ¢	7.5 ¢	9.1 ¢	11.1 ¢	10.4 ¢
Community Power (Granite Basic)	9.2 ¢	7.5 ¢	7.0 ¢	8.5 ¢	10.3 ¢	9.7 ¢

*Load-weighted average.

TIF Advisory Board



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 777-1514

www.exeternh.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Exeter Select Board

DATE: February 18, 2025

FROM: Russ Dean, Town Manager

RE: TIF Advisory Board

The Select Board discussed the composition of the TIF Advisory Board at the meeting of February 3rd, 2025. The TIF Advisory Board was originally created by Article 29 of the 2015 Town Meeting following the adoption of RSA 162-K. The article allowed the Select Board to appoint a five-member Advisory Board and a District Administrator consistent with RSA 162-K. Attached is a charge for the Advisory Board that describes the responsibilities of the Advisory Board in accordance with the RSA 162-K. You will note that three members of the Advisory Board are to be property owners or occupants of real property within Exeter. One member must be a property owner or occupant of real property within the Epping Road TIF district. The Advisory Board's responsibilities are to be made out in the form of a resolution by the Select Board. The District Administrator is also appointed by the Select Board and has specific powers and duties laid out in RSA 162-K:13 (attached).

If the Select Board is agreeable, I would recommend adopting the charge and resolution outlining the duties of the TIF Advisory Board, and name an official Select Board representative. Any changes to the powers and duties of the TIF Advisory Board could be made, as long as they are in accordance with RSA 162-K.

MOTION: Move the Select Board establish the TIF Advisory Board as a 5-member board described in the Committee charge. Further, to adopt the resolution of TIF Advisory Board duties as described in the charge, as authorized by RSA 162-K.

TIF Advisory Committee Charge

The Charge of the TIF Advisory Board is to ensure fair representation of business and community interests in accordance with RSA 162-K:14. The TIF Advisory Board was authorized by Article 29 of the 2015 Town Meeting to administer the Epping Road TIF. The role of the Advisory Board is found in RSA 162-K: 14. The Board is a five member board. A majority of members shall be owners or occupants of real property within Exeter. At least one member shall be an owner or occupant of real property within the district. The Advisory Board shall advise the Select Board (governing body) and District Administrator (Town Manager) on planning, construction and implementation of the development program and on maintenance and operation of the district after the program has been completed.

The Select Board shall by resolution delineate the respective powers and duties of the Advisory Board. The resolution shall establish a reasonable time limit for consultation by the Advisory Board on phases of the development program, and provides a mechanism for appealing to the governing body for a final decision when conflicts arise between the Advisory Board and the District Administrator regarding the development program in its initial and subsequent stages.

Powers and Duties of the TIF Advisory Board – Resolution

1. The TIF Advisory Board shall be responsible to advise the Select Board on activities within the Epping Road TIF District;
2. The TIF Advisory Board shall be responsible to advise the District Administrator (Town Manager) on the planning, construction and implementation of the development program for the Epping Road TIF District and maintenance and operation of the district after the program has been completed.
3. When the TIF Advisory Board and District Administrator are in conflict or have proposed development for the Epping Road TIF Development and Financing Plan, the proposal shall be presented to the Select Board for approval.

Five Member TIF Advisory Board

5 members. Members appointed to staggered terms 2026, 2027, and 2028 (2 members). One member is a member of the Select Board (Select Board representative). Three members owners or occupants of property within Exeter. One member an owner of property within the district.

Section 162-K:13 - Administration

The municipality may create a department or designate an existing department or office or agency or municipal housing and redevelopment authority, or form a corporation under RSA 292, to administer development districts. The district administrator may, subject to such rules and limitations as may be adopted by the governing or legislative body, be granted the power to:

- I.** Acquire property or easements through negotiations;
- II.** Enter into operating contracts on behalf of the municipality for operation of any of the facilities authorized to be constructed under this chapter;
- III.** Lease space to private individuals or corporations within the buildings constructed under this chapter;
- IV.** Lease or sell land and lease or sell air rights over structures constructed under this chapter;
- V.** Enter into contracts for construction of several facilities or portions thereof authorized under this chapter;
- VI.** Contract with the housing and redevelopment authority of the municipality for the administration of any or all of the provisions of this chapter;
- VII.** Certify to the governing body of the municipality, for acquisition through eminent domain, property that cannot be acquired by negotiation, but is required for implementation of the development program;
- VIII.** Certify to the governing body of the municipality the amount of funds, if any, which must be raised through sale of bonds to finance the program for development districts;
- IX.** Apply for grants from the government of the United States or other source.

RSA 162-K:13

1979, 175:2, eff. Aug. 5, 1979.

Section 162-K:14 - Advisory Board

I. The legislative body of the municipality shall create an advisory board for each development district that ensures fair representation of business and community interests. The board shall consist of such number of members appointed or elected as determined by the legislative body. A majority of members shall be owners or occupants of real property within the community and at least one member shall be an owner or occupant of real property within the development district. In a substantially residential development district, however, the board shall consist solely of owners or occupants of real property within the community and at least one member shall be an owner or occupant of real property within the development district.

II. The advisory board shall advise the governing body and district administrator on planning, construction and implementation of the development program and on maintenance and operation of the district after the program has been completed.

III. The governing body shall by resolution delineate the respective powers and duties of the advisory board and the planning staff or agency. The resolution shall establish reasonable time limits for consultation by the advisory board on the phases of the development program, and provide a mechanism for appealing to the governing body for a final decision when conflicts arise between the advisory board and the planning staff or agency, regarding the development program in its initial and subsequent stages.

RSA 162-K:14

Amended by 2022 , 151: 1, eff. 8/6/2022.

1979, 175:2, eff. Aug. 5, 1979.

Article 10

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of six million eight hundred forty five thousand and three hundred twelve dollars (\$6,845,312) for the design and construction of roads, water and sewer improvements in the Epping Road Tax Increment District, in accordance with RSA 162-K:8, and to authorize the issuance of not more than (\$6,845,312) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. It is anticipated that no bonds will be issued unless and until debt service can be paid from the tax increment district fund. This article will only become effective subject to the passage of Article 28 and Article 29 of the 2015 Town Warrant.

(3/5 ballot vote required for approval.)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0.

Article 28

To see if the Town will vote to adopt Chapter 162-K of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes, which if adopted will grant the Town authority to establish tax increment financing districts.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0.

Article 29

To see if the Town will vote to:

- a) Establish a municipal economic development and revitalization district as shown on a map entitled Proposed Epping Road Tax Increment District (dated January 20, 2015) and which generally encompasses portions of Epping Road east and west of Epping Road. The district will have the name of the Epping Road Tax Increment Financing District.
- b) Authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a District Administrator in accordance with RSA 162-K:13 and create a five member advisory board in accordance with RSA 162:K-14 with membership to be determined by the Selectboard.
- c) Adopt the provisions of the Epping Road Tax Increment District Plan (dated January 20, 2015) in accordance with RSA 162-K:9, which allocates the use of tax increments for retirement of bonds and notes as outlined in the plan.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0.

Phillips Exeter Academy

Tax Abatements, Veteran's Credits & Exemptions

Permits & Approvals



EXETER PARKS & RECREATION

32 COURT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833 • (603) 773-6151 • www.exeternh.gov



TOWN OF EXETER MEMORANDUM

TO: Russ Dean, Town Manager
CC: Melissa Roy, Assistant Town Manager
FROM: Greg Bisson, Director of Parks and Recreation
RE: Donation Acceptance
DATE: 02/18/2025

The Exeter Parks and Recreation department is requesting the official acceptance of the donations for the Planet Playground ADA enhancement. We are excited to announce that several organizations have provided a tremendous outpouring of support, exceeding our minimum goal of \$27,000 by \$37,000. We want to acknowledge these organizations and have the select board officially vote to accept these donations. These donors will be listed on the signage at the playground's entrance and by the ADA-accessible Alta Glide.

The following organizations have donated to our fundraiser:

Victoria Victory Foundation:

Victoria's Victory Foundation (VVF) is a nonprofit organization supporting individuals with mobility-related disabilities. Founded by Victoria Arlen, who overcame significant health challenges herself, the foundation aims to help others achieve their personal victories by providing both emotional and financial assistance.

Mission and Support:

VVF focuses on enhancing the quality of life for people with mobility challenges by offering:

- **Victory Scholarships:** Financial assistance for essential services and equipment, including wheelchairs, custom mobility devices, home and vehicle modifications, recovery training sessions, in-home nursing services, and driver assistance programs.
- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Programs designed to educate the public and promote inclusion for individuals with mobility disabilities.

Funding and Community Engagement:

The foundation relies on donations, fundraising events, and grants to fund its programs and scholarships. In 2020 alone, VVF awarded \$215,000 in Victory Scholarships, supporting various needs such as training sessions, in-home nursing, and home renovations.

VVF also collaborates with local communities to raise awareness and support. In October 2024, the foundation received a \$1,000 donation from the Exeter community as part of a local bank's nonprofit contest, highlighting its positive impact in the area.

Contact Information:

For more details or to get involved, you can reach out to Victoria's Victory Foundation at:

- Address: 20 Portsmouth Avenue #98, Stratham, NH 03885
- Phone: 603.534.3670
- Email: director@victoriasvictory.org

To learn more about their programs or to make a donation, visit their official website:

victoriasvictory.org

Project Walk Boston Ability Center

Project Walk Boston Ability Center, located at 20 Portsmouth Avenue in Stratham, New Hampshire, is a rehabilitation facility specializing in activity-based recovery programs for individuals with spinal cord injuries and other forms of paralysis. Established by Jacqueline and Larry Arlen after their daughter, Victoria Arlen, benefited from a similar program in San Diego, the center aims to provide transformative rehabilitation services to the local community.

The facility offers personalized, one-on-one sessions with specialists to activate paralyzed areas and strengthen weakened muscles. Clients typically experience benefits such as increased muscle mass, enhanced central nervous system activity, improved health and well-being, heightened sensation, and regained function below the level of injury.

For more information or to inquire about their programs, contact Project Walk Boston Ability Center via email at info@pwboston.com or by phone at 603-583-5119. pwboston.com

Annie Angels

Annie's Angels Memorial Fund is a nonprofit organization based in New Hampshire, dedicated to assisting families facing financial hardships due to life-threatening diseases, illnesses, or disabilities. Established in 2007, the organization connects neighbors, friends, and businesses to support those in need.

<https://www.anniesangels.org/>

Amanda Ranauro Autism Assistance Fund

The **Amanda Ranauro Autism Assistance Fund** is a program under the umbrella of Annie's Angels Memorial Fund, established to honor the memory of Amanda Ranauro, a dedicated Applied Behavior Analysis therapist who specialized in teaching children on the autism

spectrum. This fund provides financial assistance for therapies and equipment essential for children with autism, including:

- Hippotherapy
- Music therapy
- Acoustic and sensory suppression and compression equipment
- Teardrop swings
- Weighted vests and blankets
- Compression vests and pajamas
- Chew toys
- Sensory body socks

The fund is primarily supported through the annual **Amanda Ranauro Charity Golf Tournament**, held each June at Apple Hill Golf Course in East Kingston, New Hampshire.

<https://www.anniesangels.org/amanda-ranauro-autism-assistance-fund>

Exeter Area New Car Dealers Association

The **Exeter Area New Car Dealers Association** is a nonprofit coalition of business owners in Exeter, New Hampshire, established in the 1950s. Its members include:

- Foss Motors Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep
- Holloway Automotive Group Mercedes-Benz
- Seacoast Volkswagen
- Exeter Subaru
- BMW of Stratham
- McFarland Ford
- Hurlbert Toyota, Scion
- Autofair Nissan
- Wentworth Motors Volvo
- Honda Barn
- Porsche, Audi of Stratham

In addition to their business operations, the association actively contributes to community causes. For example, they have held annual golf tournaments benefiting charities that provide services to children and their families in the Seacoast area.

Exeter Area General Federation of Women's Club

The Exeter Area GFWC (EAGFWC) is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the Exeter, New Hampshire, area and other surrounding communities in the Seacoast region. Our women's club, 70 years strong, strives to enhance the lives of others through volunteer services and support.

EAGFWC is proud to be a member of The General Federation of Women's Club (**GFWC**), an international organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. GFWC is one of the world's oldest and largest nonpartisan,

nondenominational women's volunteer service organizations. We are one of many GFWC groups across the state.

<https://eagfwc.org/>

The groups have donated the following:

Victoria Victoria Foundation: \$5,000

Project Walk: \$5,000

Annie's Angels: \$2,500

Amanda Ranauro Autism Assistance Fund: \$2,500

Exeter Area General Federation of Women's Club: \$10,000

Exeter Area New Car Dealers Association: \$12,000

We are still collecting donations and will acknowledge all past, present, and future donors at a ceremony this spring before the renovation begins. A date is still to be determined.

Greg Bisson

Director

Exeter Parks and Recreation

Town Manager Report

Town of Exeter

Outstanding & Potential Projects with Federal Grant Funding

2/14/2025

Outstanding Projects	Source	Awarded	Received	Outstanding	Comment (<i>** italics updated 2/14/25</i>)
Winter Street BMP	NHDES/ EPA	118,000	35,000	83,000	Status unknown
Historic Presevation Grant	Federal	15,000	-	15,000	<i>** Goes before Govenor & Council 3/12/25</i>
Energy Efficiency & Community Block Grant	DOE	200,000	-	200,000	Status unknown
Enhancing Climate Resilience	NHDES	18,000	-	18,000	<i>** Status unknown - the State is in possession of these funds</i>
Solar Array	IRA credits	1,294,000	-	1,294,000	Credits are applied for after project completion
				1,610,000	Funding status unknown
Webster Ave Sewer Pump Station	Federal CDS	1,050,000	547,341	502,659	<i>Not considered in jeopardy based on inquiry with State reps.</i>
Webster Ave Sewer Pump Station	SRF Loan	325,500	-	325,500	DES does not consider forgiveness on these loans to be at risk
Webster Ave Sewer Pump Station	State ARPA	1,395,000	1,144,469	250,531	DES does not consider ARPA to be at risk
10 Hampton Road - CDBG Renovations	CDFA/ CDBG	841,240	-	841,240	NHCDFA has indicated that these funds are available
Planet Playground	LWCF	297,500	-	297,500	Land Water Conservation Fund grant, funds available
School Street Area Reconstruction	SRF Loan	1,691,148	-	1,691,148	DES does not consider forgiveness on these loans to be at risk
Exeter Reservoir Dam	State ARPA	172,000	133,470	38,530	DES does not consider ARPA to be at risk
Squamscott River Sewer Siphons	SRF Loan	510,000	-	510,000	DES does not consider forgiveness on these loans to be at risk
Water Street Stormwater Infrastructure Plan	SRF	100,000	-	100,000	DES does not consider forgiveness on these loans to be at risk
Kingston Road	TAP	1,541,106	1,082,311	458,795	<i>** \$425K reimbursement request - to be funded w/ in 3-weeks</i>
				5,015,903	Funding considered secure
				6,625,903	
		Total Outstanding Projects		6,625,903	

Potential Projects	Source	Award	Potential Comment
Pickpocket Dam - Article 4	NOAA	2,100,000	Grant opportunity only - no award as of 1/28/25
Public EV Charing Facility - Article 21	DOT	96,000	Grant opportunity only - no award as of 1/28/25
Railroad Ave. Intersection Improvements	TAP	1,067,951	Grant opportunity only - no award as of 1/28/25
		3,263,951	Funding status unknown
Pickpocket Dam - Article 4	GB2030	310,000	Private funding, not Federal - no award as of 1/28/25
Clean Sweep - Street Sweeper - Article 7	SRF Loan	108,750	DES does not consider forgiveness on these loans to be at risk
		418,750	Funding considered secure
		3,682,701	
		Total Potential Projects	3,682,701

Select Board Committee Reports

Correspondence



EXETER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

13 NEWFIELDS ROAD • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 773-6157 • FAX 772-1355

www.exeternh.gov/publicworks • publicworks@exeternh.gov

TO: Russ Dean, Town Manager
FROM: Stephen Cronin, Public Works Director
DATE: February 13, 2025
RE: Park Street Bridge Closure

The Highway Department made the decision to close the Part Street bridge last night around 4:00 after a large hole was discovered in the wooden bridge deck. NHDOT, as the owner of record, was notified this morning of the closure. Per the attached correspondence, NHDOT's Bridge Maintenance division will assess the bridge and plan repairs. The bridge will remain closed until further notice. Updates will be provided as soon as possible. A copy of the bridge closure alert has also been attached for reference.

Park St Bridge over RR

From Willeke, Charles <Charles.R.Willeke@dot.nh.gov>

Date Thu 2/13/2025 8:52 AM

To 'schronin@exeternh.gov' <schronin@exeternh.gov>

Cc 'pvlasich@exeternh.gov' <pvlasich@exeternh.gov>; Avenant, Julie <Julie.F.Avenant@dot.nh.gov>

Hi Public Work Director Steve,

Thanks for calling and letting NHDOT know about the decking issue for the Park St bridge over the RR (NHDOT Bridge # 088/076)

I spoke with our Bridge Maintenance division and they will send a crew out to assess the bridge and plan repairs.

Any immediate road barricades the Town can provide would be appreciated – sounds like you already have done so.

Thank you.

C.R.

C.R. Willeke, P.E.

Municipal Highways Engineer

NH Dept. of Transportation

The Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance

John O. Morton Building

7 Hazen Drive, PO Box 483

Concord, NH 03302-0483

Direct Tel (603) 271-6472

Office Tel (603) 271-3344

Fax (603) 271-8093

EXETER 088/076

Friday, December 05, 2003

Roll: C214

Route: PARK STREET

Photo Number: 22

Over: BMRR

SOUTH ELEVATION. RED LIST.



Bridge Closure Alert

Effective February 12, 2025, the Park Street Bridge is **CLOSED** until further notice due to the failure of a section of the wooden bridge deck. Please avoid the area and use alternative routes. NHDOT has been notified and will be assessing the situation. Updates will be provided as soon as possible. We apologize for the inconvenience to our residents. Your safety is our top priority.



Select Board
Town of Exeter
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833

January 29, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to inform you that Unitil and our qualified contractor will be conducting our integrated vegetation management program on our Sub-Transmission lines in parts of your city. Unitil intends to selectively apply herbicide to undesirable vegetation growing within the electric line rights-of-way.

This treatment will be performed by experienced State of NH Certified Applicators, authorized by Special Permit #SP-023, issued by the NH Division of Pesticide Control. In compliance with the State of NH, Code of Administrative Rules regarding public notification of herbicide treatments to rights-of-way, we have enclosed the following for your information and review:

1. "Herbicide Use Notification" – this notification includes a notification request coupon for individuals who own property over which the right-of-way passes, or whose property abuts the right-of way and who wish to be notified in writing thirty (30) days prior to any treatment. Coupons must be received no later than **April 1st, 2025**. Requests after this date will not be granted until the next treatment cycle
2. Copy of the Treatment Maps – these maps depict the location of the electric line rights-of-way intended for treatment
3. Copy of the Door Hanger Notification – this notification will be left with each right-of-way abutter, along with a copy of the "Herbicide Use Notification"
4. Additional Mail-in Notification-Request Coupons - equivalent to the number of landowners abutting or owning land on the right-of-way in the city/town for use by such landowners to request specific written notice

The enclosed "Herbicide Use Notice" will be published in a newspaper of statewide circulation and those of local circulation to help inform the public. Please also post this notice as you deem appropriate.

Unitil will be working very closely with all parties involved and any questions, concerns or comments about the integrated vegetation management program's herbicide treatment may be directed to me at 603-227-4652 between 7:00am and 3:30pm, Monday through Friday.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation with this project.

Sincerely,

Chris Moultroup
Manager- Forestry Operations
Unitil Corporation
(O) 603-227-4652

RECEIVED

FEB - 3 2025

Town Manager's Office

HERBICIDE USE NOTIFICATION

Unitil plans to apply herbicides along certain rights-of-way in New Hampshire in 2024. In accordance with administrative rules of the State of New Hampshire Pesticide Control Board, no application of herbicides shall be made to rights-of-way, during the months of June 15 through September 30, without first providing notification to Town officials, the public, and residences near the rights-of-way. This announcement serves to provide notification to the public.

The following herbicides will be selectively used to control certain tall-growing vegetation on the rights-of-way while leaving undisturbed low growing vegetation: **Rodeo/ AquaNeat/ AquaMaster/ Accord** (Glyphosate), **Garlon 4 Ultra/ Vastlan** (Triclopyr), **Arsenal Powerline / Stalker/ Polaris** (Imazapyr), **Escort XP** (Metsulfuron Methyl), **Krenite S** (Fosamine Ammonium), **Milestone** (Aminopyralid), **Oust Extra** (Sulfometuron Methyl), and/or **TerraVue** (Aminopyralid, Florpyrauxifen Benzyl). Unitil will conduct maintenance on the following rights-of-way in the associated Towns, beginning no earlier than April 10th, 2025:

Right-of-Way Town

3359 Hampton, Hampton Falls, Seabrook
3348 Hampton, Hampton Falls, Seabrook
3350 Seabrook

Bare Ground- Select Equipment locations

East Kingston, Exeter, Hampton, Hampton Falls,
Kensington, Kingston, Plaistow, Seabrook, Stratham

Individual landowners whose property abuts the right-of-way, or over whose property the right-of-way passes, may request and receive individual notification thirty days prior to any treatment.

A Notification Request Coupon is provided below. To receive individual notification, fill out the Notification Request Coupon and return to the specified address. Coupons must be received by Unitil no later than April 1, 2025. Requests received after this date will not be granted until the next treatment cycle.

In addition to the Personal Notification by mail, as an individual landowner whose property abuts the right-of-way, or over whose property the right-of-way passes, you have the right to

request and receive the approximate date, plus or minus 5 days, that pesticides will be applied to the right-of-way in your area. Requests should be made to the contact listed below.

Rights-of-way are generally located away from streets and may be identified by locating a metal tag on a pole or structure with a number on it and usually appear with the right-of-way number. (see list above)

In accordance with State Regulations, it is the duty of each landowner or resident to make Unitil aware of the location of potentially affected private water supplies, and of any other environmentally sensitive areas where herbicide application should be further restricted.

**Further information may be requested by contacting, during business hours (Mon.-Fri. 7AM-3PM):
Chris Moultroup • Unitil, Manager Forestry Operations • Telephone (603) 227-4652**

NOTIFICATION REQUEST COUPON

Name _____ Property Location: Town _____ Street _____

Street Address _____ Tel. # (home) _____ Tel. # (work) _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

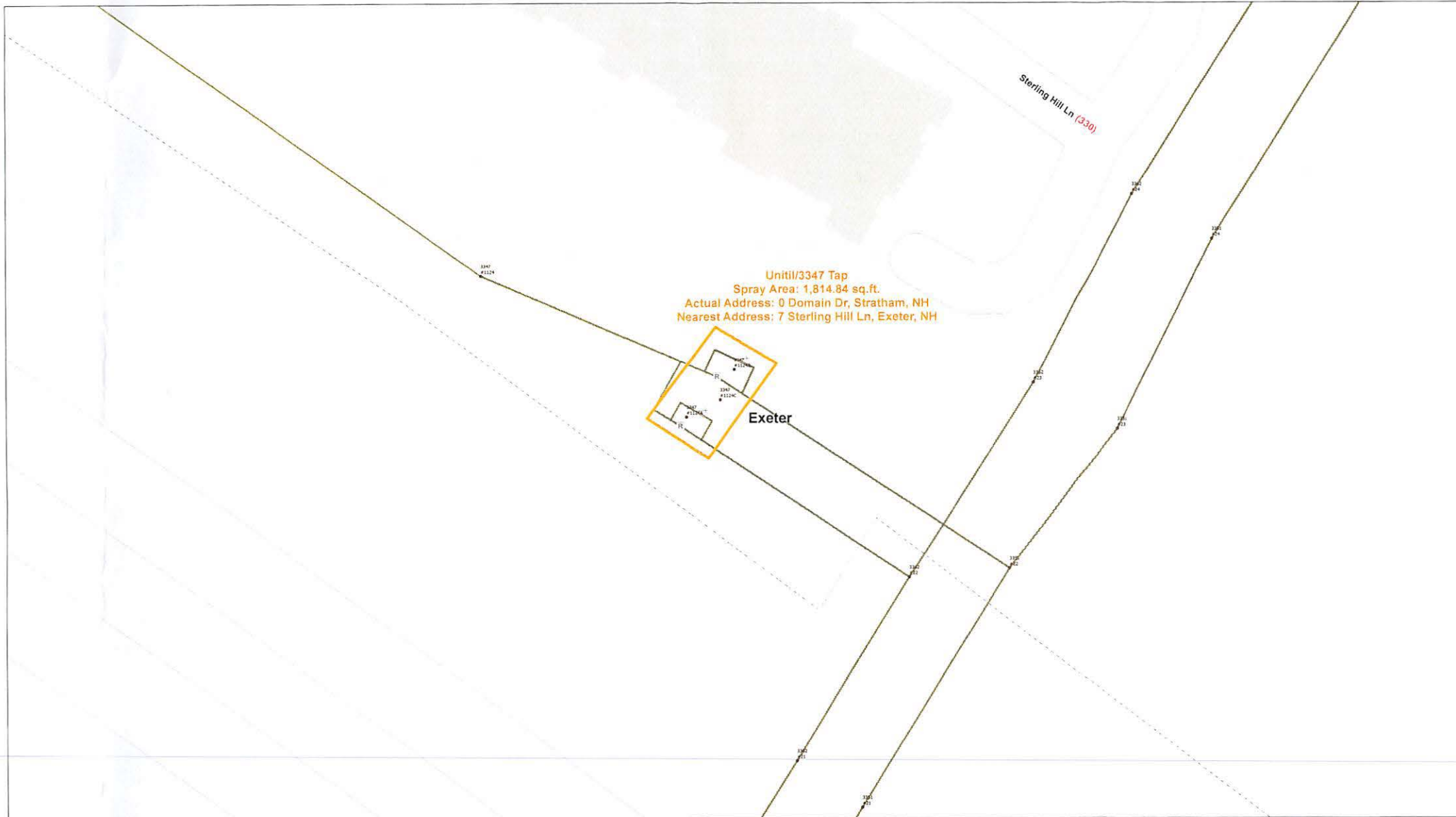
Line and Pole Numbers: _____

Other Landowner Location Information: _____

Sensitive Areas: _____

Landowner or Abutter requests notification of approximate date of application (Yes or No): _____

Return to: Unitil Forestry, Chris Moultroup, 1 McGuire St, Concord, NH 03301



Spraying Boundaries	Pole	Fuse	Dynamic Protective Device	Transformer	UG Transformer	Waterbody	Well Type: Other 250' Buffer
Primary OH Conductor	Light Pole	Solid Fuse	Recloser as Circuit Source	Step Transformer	1 Phase UG Trans	Wetland	Active
Primary UG Conductor	Distribution Pole	Fuse	Recloser	1 Phase OH Trans	3 Phase UG Trans	Stream/River	Inactive
Sub-Transmission Conductor	Transmission Pole	Switch	Sectionalizer, Cutout Mounted	3 Phase OH Single Trans	Railroad	Public Water Supply Wells	Well Type: GPW/Null 400' Buffer
Substation	Capacitor	Overhead Switch, Disconnect	Sectionalizer, Tank Enclosed	3 Phase Bank OH Trans	Parcel	Private Wells	Active
	Regulator	Overhead Switch, Gang	Fault Interrupter	Building	250' Surface Water Setback	Inactive	5 Mile Watershed Buffer

Substation - Herbicide Treatment Area 3347 Tap

Disclaimer: Unitil has prepared these maps based on best available information. The information provided is not warranted for accuracy and may be incomplete. Field verification is advised for all information shown on the maps.

SCALE 		DATE 1/17/2025	
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NOTIFICATION REQUEST COUPON

Name _____ Property Location: Town _____ Street _____
Street Address _____ Tel. # (home) _____ Tel # (work) _____
Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Line and Pole Numbers: _____
Other Landowner Location Information: _____
Sensitive Areas: _____
Landowner or Abutter requests notification of approximate date of application (Yes or No): _____

Return to: Unitil Forestry, Chris Moultroup, 1 McGuire St., Concord, NH 03301

Right Tree, Right Place

Before you plant that tree or shrub, consider its location. A small sapling can grow to be 40 feet tall and 40 feet wide or more. Bear in mind, too, that trees not only have branches up and out, but also roots reaching down and out. Roots can interfere with underground power lines, gas lines and other utility systems.

Follow these tips to plant safely:



Think about what is above and below. Call DigSafe® before any disturbance is scheduled to begin.

Plant your tree in the right space for its "adult size."

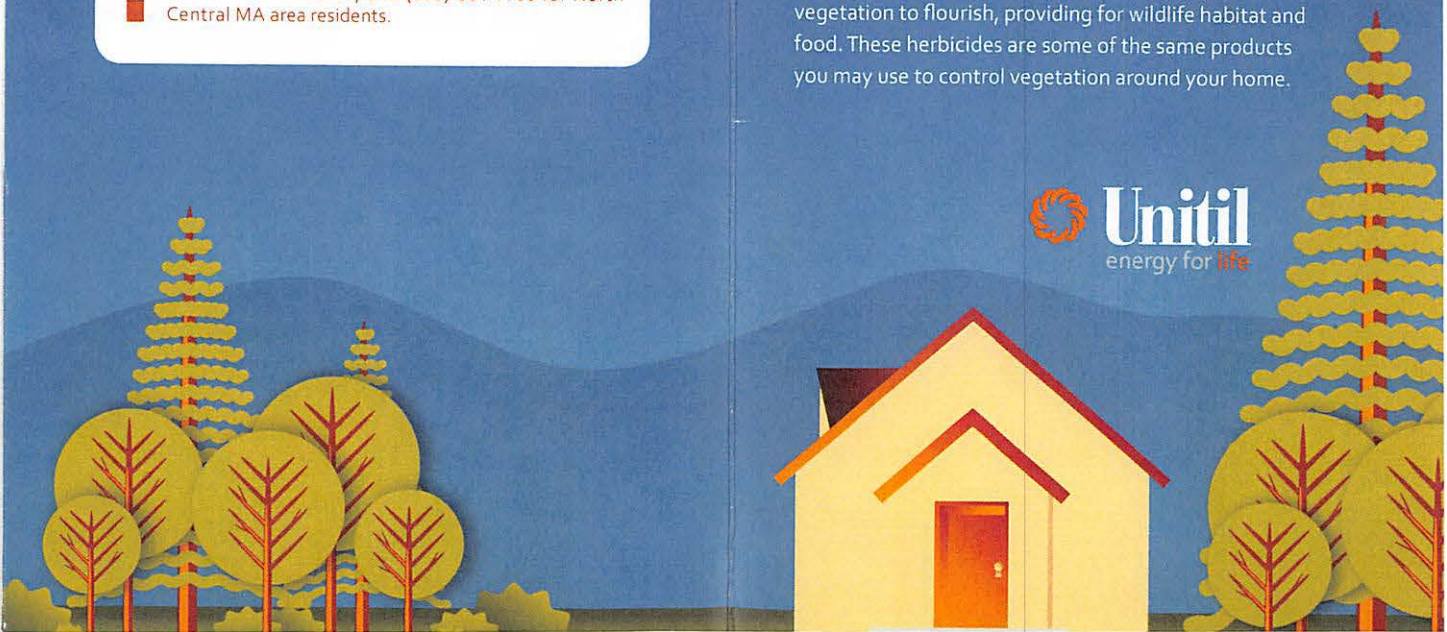
Do not cut down trees or branches near power lines yourself. Have it done by trained professionals or call Unitil. If a tree limb breaks off and lands on a power line, do not touch the limb or wire. Call Unitil immediately at (800) 852-3339 for Concord, NH area; (800) 582-7276 for Seacoast NH area; and (888) 301-7700 for North Central MA area residents.

Preventative Vegetation Maintenance

Trees growing near power lines can be dangerous. Unitil schedules tree pruning in your area every five years and notifies you of upcoming work before it begins. Our pruning plans include the systematic removal of vegetation growth and damaged or defective limbs along distribution circuits, along roadways and driveways. We use industry best management practices and techniques that minimize disease and decay entry points.

Trees deemed hazardous are removed though we try to maintain as much vegetation as possible using a technique called directional pruning. This pruning practice was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and is endorsed by the International Society of Arboriculture, the National Arbor Day Foundation and other tree-care professionals around the world.

Herbicide application also allows us to keep power lines clear of tall growing undesirable plants while maintaining low growing desirable vegetation. It allows for low growing native vegetation to flourish, providing for wildlife habitat and food. These herbicides are some of the same products you may use to control vegetation around your home.





Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Bulletin #5: Speak Out Against Zoning Mandates

1 message

NHMA Government Affairs <governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fri, Feb 7, 2025 at 2:50 PM

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 5

2025 Session

February 7, 2025



[Live Bill Tracker](#)
[Bill Hearings Schedule](#)

Bills Blame Cities and Towns

Practically everyone agrees that New Hampshire doesn't have enough housing units in general, or enough affordable residential and rental property in particular. The lack of affordable housing stems from a combination of complex economic factors, which cannot be addressed through zoning mandates, including low inventory, increasing home prices and monthly rents coupled with higher interest rates, rising construction costs, rising lumber and materials costs, rising labor costs, and limited new developments.

Based on the majority of housing-related bills introduced in 2025, the legislature's overarching response to this multi-pronged issue is to blame the cities and towns to the exclusion of other factors, bulldozing over local control and planning and zoning regulations. It is a simple solution that won't solve a much larger problem. It is also contradictory to recent efforts by the legislature to create a partnership between local governments and the state to address housing through well-considered programs like Housing Champions and InvestNH, which are still only a few years old.

But zoning mandates are even more problematic than that: They also strip voters of their decision-making rights when it comes to local decisions about their communities. A number of concerning zoning mandates are wending their way through the House and Senate. Here's a summary of a few that will be considered further next week:

On **Tuesday, February 11** beginning at **10:00 a.m.** in **Legislative Office Building (LOB) Room 305**, the **House Housing Committee** will hold work sessions on four bills related to zoning mandates opposed by NHMA.

HB 577: Under this bill, municipalities would be mandated to allow either one detached or attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) by right on single-family lots. NHMA opposes this bill because it requires municipalities and cities to allow detached ADUs, which would put a strain on municipal services and infrastructure. The bill would essentially turn single-family residential zones into two-family residential zones because towns could not limit ADU size. In addition, the bill does not allow municipalities to adopt local ordinances requiring ADUs to be affordable or work-force housing.

HB 685: This bill mandates manufactured housing by right in residentially zoned areas. NHMA opposes this bill because it has many technical defects and could undermine design requirements in local planning codes.

HB 631: This bill mandates multifamily or mixed-use developments as a permitted use by right in certain urban municipalities as defined by the US Census Bureau, lists specific zoning regulations that cannot be imposed on such developments, and provides definitions for key terms. There are approximately 18 communities currently affected by the bill. NHMA opposes **HB 631** because it would greatly impact some communities that want to ensure - for health and safety reasons and to limit stress on city infrastructure - that commercial zones stay commercial.

HB 382: This bill removes the authority of municipalities to regulate mandatory onsite parking requirements. NHMA opposes this bill because it eliminates local control, creates potential planning issues including traffic management concerns, community aesthetic concerns, health/safety concerns, snow removal, and potentially more neighbor disputes, which could require law enforcement presence.

Additional details on why we are opposing these bills is [available here](#).

Municipal officials are encouraged to testify against these attempts to usurp local control or, if that isn't possible, [contact](#) the House Committee on Housing to register opposition. [For detailed instructions on how to make your voice heard, on these and all other bills, see the final item in this week's bulletin.](#)

Another bill, **HB 296** - which NHMA supports - is also part of the Housing Committee's work session. Under this bill, municipalities would receive more flexibility in issuing building permits on private roads when the roads clearly meet existing policies adopted by the governing body. This would improve local government efficiency and better meet the needs of residents who want to build on a private road.

On the Senate side, the **Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee** (ED&A) held a public hearing Wednesday and shortly thereafter recommended **SB 188** as ought to pass (OTP) with amendment, 5-0. The bill is on the Senate consent calendar on **Thursday, February 13**.

This bill, which NHMA opposes, is modeled on Florida law and would allow property owners or developers to use licensed, insured private providers for building code plan reviews and inspections related to the New Hampshire state building code and any local technical amendments, excluding fire prevention and fire safety codes. If an owner or contractor retains an independent provider for the purposes of reviewing development documents or providing building inspections, the municipal regulatory authority must reduce the fee charged for such services by the amount of cost savings realized by the regulatory authority.

Most troubling, **SB 188** requires a municipal regulatory body to review and approve, or provide written notice to the independent provider of any specific deficiencies or compliance issues, within a required number of days (3 days or 5 days for code inspections depending on the type of building and 8 days for reviews of development documents and permits). [Approvals will be considered granted as a matter of law](#) if the municipal regulatory body fails to respond within the mandated timeframe.

NHMA believes this bill creates an entirely new framework for building code plan reviews and inspections in New Hampshire, creates a troubling “building permits by default” model, and would have multiple impacts on municipal revenue and expenses. Note: The amendment to the bill changes the words “improvements to land” to “building code compliance” in one section.

Members are encouraged to reach out to your senator to explain how this bill would impact your ability to manage planning and zoning compliance and inspections.

The **Subcommittee on Housing**, consisting of three members of the **Senate Commerce Committee**, met Thursday and made recommendations on six bills.

SB 78: Changes the appeal period to the ZBA from a “reasonable time” to 30 days, overriding local rules that allow more than 30 days, which NHMA opposes because it wouldn’t allow municipalities to be more flexible in their rules, which benefits both applicants and local officials. Subcommittee Recommendation: OTP (3-0)

SB 91: Allows owners of residences in industrial/commercial zones to submit a single application for a special appraisal based on current residential use and removes the requirement for annual reapplication, which NHMA opposes. Subcommittee Recommendation: OTP (3-0)

SB 55: Provides temporary exemptions from the land use change tax for qualifying housing projects, which NHMA opposes. Subcommittee Recommendation: Retain (3-0)

SB 84: Requires zoning ordinances to permit smaller lot sizes for single-family homes in certain areas, overriding local zoning rules, which NHMA opposes. Subcommittee Recommendation: OTP (3-0)

SB 81: Increases annual real estate transfer tax revenue contribution and appropriates funds to the affordable housing fund, which NHMA supports. Subcommittee Recommendation: OTP (3-0)

SB 82: Creates a new option for municipalities to incentivize new development, including identifying land for affordable housing and appropriating \$20 million for infrastructure development. Subcommittee Recommendation: Re-refer (3-0)

Please reach out to the Senate Commerce Committee to share your concerns about any/all of the bills recommended OTP.

Stand Up Against Anti-Lobbying Bill

On **Wednesday, February 19**, at **1:00 p.m.** in **LOB Room 203**, the **House Legislative Administration Committee** will hold a public hearing on **HB 314**, which is intended to cut those who represent local governments out of the legislative process.

Because of the threat to your voices, we are asking members to contact anyone on the House Legislative Administration Committee who represents your community now and ask them to vote against **HB 314**.? You can also register your opposition online any time before the hearing.

The bill does three things: broadly prohibit a huge number of individuals from engaging in the legislative process, set unnecessarily burdensome segregation of funds requirements, and create criminal and other penalties for engaging in speech.

First, the bill prohibits local officials acting in their official capacity from any form of speech related to legislation or politics. It broadly prohibits any public funds from being used to “to lobby, attempt to influence legislation, participate in political activity, or contribute funds to any entity for the purpose of engaging in the same.” “Public funds” are defined as a “grant or appropriation of a state, county, town, city, village district, unincorporated place, or school district.” An “appropriation” could be anything from the mileage paid to drive to the State House to the stipend paid to an elected or appointed official or the salary paid to an employee of a local government or of the state who testifies at a hearing or calls a

legislator to express opinions or give input on how legislation would affect their community. So, what does it all mean? Well, because the speech prohibition is on any “political activity” or “attempt to influence legislation,” which goes well beyond the definition of lobbying in RSA chapter 15, **HB 314** would prevent any local official, whether a paid employee or an elected official receiving a stipend, from any advocacy on behalf of a city or town. It is inconceivable that locally elected leaders would be barred from—even prosecuted or terminated for—speaking on legislation with local impacts in the Live Free or Die State. And yet, this type of bill has become a perennial effort of certain legislators in New Hampshire.

But it doesn’t stop there. The bill would prohibit many others—who would qualify as recipients of public funds—from lobbying. Beyond NHMA, **HB 314** affects every organization of municipal officials, such as building officials, assessing officials, firefighters, or the police chiefs; every state agency and department; and every nonprofit organization that receives state or local funds. In fact, the bill is so broad in its language, it appears to apply to any private corporation that receives payment from a public entity, since the purchase of goods or payment for services constitutes an “appropriation” of public funds.

If the ban itself isn’t enough, the bill makes the prohibited speech a Class A misdemeanor, establishes personal liability “equal to 3 times the amount wrongfully paid or expended,” and makes a “knowing violation grounds for discharged of an employee.”

Local Option Public Safety Assessment Fee

On **Monday, February 10, at 10:20 a.m.**, the **House Municipal and County Government Committee** will hold a public hearing on **HB 544**, which would allow municipalities to adopt a local option fee on no more than \$2 per day to be assessed on hotel occupancies for municipal public safety services, helping offset the cost burden of services associated with increased tourism and transient traffic. The bill is materially similar to a 2024 bill that was indefinitely postponed, except that a provision was added allowing the owner/operator of the hotel to retain up to three percent of a collected daily charge for hotel maintenance and service-related purposes. This bill represents a long-standing NHMA policy.

With the pressure to minimize the property tax burden, increased attention is being focused on the amount and type of locally estimated revenues, including “charges” and “user fees.” Municipalities in New Hampshire may assess charges and user fees only as permitted by state statute.

Currently, no state law authorizes municipalities to assess and collect a local option hotel occupancy fee to support public safety services. While **HB 544** may not be of interest to all municipalities, the municipal officials who testified last year in support of the previous bill made compelling arguments as to how a hotel occupancy fee would help ease the financial burden placed on their property taxpayers by added public safety and costs associated with tourists or with significant growth in their daily “population” from serving as a regional economic hub. A similar local option is already in effect in Vermont.

The committee also has public hearings on three other bills we are following:

HB 569 (10:00 a.m.), which NHMA opposes, allows a county to establish a county-wide communications district, that towns and cities would need voter approval to opt-out of. NHMA opposes the bill only because it requires municipalities to vote to opt out, rather than opt in, to a county-wide district.

HB 123 (1:00 p.m.), which NHMA supports, allows municipalities to tax standing timber that’s on land used for carbon sequestration, which would make up for any lost timber tax revenues that towns and cities would have otherwise received if the timber was cut.

HB 247 (1:30 p.m.), which NHMA supports, requires municipalities and cities to receive voter approval for historic horse racing machines to be allowed at charitable casinos. If the bill became law, it seems all

communities that would like to allow or prohibit historic horse racing machines would be required to have a vote.

Please contact the committee to register your position on these bills.

Bills Negatively Impacting Town Meeting

The **House Municipal and County Government Committee** will hold executive sessions **Monday, February 10, at 2:00 p.m. in LOB Room 301-303** on several bills, including two bills that NHMA opposes, **HB 407** and **HB 149**.

HB 407 proposes an exceptionally high threshold for approving appropriations. According to the bill, “no warrant article relative to the adoption of town or school spending items shall pass unless such measure receives votes from at least 15 percent of the registered voters in the town and a majority of those voting.” This threshold is seen as nearly impossible to meet, given that it is not uncommon for less than 15% of registered voters to even attend town meetings or participate in elections. The term “spending items” would encompass budgets and any other warrant article or ballot question involving appropriations. NHMA believes this bill is anti-democratic, as it empowers non-participants over those who actively engage in local governance. The bill could ultimately make local government less efficient by creating barriers to passing budgetary measures.

HB 149 introduces a form of ranked choice voting for town meeting ballots in “SB 2” towns. It mandates that both the original and amended warrant articles be included on the ballot. This approach would create confusion among voters, particularly those who did not attend the deliberative session. Additionally, it would result in longer ballots and a more cumbersome ballot counting process for local election officials. NHMA believes HB 149 contradicts the purpose of the deliberative session and dilutes the authority of the voters, who serve as the legislative body at town meetings. The bill also stands in contrast to the state’s legislative process, where amendments are final and not subjected to a similar ranked choice voting system.

Please contact committee members to express opposition to these bills.

House Advances Accessible Voting Bill, Others

The House met Thursday and acted on several bills of municipal interest. Unless otherwise indicated, adopted bills will be referred to the Senate. NHMA’s position on these bills, if any, is noted.

HB 67, makes permanent last year’s pilot program regarding Accessible Voting Systems, ensuring that the state provides accessible voting systems through agreements with municipalities. Under this bill, municipalities would continue to be responsible for programming costs. **Passed.** NHMA supported. Referred to House Finance Committee.

HB 84, allowing municipalities to collect fees for certain recreational vehicles located on campground properties. **Inexpedient to legislate (ITL).** NHMA supported.

HB 86, increasing the cost of service for notice of civil forfeiture of unlicensed dogs to the rate for certified mail. **Passed with amendment.** NHMA supported.

HB 99, increasing the maximum allowed optional property tax credit for disabled veterans from \$4,000 to \$5,000 and preventing the “stacking” of other tax credits for which a veteran may qualify. **Passed.**

HB 101, relative to exempting certain elderly homeowners from paying property taxes. **ITL.** NHMA opposed.

HB 105, creating a new conservation license plate - “Love NH Lakes” - and directing the additional fee, minus production and administrative costs, to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund. This bill creates the license plate. **Passed.** NHMA supported.

HB 134, updating the state building code to include the 2023 electrical code, as amended by the building code review board, and incorporating other code amendments approved since the last ratification in May. **Passed.** NHMA supported.

HB 164, relative to creating a state repository and funding a local records officer position in the Division of State Archives to provide a database for municipal records. **Passed.** NHMA supported. Referred to House Finance Committee.

HB 340, banning and creating a misdemeanor-level offense for public employees who, in the performance of their official duties, act in “any way designed or having the effect of influencing the vote of a voter on any question or office.” **Passed.** NHMA opposed.

HB 399, establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act. **Passed.**

HB 511, prohibiting state and local entities from adopting sanctuary policies that hinder federal immigration law enforcement. **Passed with amendment.** Although NHMA opposed **HB 511**, amendments did improve some of the ambiguity in the original bill. Referred to House Finance Committee. **Note:** A related immigration bill, **SB 71**, is going to the Senate floor next Thursday with an ought to pass (OTP) recommendation.

Conflicting Visions on Ambulance Billing Reform

A trio of House bills regarding ground ambulance service reimbursement rates and the elimination of “balance billing” will be workshopped by the **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** on **Wednesday, February 12**, at **1:15 p.m.** in **LOB Room 302-304**.

The elimination of balanced billing – i.e. billing a patient for the difference between the full cost of the service and the amount their insurance plan pays - coupled with inadequate reimbursement rates could negatively impact town and city budgets, potentially reducing the number of ambulance providers, particularly in rural areas.

HB 316 would eliminate balance billing and set a reimbursement rate for non-Medicare/Medicaid health insurance carriers at approximately 200% above the current Medicare reimbursement rate. NHMA opposes this bill because in many cases the proposed rates are much lower than the actual cost of providing services, which, coupled with the elimination of balance billing, would put significant financial strain on municipal-run ambulance services.

HB 185, which NHMA supports, mandates that insurance carriers pay the rate set by the ambulance provider in full if no negotiated agreement exists, which would de facto eliminate balance billing.

HB 725, which had a hearing on Wednesday, is somewhere in between the other two bills, eliminating balance billing but setting the reimbursement at 325% above the current Medicare reimbursement rate. NHMA believes **HB 725** does the best job of striking a balance between competing interests.

Municipal ambulance services are essential services and not profit-driven; thus, appropriate reimbursement rates are crucial for their sustainability.

Regardless of what the House does with its bills, there are also two Senate bills addressing this issue that are being heard by the **Senate Health and Human Services Committee** on **Wednesday, February 12**, beginning at **10 a.m.** in **LOB Room 101**.

SB 245 and **SB 130** both appear to contain similar provisions as **HB 725**. These bills, which NHMA support, aim to eliminate balance billing for ground emergency ambulance services, although co-pays would still apply. Additionally, the reimbursement rate for these services would be set at 325% of the current urban, rural, or super-rural Medicare rates, depending on the geographic area where the ambulance service originated. Notably, under these proposals, patients would not be required to seek

pre-authorization before using ambulance services. These measures are intended to provide greater transparency and protection for patients in emergency medical situations.

For municipal officials whose communities provide public ambulance service, now is the time to reach out to committee members in the House and testify in the Senate regarding these bills.

Workplace Safety Rules Bills Retained

The **House Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services Committee** voted Tuesday to retain **HB 303** in committee.

The bill mandates that the New Hampshire Department of Labor (DOL) adopt rules that are at least as effective as the standards set forth in OSHA 1910. Municipal, county, and state public employees are not covered under OSHA, but are subject to state DOL rules.

NHMA, while in favor of providing a safe working environment for municipal employees, opposed this bill due to the anticipated financial burden on local governments.

A Tale of Two Chambers ...

The Senate and House finance committee took action this week on parallel bills introduced in both bodies.

The **Senate Finance Committee** voted unanimously Tuesday to recommend **SB 240**, an NHMA-supported bill, as Ought to Pass when the Senate meets next **Thursday, February 13**. **SB 240** appropriates \$15 million for each of the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years to fund the state share of eligible and completed wastewater projects under the State Aid Grant (SAG) program pursuant to RSA 486. Historically, the legislature has, by law, expressly authorized the SAG program to provide grants to municipalities of 20% to 30% of the principal and interest payments on completed and eligible environmental infrastructure projects. However, sufficient funding for the grants had not been included in the state budget for years, until the current biennial budget was passed – thus the need for a separate funding bill.

The following day, **House Finance – Division I** voted recommend retaining the House version of the same bill, **HB 97**, in committee.

It is normal for the Senate to pass and table these kind of appropriations bills, as opposed to the House, as the Senate gets the second stab at the budget later in the session when revenues will be more concrete. However, there was some conversation in Division I surrounding funding in the current biennial budget to be used in 2026 and 2027. While it is true that HB 2 from 2023 does appropriate \$15 million in the fiscal year ending 26 and \$15 million in the fiscal year ending 27 “for the purpose of making payments to communities for projects that have **previously been awarded state aid grant funding** for eligible and completed wastewater infrastructure projects ... **Any remaining funds not used for making payments on existing grants may be used to award new grants.**” While this was a great win for cities and towns, without additional funding being included in the upcoming budget, there would no funding for *new* projects in the pipeline once the \$30 million has been exhausted for already approved projects *and the* newly completed ones that will seek their 20-30% over the next couple of years. This creates uncertainty for municipalities that have recently begun their projects or are considering new, big projects that would be eligible for funds and are trying to plan out the costs. Unlike many other grants, SAG is an “after the fact grant” that requires municipalities to complete their projects and then await approval. Therefore, the key is to continue to include nonlapsing appropriations for new projects in each state budget so that municipalities can reasonably rely on future grant funding for completed projects.

House Finance Division I also voted unanimously to recommend retaining **HB 197**, restoring a 7.5% retirement state subsidy for local employer contributions for police, firefighters and teachers. (The

Senate version of this bill, [SB 20](#), was already passed and tabled.) Although the House vote was unanimous for retaining, more than one member of the committee spoke favorably of the bill and how it would take pressure off local budgets.

The Elephant in the Room: The State Budget, Part 5

Every other February, the governor presents a two-year budget proposal by February 15. This year, first-term Gov. Kelly Ayotte will unveil her vision for state spending on **Thursday, February 13** at a joint session of the legislature. Once that proposal hits the public eye, a grueling four-month marathon begins and the House gets busy drafting its version of the state budget (**HB 1** and **HB 2**). After they wrap things up in April, the Senate takes its turn to weigh in. If the House and Senate can't see eye to eye – which is often the case – they hash out their differences in a committee of conference. After all that, the budget lands back on the governor's desk for either approval or rejection sometime before the state fiscal year ends on June 30.

This is a precarious time to build a budget. The state is looking at a deficit in the second year of the current biennium along with potential increased liabilities from pending school funding lawsuits and the growing cost of settlements tied to abuse at the state's youth detention center decades ago.

Then there are campaign priorities to pay for, including increasing housing access, expanding eligibility for education freedom accounts, immigration enforcement, and pension improvements for first responders. On that final note, representatives of police, fire and state corrections unions asked the [House Executive Departments and Administration \(ED&A\) Committee](#) on Wednesday to retain [HB 727](#) - a bill adjusting New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) benefits for less than 1,600 “middle-tier” public safety members (Group II) – because their understanding is the governor will be addressing the issue in her budget. Before the committee voted to retain the bill, a representative from the NHRS testified that the bill, as introduced, would increase the retirement system's unfunded liability by \$110 million.

Over the first six weeks of the year, the term “belt-tightening” has become a mantra of state policymakers, which means municipalities could be looking at cuts to state aid, which would put pressure on municipal budgets and lead to property tax increases. NHMA will support/defend current state aid municipalities get and encourages members to chant their own mantra: “Cutting state aid is really a new tax on property taxpayers.”

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Editorial Staff:

Margaret M.L. Byrnes, Executive Director
Marty Karlon, Editor in Chief, Policy & Research Analyst
Sarah Burke Cohen, Legislative Advocate
Brodie Deshaies, Legislative Advocate

Layout & Communications:

Miranda Augustine, Communications Coordinator

New Hampshire Municipal Association
25 Triangle Park Drive
Concord, NH 03301
Tel: 603.224.7447
Email: governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org
Website: www.nhmunicipal.org



Bulletin #6: Anti-Speech Bill Will Silence Your Voice

1 message

NHMA Government Affairs <governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fri, Feb 14, 2025 at 2:32 PM

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 6

2025 Session

February 14, 2025



Live Bill Tracker
Bill Hearings Schedule

Anti-Speech Bill Will Silence Your Voice

On **Wednesday, February 19**, at **1:00 p.m.** in **LOB Room 203**, the **House Legislative Administration Committee** will hold a public hearing on **HB 314**, which is intended to cut those who represent local governments out of the legislative process—but actually goes much further than that.

The bill does three things: broadly prohibit a huge number of individuals from engaging in the legislative process, set unnecessarily burdensome segregation of funds requirements, and create criminal and other penalties for engaging in speech.

While NHMA will be speaking against this bill, there is strength in numbers, so we are asking members to come testify, [register your opposition online](#), and/or reach out to any [members of the House Legislative Administration Committee](#) who represent your municipality and ask them to vote **HB 314 Inexpedient to Legislate**. (Please remember to cc: governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org on any correspondence for our records.)

HB 314 prohibits local officials acting in their official capacity from any form of speech related to legislation or politics. **The second paragraph** broadly prohibits any public funds from being used to “to lobby, attempt to influence legislation, participate in political activity, or contribute funds to any entity for the purpose of engaging in the same.” Because this language goes well beyond prohibiting

“lobbying” as defined in RSA chapter 15, the bill would prevent any local official, whether a paid employee or an elected official receiving a stipend, from any form of advocacy or speech on legislation on behalf of a city or town.

Of course, that ban would also apply to organizations like NHMA and many, many more: **HB 314** affects every organization of municipal officials, such as building officials, assessing officials, firefighters, public works, or the police chiefs; every state agency and department; and every nonprofit organization that receives state or local funds. This is why the coalition against this bill includes the NH Center for Nonprofits and the NH Charitable Fund.

If the ban itself isn’t enough, the bill makes the prohibited speech a Class A misdemeanor, establishes personal liability “equal to 3 times the amount wrongfully paid or expended,” and makes a “knowing violation grounds for discharged of an employee.”

If *that’s* not enough, there are other reasons to oppose **HB 314** as bad public policy:

The bill would cost taxpayers money. And that’s not just because the bill would allow any resident of the state to bring a lawsuit against a city or town (in addition to the possibility of criminal penalties). Every year, alongside our members, NHMA advocates on bills that typically fall into one of two categories: defeating bills that cost municipalities money and supporting bills that maintain or increase state aid. Every new cost on municipalities is paid for by taxpayers, and every additional dollar sent from the state to the cities and towns offsets property taxes.

The bill strips local officials and town meetings of authority to make their own local decisions. Dues paid to organizations that provide services to local officials are included by local officials in municipal budgets and are voluntary for most organizations—like NHMA. In most of our municipalities, these budgets are adopted by the voters. In the rest, they are adopted by the representatives the voters elect to make those decisions for them. Cities and towns make decisions every year to be members of organizations that provide these services to make them more efficient and to operate in a more cost-effective manner. The legislature should not make judgments on local spending; the voters and their locally elected officials should.

It is inconceivable in the Live Free or Die State that locally elected leaders would be barred from—even prosecuted or terminated for—speaking on legislation with local impacts. And yet, this type of bill has become a perennial effort of certain legislators in New Hampshire. Contact your representative today and ask them to nip this bad bill in the bud by voting **HB 314** inexpedient to legislate (ITL) in committee.

For detailed instructions on the various ways to share your position on this and any other bills, see “How to Make Your Voice Heard” below.

Governor Ayotte Unveils Spending Plan

On Thursday, Governor Kelly Ayotte gave her first [budget address](#), outlining her spending plan for the biennium at a joint session of the legislature.

Among her priorities were increasing funding for special education and services for the disabled, streamlining the state permitting process for housing development, expanding the education freedom program, and spending more on public safety.

With lagging state revenues and the sunset of more than \$2 billion in federal aid, the governor faced a vastly different landscape than her predecessor. In addition to revenue concerns, the state is potentially facing increased liabilities from school funding lawsuits and the cost of settlements tied to abuse at the state’s youth detention center. Finally, there are new uncertainties surrounding federal funding, which accounts for about one-third of state spending.

Despite the challenging revenue picture, there was no discussion of cuts to municipal aid and the [executive budget summary](#) indicated incremental increases in state aid from the rooms and meals tax in FY 26 and FY 27.

On housing, the governor set a goal of having state agencies and departments process permit determinations in 60 days (which is far longer than some of the local mandates for speeding development proposed in the legislature).

In regard to improving pension benefits for firefighters, police officers, and correctional officers covered by the New Hampshire Retirement System, the budget would dedicate \$33 million generated by legalizing slot machines to offset unspecified benefit improvements. The details of this and other proposals won't be fully clear until **HB 1** and **HB 2** are introduced in the House.

Three things to remember about the governor's budget: First, this is the beginning of a long process, not the end, and the budget that ends back up on the governor's desk in late June may look vastly different; second, the revenue assumptions the proposal is based are almost certain to change by May; third, the devil is always in the details, which we look forward to seeing.

Mandating Minimum Lot Sizes

The [Senate Commerce Committee](#) held an executive session Tuesday and unanimously recommended ought to pass (OTP) on **SB 84**, which mandates zoning ordinances to allow smaller lot sizes for single-family homes, overriding current zoning regulations. The bill also requires municipalities to provide empirical evidence that the sewer system cannot support the lots, which adds a layer of complexity and burden on local governments. NHMA opposes this bill—and similar proposal, **HB 459**, currently in the [House Housing Committee](#)—because it takes away local control and complicates zoning regulations and capacity assessments.

These bills are the most concerning of all the zoning mandates and we really need members to speak out against them. No action is scheduled on either bill next week; however, under House rules, the committees can hold an executive session at any time to report bills out of committee.

Municipal officials are asked to [contact your local senator](#) to express opposition to **SB 84** and [contact the House Housing Committee](#) to register opposition **HB 459**.

“Extraordinary Restriction” is in the Eye of the Beholder

On **Tuesday, February 18**, at **10:30 a.m.** in **LOB Room 305**, the [House Housing Committee](#) will hold a public hearing on **HB 410**, a bill that requires the legislative body (e.g. the voting residents of a municipality) to provide evidence before adopting or enforcing “any extraordinary restriction of residential property unless the ordinance is directly necessary for the health or safety of the community.”

The bill, which NHMA opposes, goes on to say “the legislative body shall include detailed written findings of fact, based on empirical evidence published by a non-partisan source, to demonstrate direct necessity.” The impracticality of this provision is self-evident.

For the purposes of the bill, the definition of “extraordinary restriction of residential property” includes:

- Any minimum square footage requirement for a dwelling or unit in excess of 200 square feet or the square footage required to meet the state building code, whichever is greater.
- In-home businesses use in residentially zoned lots.

- Local amendments to the state building code or state fire code regarding materials or methods of construction, which impact residential buildings of not more than 4 units.
- A restriction on the amount of time a property owner, or someone authorized by the owner, may camp on property, either in a vehicle or any other structure without a foundation

HB 410 is likely to increase municipal costs related to amending zoning ordinances by requiring municipalities to hire staff or consultants to identify and review “empirical evidence published by a non-partisan source” to justify an amendment, or in the case of an appeal.

In a nutshell, this bill is a massive overreaction to the narrative that municipalities with reasonable zoning are somehow creating overly burdensome restrictions on development.

For a reality check, take a look at these [recently released case studies](#) from New Hampshire Housing highlighting how 11 Granite State communities leveraged housing opportunity grants to address challenges through community-driven planning, zoning reforms, and innovative housing solutions. According to the report, “Each of the case study communities tackled the housing crisis *in their own way ...*” (emphasis added). Wow, local solutions to local issues, what a concept!

Baby, You Can Park My Car (If You Can Find a Spot)

On **Thursday, February 20**, at **10:15 a.m.** in **State House (SH) Room 100**, the **Senate Commerce Committee** is holding a public hearing on **SB 284**, which prevents municipalities from setting the maximum residential parking spaces per unit to more than one parking space per residential unit, except that studio and one-bedroom units under 1,000 square feet that meet the requirements for workforce housing, and multi-family developments of 10 units or more may require up to 1.5 parking spaces per unit.

Adequate parking is a major issue in every municipality, especially cities and tourism communities, and this bill—as well as even more concerning proposal in the House, **HB 382**, which removes all parking requirements—takes away municipal authority to regulate mandatory onsite parking requirements. NHMA opposes both bills because they would eliminate local control, create potential planning issues including traffic management concerns, community aesthetic concerns, health/safety concerns, snow removal, and potentially more neighbor disputes, which could require law enforcement presence.

Please testify or go online to oppose **SB 284** next week and [contact](#) the House Housing Committee to oppose **HB 382**.

“Social Districts” Coming to NH?

On **Wednesday, February 19**, at **2:45 p.m.** in **LOB Room 302-304** the **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** will hold a public hearing on **HB 467**, which would allow municipalities to establish designated social districts where people could carry alcoholic beverages in open spaces or between establishments that serve food and alcohol. Importantly, the bill, which NHMA supports, includes safeguards to prevent misuse and ensures that the governing bodies have the authority to decide whether a social district can exist and determine its specific location.

Ambulance Billing Discussions Continue

The **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** workshopped three vastly different bills concerning ground ambulance service reimbursement rates and the elimination of “balance billing” on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the **Senate Health and Human Services Committee** took up a pair of bills on the same topic later that day.

The elimination of balance billing -- i.e. billing a patient for the difference between the full cost of the service and the amount their insurance plan pays -- coupled with inadequate reimbursement rates could

negatively impact town and city budgets, potentially reducing the number of ambulance providers, particularly in rural areas.

At the House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee work session, there was clear consensus that balance billing needed to be eliminated. However, there was no consensus on reimbursement rates.

We are concerned about comments made during the work session that the “balanced billing fee will be spread over the community. The taxpayer in that community will make up the difference.”

Three bills were discussed at the session:

- **HB 316** would eliminate balance billing and set a reimbursement rate for non-Medicare/Medicaid health insurance carriers at approximately 200% above the current Medicare reimbursement rate, which NHMA opposes because in many cases reimbursement is much lower than the actual cost.
- **HB 185**, which NHMA supports, mandates that insurance carriers pay the rate set by the ambulance provider in full if no negotiated agreement exists, which would de facto eliminate balance billing.
- **HB 725** also would eliminate balance billing, but set the reimbursement at 325% above the current Medicare reimbursement rate. NHMA believes **HB 725** does the best job of striking a balance between competing interests.

At the end of the work session, the consensus was that **HB 185** was a non-starter and the committee unanimously voted the bill Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL) with the acknowledgment that more discussion would take place on **HB 316** and **HB 725**. No schedule was set.

Meanwhile, the **Senate Health and Human Services Committee** held hearings on **SB 245** and **SB 130**, both of which contain similar provisions as **HB 725**.

At the hearing, **SB 130** was replaced in its entirety by amendment 2025-0273s that creates a study commission to “study delivery models for emergency medical services in NH.”

At the **SB 245** hearing, the prime sponsor explained that the federal No Surprises Act that exempted ambulance providers because there was an acknowledgement of the complexity of providing those types of emergency service. The sponsor went on to explain that the 325% reimbursement rate was discussed during work on federal recommendations and that of the 14 states that enacted no surprise billing acts, six are using 325% of Medicare reimbursement rate. It was also noted that Maine had attempted a 200% reimbursement rate, but it was well documented that it didn’t work, and the state had to step in with general funds to stabilize the system.

Municipal ambulance services are essential services and not profit-driven; thus, appropriate reimbursement rates are crucial for their sustainability. Further, it’s unfair to put local taxpayers over a barrel to the benefit of private insurers. We are asking you to support **SB 245** by [contacting](#) the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and to support **HB 725** by [contacting](#) the House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee.

Senate Acts on Wastewater, Other Bills

The Senate was scheduled to act Thursday on a pair of NHMA priority bills, **SB 240** and **SB 188**.

SB 240, an NHMA-supported bill, was passed and tabled for possible inclusion in the state budget. The bill appropriates \$15 million for each of the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years to fund the state share of eligible and completed wastewater projects under the State Aid Grant (SAG) program pursuant to RSA 486. It is normal for the Senate to pass and table these kind of appropriations bills because the Senate, as opposed

to the House, gets the second stab at the budget later in the session when revenue projections are more concrete.

SB 188, which NHMA opposes, was “special ordered” to a future Senate session without discussion. It’s not clear if input from municipalities contributed to this delay, or whether it was simply a procedural decision, but regardless, this gives you more time to [contact your local senator](#) to express your opposition! As a refresher, this bill allows property owners or developers to use licensed, insured private providers for building code plan reviews and inspections related to the New Hampshire state building code and any local technical amendments, excluding fire prevention and fire safety codes. Most troubling, **SB 188** requires a municipal regulatory body to review and approve, or provide written notice to the independent provider of any specific deficiencies or compliance issues, within a required number of days (3 days or 5 days for code inspections depending on the type of building and 8 days for reviews of development documents and permits). Approvals will be considered granted as a matter of law if the municipal regulatory body fails to respond within the mandated timeframe. The bill was amended to move the effective date back to July 1, 2026.

The Senate also took action on two other bills NHMA has a position on:

- **SB 42**, relative to notice of death affidavits. **Passed**. NHMA supported.
- **SB 71**, relative to cooperation with federal immigration authorities. **Re-referred to Senate Finance Committee**. NHMA opposed.

Meanwhile, in the House ...

The House also met Thursday and acted on six bills NHMA has a position on.

- **HB 139**, relative to the official designation of holidays by municipalities and educational institutions. **Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL)**. NHMA supported.
- **HB 174**, increasing the maximum weight of a utility terrain vehicle to 3,500 pounds unladen dry weight. **ITL**. NHMA opposed.
- **HB 240**, removing the penalty of forfeiture for non-payment of dog licenses. **Passed** with amendment that changed a “shall” to a “may” to give municipal officials discretion. NHMA opposed the original bill, but neutral on the amended version as it authorizes a local option.
- **HB 336**, relative to the placement of political advertisements on public rights-of-way. **ITL**. NHMA supported.
- **HB 346**, relative to licensure fees for race tracks. **ITL**. NHMA supported.
- **SB 4**, relative to commercial property assessed clean energy and resiliency (C-PACER). **Passed**. NHMA supported.

Update on Municipal Government Bills

On **Tuesday, February 11**, beginning at **9:00 a.m.** in **LOB Room 201**, the **House Municipal and County Government Committee** will hold public hearings throughout the morning on six bills NHMA is following.

HB 554 (9:00 a.m.): This bill allows municipalities to decide the locations of political signs within their jurisdiction. NHMA is neutral.

HB 512 (9:20 a.m.): This bill prevents town managers, administrators, and school superintendents from being compensated under more than one town or district contract simultaneously and establishes criminal penalties for those who do. NHMA opposes this bill because it would impose stringent

restrictions on multi-contractual agreements and may inadvertently criminalize innocent administrative actions.

HB 562 (9:35 a.m.): This bill requires elected governing bodies, when filling vacancies with an applicant who ran in any of the last three elections for the office, to first extend an offer to the runner-up from the most recent prior election. NHMA opposes this bill, as it undermines the authority and flexibility of governing bodies to choose the most qualified candidates for vacant positions.

HB 123 (non-germane amendment) (9:50 a.m.): This NHMA-supported bill, enables municipalities to tax the yield on timber used for carbon sequestration, which would help municipalities capture lost timber tax revenues as timber is increasingly used for carbon sequestration rather than being cut at maturity. The amendment exempts state- and county-owned land from being enrolled in the carbon sequestration registry in RSA 227-G:4, XII.

HB 490 (10:20 a.m.): This bill asserts that municipalities won't be held liable for homeless shelters that impact public safety unless the municipality is negligent and aware of the shelter's unsafe conditions. NHMA supports this bill, as it provides municipalities with legal protection.

HB 668 (11:00 a.m.): This bill allows municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind licenses for historic horse racing gaming. NHMA supports this bill, as it gives municipalities control over whether historical horse racing games of chance can operate within their jurisdiction.

The **House Municipal and County Government Committee** reported five bills out of committee this week that we've written about in previous Bulletins:

Inexpedient to Legislate:

- **HB 149** proposes the establishment of “ranked choice” voting for warrant articles. NHMA opposed. (16-2)
- **HB 339** aims to include the preservation of agricultural land and the promotion of food production enterprises in a town's master plan. NHMA supported. (18-0)
- **HB 407** requires any warrant article raising money to be supported by 15% of all registered voters. NHMA opposed. (18-0)

Ought to Pass:

- **HB 92**, which originally prohibited an individual from simultaneously serving on the local zoning board and planning board, was amended to require members serving on both boards to recuse themselves when the issue goes to the second board. NHMA opposed the original bill but is neutral on the amended version because it simply restates current requirements for recusal of land use board members. (18-0)
- **HB 272** aims to expand the exemption for certain agricultural practices from municipal noise regulation, specifically making it so the exemption is not only for “quiet hours” ordinances. NHMA opposed. (18-0)

All the bills above, with the exception of **HB 149**, are on the consent calendar for next Thursday's House session.

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