

SELECT BOARD MEETING
Monday, March 17, 2025
7:00 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/83355681512>

To access the meeting via telephone, call: +1 646 558 8656 and enter the Webinar ID: 833 5568 1512

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. Swear In Town Officers – Andie Kohler, Town Clerk
3. Select Board Re-Organization
4. Public Comment
5. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Regular Meeting: March 3, 2025
6. Appointments/Resignations:
 - a. Appointment – Robinson Trust – Jamie Sirois – term end 2029
 - b. Appointment – Exeter Housing Authority – Patricia Scott-Hall
 - c. Appointment – Arts & Culture Advisory Commission – Kelsey Dumville – Alternate to Voting Member
 - d. Resignation – 250th Celebration Commission – Kimberly Barner
7. Discussion/Action Items
 - a. Election Update – Kate Miller, Moderator; Andie Kohler, Town Clerk; Vicky Nawoichyk, Supervisor of the Checklist
 - b. Election Re-Cap – Russ Dean, Town Manager
 - c. Keegan Report Update – William Keegan
 - d. Swasey Parkway Coastal Resilience Project – Stephen Cronin, DPW Director; Kristen Murphy, Conservation & Sustainability Planner
 - e. Use of Water/Sewer Impact Fees – Corey Stevens, Finance
 - f. SB297 Update – Russ Dean, Town Manager
 - g. Select Board Committee Appointments
8. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits & Exemptions
9. Permits & Approvals – Parks & Recreation
10. Town Manager's Report
11. Select Board Committee Reports

12. Correspondence
13. Review Board Calendar
14. Non-Public Session
15. Adjournment

Niko Papakonstantis, Chair

Select Board

Posted 3/14/25 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

Swear In Town Officers

Town Elected Volunteer Swearing-In

Select Board

Julie Gilman 2028
Niko Papakonstantis 2028

Town Moderator

Katherine Miller 2027

Trustees of the Library

Diana Perry * 2028
Cathleen Toomey 2028
Barbara Young * 2028

Trustee of the Swasey Parkway

Dwane Staples 2028

Trustee of the Trust Funds

Pat Curtis 2028

Budget Recommendations Committee

Elizabeth Canada *
Donald Cloutier
Andrew Elliott
Enna Grazier
Francine Hall
Robert Kelly
David Kovar
Dr. Judy Rowan
Christine Soutter

NOT IN ATTENDANCE – will visit Town Clerk at a later date

Budget Recommendations Committee

Amanda Kelly
Christopher Zigmont

Trustees of the Robinson Fund

Nick Drinker

Fence Viewer

Doug Eastman

Measurer of Wood & Bark

Doug Eastman

Weigher

Jay Perkins

Select Board Re-Organization

Approval of Minutes

Select Board Meeting
Monday March 3, 2025
6:10 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Draft Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Chair Niko Papakonstantis, Clerk Julie Gilman, Dan Chartrand, Nancy Belanger, and Town Manager Russ Dean were present at this meeting. Vice-Chair Molly Cowan was present remotely via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:10 PM.

2. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A3II(I). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, Ms. Gilman, Ms. Belanger, Mr. Chartrand, and Mr. Papakonstantis voted aye. Ms. Cowan was not yet present. The motion passed 4-0.

The Board emerged from non-public session.

3. Board Interviews

- a. David Kovar for the Communications Advisory Committee
- b. Patricia Scott-Hall for the Exeter Housing Authority
- c. Verity Boyer for the Historic District Commission

The Board reconvened in the Nowak Room at 7 PM. Vice Chair Molly Cowan, who was present remotely via Zoom, stated that she was unable to attend the meeting in person and was alone in the room.

4. Public Comment

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

5. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations/recognitions at this time.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: February 18, 2025

Corrections: Ms. Belanger said that on page 3, she wanted to clarify that she was hoping that we could have public plays. On page 6, under Select Board Committee reports, the Planning Board's Riverwoods decision did not have a condition of approval. It's a Select Board decision about speed bumps and signs, so the suggestion about having "no parking" signs on Pickpocket Road is going to come before the Board.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve the Select Board minutes of February 18, 2025 as amended. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

7. Appointments and Resignations

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint David Kovar to the Communications Committee, term to expire April 2026. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Verity Boyer as a regular member of the Historic District Commission, term to expire April 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to appoint Karen Prior to the 250th Celebration Commission. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to accept the resignation of Mary-Paige Provost from the Arts & Culture Advisory Commission. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

8. Discussion/Action Items

a. Surface Water Treatment Plant Preliminary Design Contract

Public Works Director Stephen Cronin was present to request that the Board approve a contract for \$325,000 for professional engineering services for a surface water treatment plant with AECOM. He said the existing plant dates to the 1800s. The most recent update was 2019 to meet regulations for disinfection byproducts. Our staff has been able to keep it operational, but it's well past its intended design life. The voters approved \$500,000 in 2004 to begin the process of replacement. In September 2024, we issued an RFQ for design services. Five firms attended a pre-proposal meeting but we only received one proposal by the October 17 deadline. We put together a review committee to ensure it met minimum requirements, and it did. We moved to an in-person interview and felt strongly that AECOM were the right firm for us. We have decided to move forward with only the first two phases of the proposal to better understand the yield of the surface water supplies, which will determine the sizing of the plant. This includes a pilot study in two different seasons to evaluate the best treatment technology for Exeter's water quality.

Mr. Chartrand said there was only one firm that offered qualifications. Is everyone maxed out? Mr. Cronin said that surface water treatment plant design is fairly specialized. We were looking for a firm that had designed several plants over the last decade. There wasn't a lot of capacity among qualified firms. Ms. Gilman said Underwood Engineers is going to be working with AECOM. Mr. Cronin said yes, they will be subcontractors.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to approve a contract with AECOM in the amount of \$325,000 for professional engineering services for preliminary design of the surface water treatment plant, and to further authorize the Town Manager or their designee to sign the contract documents. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

b. Donation Policy

Finance Director Corey Stevens was present to discuss a proposed donation policy. Mr. Stevens said he met with the Pairpoint Park Committee on their fundraising efforts, which got him thinking about what our donation policy is. We don't have anything formal on paper. He put together a proposed policy, working with Town Administration. It doesn't do a lot more than what we're already doing, it just formalizes it. The process is that a town Department Head vets a donation proposal. Their recommendation is forwarded to the Select Board, which has the sole authority to approve or deny a donation. If approved, the Department Head will work with the donor on any acknowledgement.

Ms. Belanger said the topic of donations came up at the Arts & Culture Committee. Having this in writing will help all of our Boards and Committees.

Mr. Papakonstantis said it was very helpful for Mr. Stevens to sit down with the Pairpoint Park Committee on fundraising. To have something memorialized in writing is great.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to adopt the proposed donation and gift policy #2025-01, effective March 3, 2025. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

c. TIF Advisory Board

Town Manager Russ Dean discussed updates to the TIF Advisory Board. The District Administrator, who in this case is the Town Manager, shall provide quarterly reports to the governing body. This is a five-member advisory board. The Public Works Director and Town Planner may attend as needed. The conflict provision, which in the statute RSA 162K, says whenever the Advisory Board and the District Administrator are in conflict *or* have activity related to the TIF district financing plan it would come before the Board. Mr. Chartrand asked what wouldn't be included in that. Mr. Dean said it means that everything that impacts the plan would need to come to the Board. The conflict provision needs to be in there per the RSA. Ms. Belanger said she doesn't think it's clear that the Select Board would weigh in on all the decisions. This only says conflicts. Mr. Dean asked for suggestions on language. The Board said they would like legal counsel to weigh in on the wording. Ms. Belanger asked that any new and updated language be highlighted in future drafts.

a. Rider Conservation Project [Permits and Approvals]

Kristin Murphy and Kaitlin Deyo from Southeast Land Trust, the project lead for Rider Conservation Project, were present to discuss the Rider Conservation Project. Ms. Murphy said this is a property off of Powder Mill Road, a beautiful and scenic property with a dramatic water course, supportive wetlands, and supportive woodlands. This has risen to the top of priority properties in the Exeter Conservation Natural Resource Inventory. For NH Fish and Game, it contains the highest rated habitat of the state and the biological region. This project includes land in three communities. This deed is a document that has met the needs of grantors and the towns. Each town's Conservation

Commission, as well as our Legal Counsel, has reviewed it. The land interest that is being presented is a conservation easement held by SELT. The responsibility for monitoring and landowner communication will be on SELT. We would retain executory interest on the portion of land in our town, which is 21 acres out of 156 acres. This property had a gravel extraction effort, and the property owner was looking to establish an agricultural field, so it's becoming an open agricultural field.

Ms. Deyo said Kensington and East Kingston signed today. We have another interest in the deed, the Drinking Water Groundwater Trust fund. They gave \$500,000, their maximum, because they recognize the drinking water importance of this property. Ms. Murphy said some terms in the deed are unusual. They are related to groundwater extraction. Steve Cronin reviewed this and was ok with it.

Ms. Gilman asked whether there will be public trails. Ms. Murphy said no, the intent of the property owner is to have it be private. Ms. Belanger asked if there are trails in the other towns. Ms. Deyo said no, there is an abutting property with trails but this property doesn't have public access rights.

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to authorize the Select Board to sign the final conservation deed for the Rider property on Powder Mill Road, tax map 113, lots 3 and 5. Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Cowan left the meeting at this time.

2. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to deny an elderly exemption for 72/91 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 104/70/322 and 95/64/342 in the amount of \$152,251 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an Elderly Exemption for 103/13/2 and 95/64/281 in the amount of \$183,751 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Gilman did not read the Disability Exemptions due to a discrepancy in the packet.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veterans Credit for 72/91 and 68/6/344 in the amount of \$500 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an abatement for 72/58 in the amount of \$405.61 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve an abatement for 63/41/2 in the amount of \$2,067.20 for tax year 2024. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Solar Exemption for 24/2 in the amount of \$14,000 for tax year 2025. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

b. Permits & Approvals

i. Rider Conservation Project

This item was discussed above.

ii. Citizen Awards – Letters of Support – Julie Gilman

Ms. Gilman said every year the NH State Commission on Aging has an award for the 2025 older adult volunteer. Our Heritage Commission Chair recommended we send in this application for Pam Gjettum, who has been a volunteer for 47 years. This would require the Select Board Chair to sign.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to forward the application for the NH State Commission on Aging, which in 2025 has an award for an older adult volunteer, in the name of Pam Gjettum. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Gilman said we'd like to nominate John Merkel of the Heritage Commission for the NH Preservation Alliance Award. He established the Commission in 2005 and has been on it since.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to authorize the Select Board to sign a letter of support for the nomination of John Merkel for the NHPA's 2025 Annual Preservation Achievement Award. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

c. Town Manager's Report

i. Mr. Dean said he was on vacation Feb 19 - 25.

ii. He went to RiverWoods February 27 for warrant night, which was very successful.

iii. The Bike and Pedestrian Plan has been finalized and will come before the Board in April.

iv. Andy Swanson, IT Coordinator, is having a retirement party on Friday at Town Hall.

v. There's a meeting tomorrow regarding financing for the Police Station/Fire Substation.

vi. There's a bill on risk pools being discussed in Senate Finance committee tomorrow which proposes that any reserve deficiencies be made up by assessments to communities. This is a problem for many towns. It would impact Primex and Health Insurance.

vii. The Kingston Road project \$425,000 grant came in last week. That was a State grant that was initially through the Federal Government.

viii. Town Election is March 11.

d. Select Board Committee Reports

- i. Ms. Belanger had meetings cancelled for Rec Advisory and Arts & Culture. The Arts & Culture committee voted to move Kelsey Dumville from an alternate to a full member, what's the process for that? Mr. Dean said the Select Board has to appoint the person. Ms. Belanger said she will reach out to Scott [Ruffner] to let him know. At the Planning Board meeting, the Willey Creek Company asked for a continuance to April 24. There was a continued public hearing on Green Company, the MUND project at 76 Portsmouth Ave which affects the Jady Hill neighborhood. 112 Front Street is an ongoing application. There was public comment/concern about speed limits and speed bumps.
 - ii. Ms. Gilman attended the Heritage Commission meeting. In addition to the nominations discussed, we thought about how to support the Historical Society and maybe work together. The two groups are often confused. We want to do a neighborhood meeting or presentation for the Pine and Elliot Street survey we did a few months ago.
 - iii. Mr. Chartrand attended an informal train station group meeting, where we worked on paving the way for a permanent committee. Don Briselden presented a revised timeline. Mr. Chartrand attended Hope Godino's retirement party and the DPW thank you at Town Hall. He was able to thank some of the DPW members but a lot were too shy to show up. We need to get them to a place where they are celebrated alongside our Police and Fire Departments. He attended a Facilities Advisory Committee meeting where they continue to get ready for a space needs assessment exercise in April. They heard updates on Public Safety and 10 Hampton Road from the Town Planner.
 - iv. Mr. Papakonstantis attended a Pairpoint Park Committee meeting in the Wheelwright Room that had too many members to collaborate effectively. They hope to come before the Select Board in June with recommendations aligned with the budget cycle. He attended the RiverWoods forum on the warrant articles, which was well-attended. He recognized Andy Swanson who is retiring.
- e. Correspondence
- i. Mr. Dean said letter in the packet on water and sewer service to 13 and 15 Stoneybrook Lane in Stratham. The request was made through the Water and Sewer Agreement with the town of Stratham to consider service to that development. The Stratham Town Administrator said the project hasn't reached the Planning Board there yet. We'd need to know what kind of development it would be to know if we could handle it. Mr. Chartrand asked if it's a dense development. Mr. Dean said nothing's been presented yet, but it's likely to be dense. Mr. Chartrand said years ago we were considering supporting the business strip of Stratham. Mr. Dean said these days we're more guarded these days based on drought conditions. If the groundwater project on Drinkwater Road is successful,

we may be able to loosen that up. Mr. Chartrand said if we do have the capacity, we want more customers to spread the costs out. Scale would help us in general. Mr. Dean said there are two sides, with both water and sewer. The site has some natural limitations on water. Mr. Papakonstantis asked if we should respond in writing. Mr. Dean said yes. The Board delegated the writing of that letter to the Town Manager.

- ii. Mr. Papakonstantis said resident on Newfields Road, with whom he has communicated. Chief Poulin and Devin West are also gathering data.
- iii. Letter from DRA with USPAP report. Mr. Dean said this is part of the revaluation process. The DRA audits our revaluation. USPAP is a review of whether we are within the guidelines of professional appraisal practice.
- iv. An NHMA Legislative Bulletin

9. Review Board Calendar

- a. The Town Election is March 11. The next meetings are March 17, March 31, April 14, and April 28.

10. Non-Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Belanger moved to enter into non-public 91 A 311(a). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0. The meeting entered non-public at 8:03 PM.

11. Adjournment. The Board emerged from non public session. Mr. Chartrand moved to seal the minutes indefinitely. Ms. Belanger seconded. The motion carried. Ms. Belanger moved to adjourn. Ms. Gilman seconded. The motion carried. The Board stood adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary

Appointments/Resignations



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

March 3, 2025
6:40 pm
Interview
CONFIRMED

Statement of Interest
Boards and Committee Membership

Committee Selection: Exeter Housing Board of Commissioners

New Re-Appointment Regular Alternate

Name: Patricia Scott Hall Email: bakedalaskanusvi@yahoo.com

Address: 977 Water St Apt 110 Phone: (603) 867-5444

Registered Voter: Yes No

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

See attached

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: Patricia Scott Hall Date: 01-31-2025

To be completed by Select Board upon appointment:

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

January 31, 2025

Statement of Interest-Boards and Committee Membership

I am interested in this position for many reasons. I share a real sense of community with the other residents and staff at 277 Water Street. This position would allow me to be able to serve and advocate for them.

I moved to Water St. in 2015. I was elected as president of the Tenant's Council in 2019 and spent the COVID years trying to lift up spirits while keeping us all connected. Now I am the Vice President and working with a great group.

Prior to my retirement, I served on several executive boards and councils in my community. In my employment, I helped to negotiate union contracts and grievance resolutions.

I like people and would like to stay involved.

Patricia Scott-Hall



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Arts & Culture Advisory Commission - Kelsey Dumville

3 messages

Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 5, 2025 at 12:40 PM

To: Scott Ruffner <scotruffner@mac.com>, Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>

Hi Scott.

Would you please send an email stating that the Arts & Culture Advisory Commission is requesting the Select Board to consider appointing Kelsey Dumville to Voting Member from Alternate Member?

Upon receipt, I'll add the request to the next available Select Board agenda.

Thanks.

Pam McElroy

Town of Exeter

Senior Executive Assistant, Town Manager's Office

603-773-6102

Scott Ruffner <scotruffner@mac.com>

Wed, Mar 5, 2025 at 3:00 PM

To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Cc: Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>

Hi Pam -

Yes, we discussed and voted to have Kelsey Dumville appointed as a permanent voting member.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks

Scott

On Mar 5, 2025, at 12:40 PM, Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 5, 2025 at 4:23 PM

To: Scott Ruffner <scotruffner@mac.com>

Cc: Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>

Thanks Scott.

I'll be sure to add it to the packet.

Have a good afternoon.

Pam

[Quoted text hidden]

--

[Quoted text hidden]



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Resigning from 250th committee

2 messages

Kimberly Barner <mattitudeyoga@gmail.com>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Mon, Mar 3, 2025 at 9:45 AM

Good morning, Pam.

I'm sad to inform you that due to family reasons I must withdraw from serving on this committee.

I know it will be a success!

Best,

Kimberly Barner

Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>
To: Kimberly Barner <mattitudeyoga@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 3, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Thank you Kimberly. We wish you and your family the best.

Pam

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Pam McElroy

Town of Exeter

Senior Executive Assistant, Town Manager's Office

603-773-6102

Discussion/Action Items

Election Update

Election Re-Cap

| | | Yes | No | | % Yes | % No |
|------------|--|------|-----|------|-------|-------|
| Article 1 | Elections Article | | | | | |
| Article 2 | Zoning Amendment #1 | 1443 | 751 | 2194 | 65.8% | 34.2% |
| Article 3 | Drinkwater Road Groundwater Development | 1495 | 710 | 2205 | 67.8% | 32.2% |
| Article 4 | Pickpocket Dam Removal | 1501 | 723 | 2224 | 67.5% | 32.5% |
| Article 5 | Linden Street Bridge Repairs | 1584 | 617 | 2201 | 72.0% | 28.0% |
| Article 6 | DPW Fuel Island Station Replacement | 1354 | 816 | 2170 | 62.4% | 37.6% |
| Article 7 | DPW Street Sweeper | 1308 | 898 | 2206 | 59.3% | 40.7% |
| Article 8 | Use of Excess Bond Proceeds - Front, Pine & Linden Sewer & Drainage Improvements | 1856 | 360 | 2216 | 83.8% | 16.2% |
| Article 9 | Use of Excess Bond Proceeds - Clemson Lagoon Cleaning & Inspection | 1802 | 404 | 2206 | 81.7% | 18.3% |
| Article 10 | Use of Excess Bond Proceeds - WWTF Effluent Flume Repair | 1862 | 335 | 2197 | 84.8% | 15.2% |
| Article 11 | Choose Town Officers | 1926 | 179 | 2105 | 91.5% | 8.5% |
| Article 12 | 2025 Operating Budget | 1431 | 772 | 2203 | 65.0% | 35.0% |
| Article 13 | 2025 Water Budget | 1774 | 414 | 2188 | 81.1% | 18.9% |
| Article 14 | 2025 Sewer Budget | 1496 | 670 | 2166 | 69.1% | 30.9% |
| Article 15 | CBA - SEIU Local 1984 and Town of Exeter | 1580 | 607 | 2187 | 72.2% | 27.8% |
| Article 16 | CBA - Exeter Police Association and Town of Exeter | 1492 | 663 | 2155 | 69.2% | 30.8% |
| Article 17 | CBA - Exeter Fire Association and Town of Exeter | 1598 | 556 | 2154 | 74.2% | 25.8% |
| Article 18 | Replace Sidewalk Tractor 58 | 1375 | 757 | 2132 | 64.5% | 35.5% |
| Article 19 | Replace Dump Truck 33 | 1265 | 849 | 2114 | 59.8% | 40.2% |
| Article 20 | Purchase ADA Accessible Van for Parks/Recreation | 1522 | 620 | 2142 | 71.1% | 28.9% |
| Article 21 | Public EV Charging Facility | 1342 | 804 | 2146 | 62.5% | 37.5% |
| Article 22 | Appropriate to Sick Leave Trust Fund | 1662 | 542 | 2204 | 75.4% | 24.6% |
| Article 23 | Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund - Parks Improvements | 1367 | 821 | 2188 | 62.5% | 37.5% |
| Article 24 | Purchase Styrofoam Recycling Unit | 1674 | 521 | 2195 | 76.3% | 23.7% |
| Article 25 | Appropriate to Non-Capital Reserve Fund - Snow and Ice Deficit | 1752 | 445 | 2197 | 79.7% | 20.3% |
| Article 26 | Replace Fire Utility Truck | 1699 | 499 | 2198 | 77.3% | 22.7% |
| Article 27 | Transfer Station Improvements | 1307 | 879 | 2186 | 59.8% | 40.2% |
| Article 28 | Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund - ADA Fund | 1360 | 797 | 2157 | 63.1% | 36.9% |
| Article 29 | Sestercentennial Fund | 1262 | 907 | 2169 | 58.2% | 41.8% |
| Article 30 | Appropriate to Trust Fund - Swasey Parkway | 1783 | 417 | 2200 | 81.0% | 19.0% |
| Article 31 | TIF Amendment - Amend Financing Plan | 1587 | 517 | 2104 | 75.4% | 24.6% |
| Article 32 | Citizen's Petition Article - 79 E | 1696 | 413 | 2109 | 80.4% | 19.6% |
| Article 33 | Citizen's Petition Article | 1407 | 711 | 2118 | 66.4% | 33.6% |
| Article 34 | Citizen's Petition Article | 1198 | 843 | 2041 | 58.7% | 41.3% |
| Article 35 | Citizen's Petition Article | 1202 | 811 | 2013 | 59.7% | 40.3% |
| Article 36 | Citizen's Petition Article | 1559 | 529 | 2088 | 74.7% | 25.3% |
| Article 37 | Citizen's Petition Article | 1739 | 420 | 2159 | 80.5% | 19.5% |
| Article 38 | Any Other Business | | | | | |
| | Totals | | | | | |

Registered voters 13,064

Absentee voters 127

BALLOT 1 OF 4



17.6% turnout

ABSENTEE OFFICIAL BALLOT ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE MARCH 11, 2025

Andrea J. Kohler TOWN CLERK

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice(s) like this: ●
B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

FOR SELECTMEN
Vote for not more than TWO
Three Year Term
JULIE GILMAN 1786
NIKO PAPAKONSTANTIS 1099

FOR TRUSTEES OF THE LIBRARY
Vote for not more than THREE
Three Year Term
DIANA PERRY 1455
CATHLEEN A. TOOMEY 1675
BARBARA YOUNG 1632

FOR TRUSTEE OF THE SWAZEY PARKWAY
Vote for not more than ONE
Three Year Term
DWANE STAPLES 1766

FOR MODERATOR
Vote for not more than ONE
Two Year Term
KATHERINE MILLER 1779

FOR TRUSTEE OF THE ROBINSON FUND
Vote for not more than ONE
Seven Year Term
NICK DRINKER 1660

FOR TRUSTEE OF TRUST FUNDS
Vote for not more than ONE
Three Year Term
PAT CURTIS 1714

ARTICLES

Article 2 Zoning Amendment #1: Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the town zoning ordinance... YES 1443 NO 751

Article 3 Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of six million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$6,800,000) for the purpose of design, engineering and construction of a new groundwater source off Drinkwater Road... YES 1495 NO 710

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 4

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of two million one hundred thousand dollars (\$2,100,000) for the purpose of design, engineering, 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: .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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1501
YES
NO
123

Article 5

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of one million two hundred fifty seven thousand nine hundred dollars (\$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: .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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1584
YES
NO
617

Article 6

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of five hundred seventy five thousand dollars (\$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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1354
YES
NO
816

Article 7

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of three hundred ninety five thousand dollars (\$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: .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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1308
YES
NO
898

Article 8

Shall the Town 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 two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$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) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1856
YES
NO
360

Article 9

Shall the Town 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 five hundred thousand dollars (\$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) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1802
YES
NO
404

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING



**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 11, 2025**

BALLOT 2 OF 4

Andrea J. Kohler
TOWN CLERK

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 10

Shall the Town 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 two hundred forty-five thousand dollars (\$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) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1862
YES
NO
335

Article 11

Shall the Town vote on all other necessary Town Officers, Auditors or Committees for the ensuing year.
BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Canda
Donald Cloutier
Andrew Elliott
Enna Grazier
Francine Hall
Amanda Kelly
Robert Kelly
David Kovar
Dr. Judy Rowan
Christine Soutter
Christopher Zigmont

Fence Viewer
Doug Eastman

Measurer of Wood & Bark
Doug Eastman

Weigher
Jay Perkins

1926
YES
NO
179

Article 12

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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1431
YES
NO
778

Article 13

Shall the Town 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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1774
YES
NO
414

Article 14

Shall the Town 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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1496
YES
NO
670

Article 15

Shall the Town 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:

| Year | Water/Sewer Fund | General Fund | Total |
|------|------------------|--------------|-----------|
| FY25 | \$68,068 | \$70,451 | \$138,519 |
| FY26 | \$93,597 | \$105,320 | \$198,917 |
| FY27 | \$61,403 | \$80,643 | \$142,046 |

And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thirty-eight thousand five hundred nineteen dollars (\$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. (Estimated Tax Impact: .02/1,000, \$2.02/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1580
YES
NO
607

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 16

Shall the Town 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:

| Year | Estimated Salary/Benefits Increase |
|------|------------------------------------|
| FY25 | \$133,009 |
| FY26 | \$225,370 |
| FY27 | \$128,120 |

And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thirty-three thousand, nine dollars (\$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: .038/1,000, \$3.82/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1492
YES
NO
663

Article 17

Shall the Town 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:

| Year | Estimated Salary/Benefits Increase |
|------|------------------------------------|
| FY25 | \$158,248 |
| FY26 | \$207,857 |
| FY27 | \$124,297 |

And further, to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred fifty-eight thousand, two hundred forty-eight dollars (\$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: .045/1,000, \$4.54/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1598
YES
NO
556

Article 18

Shall the Town 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 1991 sidewalk tractor in the Public Works Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty-six thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$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: .016/1,000, \$1.61/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1375
YES
NO
757

Article 19

Shall the Town 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: .011/1,000, \$1.15/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1265
YES
NO
849

Article 20

Shall the Town 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: .004/1,000, \$.43/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1522
YES
NO
620

Article 21

Shall the Town raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of one hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000), for the purpose of purchasing and installing two (2) two-port Electric Vehicle chargers (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 are 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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1342
YES
NO
804

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING



**ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 11, 2025**

BALLOT 3 OF 4

Andrea J. Kohler
TOWN CLERK

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 22

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1662
YES
NO

Article 23

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to be added to the Parks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund previously established. (Estimated Tax Impact: .028/1,000 assessed property value, \$2.84/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

542
1367
YES
NO
821

Article 24

Shall the Town raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$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 equipment. This appropriation will not take effect unless \$50,000 in grants are received, with the town's share of \$30,000 to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1674
YES
NO
521

Article 25

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of seventy-five-thousand dollars (\$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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1752
YES
NO
446

Article 26

Shall the Town raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of seventy-one thousand three hundred and fifty-five dollars (\$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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1699
YES
NO
499

Article 27

Shall the Town raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000), for the purpose of making improvements to the Town Transfer Station. This sum to come from general taxation. (Estimated Tax Impact: .014/1,000, \$1.44/100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1307
YES
NO
879

Article 28

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the ADA Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established. (Estimated Tax Impact: .0072/1,000 assessed property value, .72/\$100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1360
YES
NO
797

Article 29

Shall the Town 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: .0014/1,000 assessed property value, .14/\$100,000 assessed property value). (Majority vote required.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1262
YES
NO
907

Article 30

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

1783
YES
NO
417

TURN BALLOT OVER AND CONTINUE VOTING

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 31

Shall the Town 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.) Recommended by the Select Board 5-0.

YES NO

1587

Article 32

On the petition of Gerry Hamel and other registered voters of the town of Exeter, NH; Shall the town discontinue the community Revitalization Tax Incentive Program (RSA 79E) adopted by the Town of Exeter in March of 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 the taxes on all future projects can be utilized by the town and citizens instead of investors. (Majority Vote Required.)

YES NO

1696

Article 33

By petition of Karishma Manzur 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 not incorporating advanced technology and other safety features to prevent gun deaths and gun thefts?

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. (Majority Vote Required.)

YES NO

1407

413

Article 34

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. (Majority Vote Required.)

YES NO

1198

843

Article 35

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 U.S. 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 Americans 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. (Majority Vote Required.)

YES NO

1202

811

Article 36

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. (Majority Vote Required.)

YES NO

1559

529

GO TO NEXT BALLOT AND CONTINUE VOTING



ABSENTEE
OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 11, 2025

BALLOT 4 OF 4

Andrea J. Kohler
TOWN CLERK

ARTICLES CONTINUED

Article 37

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. (Majority Vote Required.)

1739
YES
NO
400

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED VOTING THIS BALLOT

Keegan Report Update



Presented by:
WG Keegan Associates



KEEGAN ASSOCIATES
MUNICIPALITY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Town of Exeter, NH

Management Study & Strategic Recommendations Phase II

Phase II Project

Overview and Purpose

- Evaluate Results of management changes and structures
- Reinterview individual departments to evaluate adaptations to operational changes and reporting structure
- Evaluate the new practices of the Select Board and Town Manager's Office to see if the changes are working and make adjustments as needed
- Perform Management Coaching and mentoring to further support the new management structure

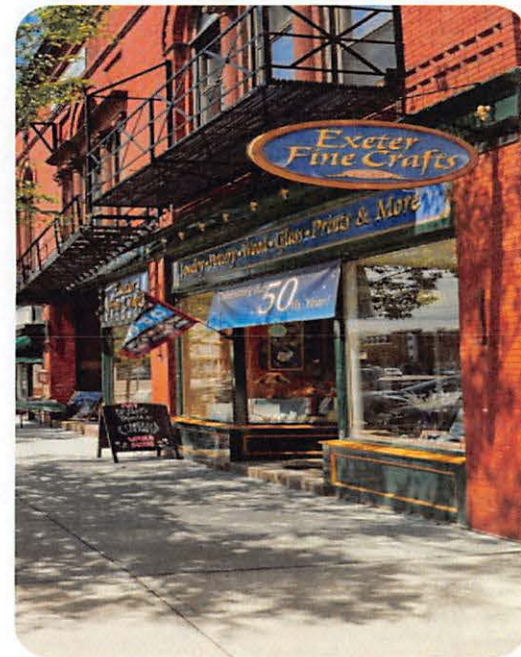
Notable Issues Identified in Phase I

Filling Vacant Positions -
Some positions, most notably in Public Works, had been vacant for more than a year and the absences were taking a toll on those existing employees who were trying to keep the operations functioning



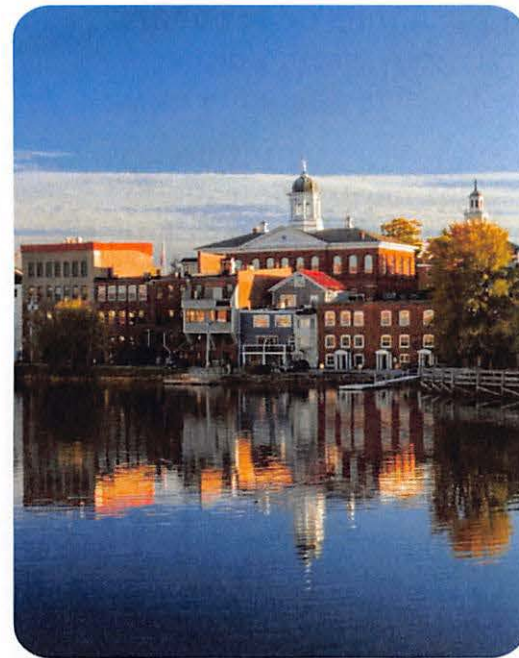
Notable Issues Identified in Phase I

The Inability to Retain Good Talent - This concern has been almost universal in local government and has been attributed to many different factors such as a highly transient labor market and competing wage scales from both the public and private sectors



Notable Issues Identified in Phase I

The Lack of Ability to Grow Talent from Within the Organization - This is something we identified as a concern, but it is best addressed as a key component of the Town's strategic hiring and retention plans



Results Achieved Over the Last Twelve Months

1

Filling Vacant Positions

Improvements achieved in Public Works, Police and Fire. The Town is now fully staffed in Police and Fire but challenges are still occurring in Public Works though things have improved. The hiring of the new Public Works Director has been a significant step forward.

2

The Inability to Retain Good Talent

Improvements to Pay Scales have had a positive effect on retention rates. Improvements to the reporting structure have also reduced stress throughout the organization.

3

The Lack of Ability to Grow Talent from Within the Organization

With improved vacancy and retention rates, the organization continued to improve its Succession Planning capability

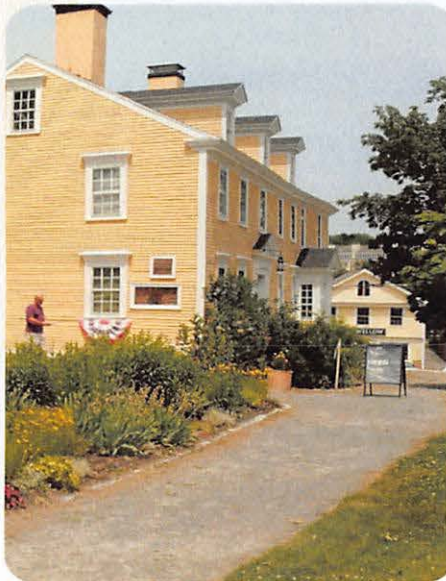
Operational Improvements Achieved



During the past twelve (12) months, the Town of Exeter has improved in the following ways:

- The *E-Team* was formed. The E-Team includes the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager and Finance Director. This new team meets almost daily and collaborates on many operational decisions before they are made. This has removed the “island effect” for the Town Manager and has allowed him to get different perspectives before he proceeds with many operational actions.

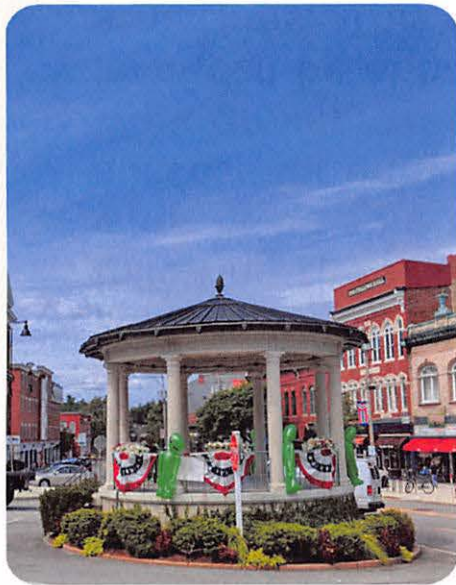
Operational Improvements Achieved



During the past twelve (12) months, the Town of Exeter has improved in the following ways:

- Weekly Operations Meetings have been held which has helped to forge a bond between many of the Town's Operating Departments. The proof is that this year's discussions around the Capital Plan was one of the most collaborative in years; leading to a strategic result for the Town.

Operational Improvements Achieved



During the past twelve (12) months, the Town of Exeter has improved in the following ways:

- Restructuring of the Departments has led to less confusion and an improved level of internal communications. This has resulted in greater confidence in the decision-making process throughout the community.



Operational Improvements Still in Progress



Areas of the Organization that Still Need Work:

- Further review of the Public Works Department is needed following the first year of the new Director being hired. We want to be sure that this Department is properly built for success for enhanced service to the community.
- Work on improved internal communications at the Department level can be enhanced by further adjustment to internal structures. This will lead to enhanced strategic discussions
- Hiring the new HR Director will be a plus. To help guarantee success we want to make sure that the mission for this new division is clear and that initial priorities are identified for the new leader of this role.



Management Coaching

We are recommending that management coaching and mentoring occur throughout the summer to assist new managers and to help existing managers improve their supervisory skills. We also want to take the existing organizational improvements and build on the successes so that they become part of the culture of the organization. We will discuss a plan of action with the Town Manager and his Team on how to proceed with this training piece once we complete the evaluation of the past year's experiences.





Management Coaching (Cont'd)

As part of our efforts to determine coaching needs, we will continue to meet with the management team, Board Members and with Departments to identify management gaps.

A lot of progress has been made during the past year, and we are truly excited with the results. However, we want to solidify those successes with any mid-course corrections.

This will help continue to move the organization in a more efficient and effective direction.





In Summary

- The new organizational structure appears to be working with a significant measure of success. The next steps will be to reinforce the changes that have been made so that they become long lasting and promote long term success.
- We have already identified some adjustments that are needed and the conversations with the Team have been very productive.
- We want spend some additional time with the Public Works Department to see if any changes are needed after the Directors first year on the job.
- We will be doing management training and mentorship through the next few months to help strengthen the management teams supervisory capabilities and to further enhance the collaboration between departments.
- We will be seeking feedback from Board members, the E-Team and Department Managers on how to best formulate needs of this next phase.

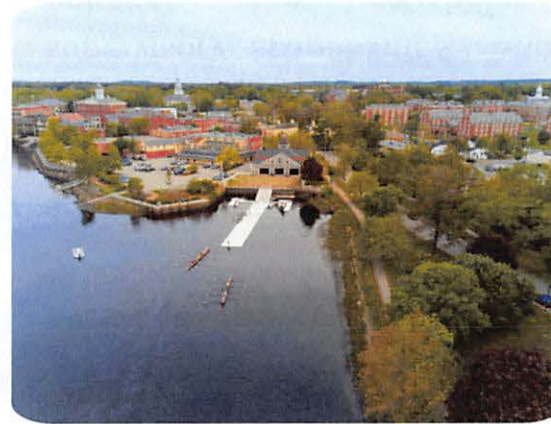
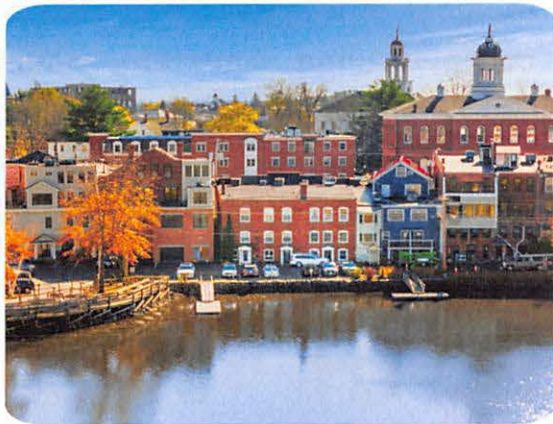


Thank You!



KEEGAN ASSOCIATES
MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

William G. Keegan, Jr., ICMA-CM, LM
President,
WGK Associates
781-603-9632
keegerb@comcast.net



Swasey Parkway Coastal Resilience Project



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: Select Board

FROM: Stephen Cronin, Public Works Director

DATE: March 13, 2025

RE: Swasey Parkway Coastal Resilience Grant Project, “NH Community-Centered Approach for Enhancing Climate Resilience in Exeter’s Swasey Parkway”

To initiate the Swasey Parkway Coastal Resilience Grant (CRG) Project, we are seeking time before the Select Board on March 17th to provide an update on funding status, an overview of the project, and to request the appointment of a Select Board representative for the project team.

As previously presented, the goal of this project, anticipated to occur between now and June 2026, is to engage the Select Board, Parkway Trustees, residents, community stakeholders, and staff to develop a climate resilience plan for the Parkway. To achieve this, the Town would hire a consultant responsible to facilitate engagement and input that informs the development of recommendations and designs to strengthen the park’s resilience against frequent tidal flooding. These recommendations would inform any future approaches or funding needs.

The first step of this process is to establish the project team which is anticipated to include members from the Select Board, the Trustees, and Town staff. The project team will work to solicit a consultant in late March/early April. We will also have an opportunity for interested members of the project team to attend the State’s Meaningful Engagement workshop in March. Following selection, the project’s consultant will work with the project team through goal setting, stakeholder identification and engagement, and development of final designs and recommendations following several steps of engagement including: public input, draft design development and review, and selection of community-supported preferred alternatives.

Use of Water/Sewer Impact Fees



TOWN OF EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

10 FRONT STREET • EXETER, NH • 03833-3792 • (603) 778-0591 • FAX 772-4709

www.exeternh.gov

TO: RUSSELL DEAN, TOWN MANAGER
FROM: COREY STEVENS, FINANCE DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: USE OF WATER/ SEWER IMPACT FEES
DATE: MARCH 12, 2025

The Water and Sewer Impact Fee bank accounts have balances of \$63,111 and \$65,709 respectively as of 12/31/2024. The Town is authorized to use water/ sewer impact fees to offset debt payments on water/ sewer capital projects. I recommend that the amount representing water and sewer impact fees collected in 2023 be transferred to the General Fund operating account for that purpose at this time. The total to be transferred would be \$57,075, broken down as follows: Water Impact Fee account \$18,007; Sewer Impact Fee account \$39,068.

Corey

SB297 Update



Fwd: URGENT: Please Read – SB297 Update

1 message

Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 12, 2025 at 6:20 PM

To: Corey Stevens <cstevens@exeternh.gov>, "Dan Chartrand (Town)" <dchartrand@exeternh.gov>, "Julie Gilman (Town)" <jgilman@exeternh.gov>, Melissa Roy <mroy@exeternh.gov>, Molly Cowan <mcowan@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>, Niko Papakonstantis <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>, Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

This is the latest on SB297. Please read the attachment closely.

Questions as always are welcome.

Thank you,

Russ

Russ Dean
Exeter Town Manager
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833
(603) 773-6102
rdean@exeternh.gov



----- Forwarded message -----

From: HealthTrust - Executive Director <healthtrust-ed@healthtrustnh.org>

Date: Wed, Mar 12, 2025 at 4:55 PM

Subject: URGENT: Please Read – SB297 Update

To: <rdean@exeternh.gov>



Dear Member Groups,

Yesterday, [Senate Bill 297](#) (as amended) was passed through the Senate Finance Committee. This bill is expected to appear before the Senate as part of the consent calendar no later than next week.

HealthTrust testified in opposition of this late bill last Tuesday. You may find a copy of our testimony [here](#).

This bill will have significant impacts on you, our Member Groups. We have provided a list of the material impacts as we understand them on the

attached SB297 Fact Sheet.

In short, these regulatory changes by the State of New Hampshire will negatively impact your city, town, county, or school district by:

- Shifting the ultimate financial liability for losses to you, the Member Groups of HealthTrust;
- Requiring Member Groups to establish reserve accounts used to pay for assessments and replenishments, and;
- Requiring Member Groups to accept changes for a new process and structure that are not based on commonly accepted, actuarially sound standards (such as those used by the NH Department of Insurance).

If these changes present problems for your community, we encourage you to contact your Senators, Representatives, and other stakeholders.

Sincerely,



Scott DeRoche
Executive Director

HealthTrust

PO Box 617

Concord, NH 03302-0617

Phone: 800.527.5001

healthtrust-ed@healthtrustnh.org

www.healthtrustnh.org

The mission of HealthTrust, Inc. is to provide high quality, cost-effective employee benefit products and services for public employers and employees in New Hampshire in order to reduce costs through pooling strategies with a commitment to education, health promotion and disease prevention.

HealthTrust, Inc. endeavors to protect the privacy of the enrollee and their beneficiaries' healthcare information. This message is intended only for the use of the addressee and may contain private health care information that is protected by state and federal law, including without limitation the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please erase or destroy all copies of the message and its attachments and notify the sender immediately. Thank you.

[Unsubscribe](#)



SB297 (as Amended by 2025-0894s) Fact Sheet

March 11, 2025

Member Group Impacts:

1. You are ultimately responsible for losses.
 - a. **Effective upon passage:**
 - b. You **must** agree in writing that you (as a Member Group) are ultimately responsible for any potential losses incurred while participating in a NH RSA 5-B risk pool, such as HealthTrust.
 - c. You **must** acknowledge that HealthTrust coverage is not insurance, does not function like an insurance company, and is not an insurer.
 - d. HealthTrust **must** collect funds from Members (through assessments or replenishments) in the event of losses that cause HealthTrust reserves to fall below the minimum reserve requirements or insolvency.
 - e. If you terminate coverage, you remain responsible for losses that occurred during the prior year.
 - f. This policy change stands in stark contrast to the current arrangement. Today, HealthTrust (a non-profit New Hampshire corporation) would be the responsible entity. This shifts the ultimate liability to each Member Group.
2. You will need to create a reserve.
 - a. **Effective upon the next setting of fiscal year budgets following passage.**
 - b. In order to participate in a RSA 5-B health risk pool, you **must** create a non-lapsing reserve account held by you as a Member Group.
 - c. This reserve will be utilized to fund assessments for which you may be responsible.
 - d. You **must** fund an amount equivalent to at least 1% of your health coverage contributions each year, until the reserve account is funded to a total of 4% of contributions.
 - e. If you utilize these reserves, you **must** rebuild the fund at a rate of at least 1% the following year, until the 4% funding has been achieved.
 - f. You may **not** participate in a RSA 5-B risk pool for health coverage without having this reserve account in place.
 - g. In the years where there are returns of surplus from HealthTrust, they may be deposited into this reserve account.
3. You **must** pay replenishments and/or assessments when needed. You, as the Member Groups, would utilize the funds created in Section 2 above to pay these costs.
 - a. **Replenishments:**
 - i. **Effective as of closure of HealthTrust Fiscal Year 2026 (for renewals starting January 1, 2027 and July 1, 2027)**
 - ii. If HealthTrust reserves fall below 12% of member group contributions in a fiscal year, HealthTrust **must** include a contingency reserve replenishment amount in the next rating cycle (i.e., FY2028 in the first year) that mandates a recovery to at least that 12% level.

- iii. This replenishment amount will be due from Groups who participated in the fiscal year for which the replenishment is calculated, even if they have terminated membership.

b. Assessments:

- i. **Effective upon passage.**
- ii. If HealthTrust reserves fall below 8% of annual paid claims, HealthTrust **must** notify you of a potential required assessment if reserves fall below 4% of annual paid claims.
- iii. If HealthTrust reserves fall below 4% of annual paid claims, you **must** pay an assessment **within 30 days** to satisfy the amount of the deficiency.
- iv. Evaluation occurs at the end of each fiscal month.
- v. Calculated on a pro-rata basis based on contribution amounts.

HealthTrust Reserves:

1. HealthTrust contingency reserves (Capital Adequacy Reserves) **must** be between 12% and 16% of Member Group contributions for the current fiscal year.
 - a. The upper limit may be temporarily increased to 18% if we apply for, and are granted, an exception.
 - b. The bill states that the contingency reserve rate ranges will be reviewed by July 1, 2027 and every 4 years thereafter. No actuarially sound standards have been identified as the basis for this review such as those used by the New Hampshire Insurance Department.
 - c. As written, the upper limit is less than the minimum reserve level (\$95 million, which is 20% of contributions for the current fiscal year) that our actuaries have determined is necessary in order to have only a 5% chance of reserves being depleted within 5 years.
 - d. As of the end of FY2024, HealthTrust is at a contingency reserve level equivalent to 7% of contributions and is in the midst of a Board-approved, actuarially-modeled plan to rebuild reserves over a period of three rating cycles. This would halt that rebuild effort at the 16% allowable limit and thereby prevent HealthTrust from accumulating the level of reserves that has been actuarially determined appropriate.
 - e. **If HealthTrust becomes financially impaired, Groups will be responsible to replenish HealthTrust reserves through prescribed replenishments and/or assessments detailed above.**

Select Board Committee Appointments

Select Board Representatives to Boards/Committees/Commissions

Select Board

| | | |
|---------------------|------------|------|
| Niko Papakonstantis | Chair | 2028 |
| Molly Cowan | Vice Chair | 2027 |
| Julie Gilman | Clerk | 2028 |
| Nancy Belanger | | 2026 |
| Daniel Chartrand | | 2026 |

Planning Board

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|------|
| Nancy Belanger | SB Rep. | Term |
| Dan Chartrand | SB Rep. Alt. | Term |

Recreation Advisory Board

| | | |
|----------------|---------|------|
| Molly Cowan | SB Rep. | Term |
| Nancy Belanger | SB Alt. | Term |

Conservation Commission

| | | |
|---------------------|--|------|
| Nancy Belanger | | Term |
| Niko Papakonstantis | | Term |

Heritage Commission

| | | |
|--------------|---------|------|
| Julie Gilman | SB Rep. | Term |
|--------------|---------|------|

Historic District Commission

| | | |
|--------------|--------|------|
| Julie Gilman | SB Rep | Term |
|--------------|--------|------|

Rockingham Planning Commission

| | | |
|--------------|---------|------|
| Julie Gilman | SB Rep. | Term |
|--------------|---------|------|

Swasey Parkway Trustees

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Rep. | Term |
| Dan Chartrand | SB Alt. | Term |

Communications Advisory Committee

| | | |
|----------------|---------|------|
| Molly Cowan | SB Rep. | Term |
| Nancy Belanger | SB Alt. | Term |

E911 Committee

| | | |
|-------------|---------|------|
| Molly Cowan | SB Rep. | Term |
|-------------|---------|------|

Energy Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Julie Gilman | SB Rep. | Term |
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Alt. | Term |

Facilities Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Dan Chartrand | SB Rep. | Term |
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Alt. | Term |

Housing Advisory Committee

| | | |
|----------------|---------|------|
| Nancy Belanger | SB Rep. | Term |
| Dan Chartrand | SB Alt. | Term |

River Advisory Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Rep. | Term |
|---------------------|---------|------|

Sustainability Advisory Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Dan Chartrand | SB Rep. | Term |
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Alt. | Term |

Water/Sewer Advisory Committee

| | | |
|---------------|---------|------|
| Molly Cowan | SB Rep. | Term |
| Dan Chartrand | SB Alt. | Term |

Tree Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Rep. | Term |
|---------------------|---------|------|

Arts and Culture Advisory Commission

| | | |
|----------------|---------|------|
| Nancy Belanger | SB Rep. | Term |
|----------------|---------|------|

Tax, Exemption & Credit Advisory Committee

| | | |
|--------------|---------|------|
| Molly Cowan | SB Rep. | Term |
| Julie Gilman | SB Alt. | Term |

Pairpoint Park Stakeholders Committee

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|------|
| Niko Papakonstantis | SB Rep. | Term |
|---------------------|---------|------|

250th Celebration Commission

| | | |
|--------------|---------|------|
| Julie Gilman | SB Rep. | Term |
|--------------|---------|------|

Tax Abatements, Veteran's Credits & Exemptions

List for Select Board meeting March 17, 2025

Elderly Exemption

| Map/Lot/Unit | Location | Amount | Tax Year |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| 87/14/8A | 8 First St Pinecrest Pk | 152,251 | 2025 |
| 104/79/955 | 900B Maid Marion Dr | 152,251 | 2025 |
| 103/13/33 | 33 Donna Dr | 236,251 | 2025 |
| 104/79/322 | 322 Friar Tuck Dr | 152,251 | 2025 corrected lot # |

Disability Exemption

| Map/Lot/Unit | Location | Amount | Tax Year |
|--------------|---------------|---------|----------|
| 95/64/47 | 4 Wayland Cir | 125,000 | 2025 |

Veteran Credit

| Map/Lot/Unit | Location | Amount | Tax Year |
|--------------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| 99/9 | 3 Connie Rd | 2,000.00 | 2025 disable |

Abatements

| Map/Lot/Unit | Location | Amount | Tax Year |
|--------------|------------------------|------------|----------|
| 32/12/1 | 1 Beech Tree Co-op Inc | denied | 2024 |
| 47/8/3243 | 32 Willey Creek #403 | \$485.67 | 2024 |
| 64/24 | 25 Park St | \$71.16 | 2024 |
| 73/280 | 14 Tremont St | \$136.98 | 2024 |
| 79/22 | 1 Indian Trail | \$106.74 | 2024 |
| 87/3/14 | 14 Exeter Farms Rd | \$112.08 | 2024 |
| 94/22 | 2 Gary Ln | \$305.99 | 2024 |
| 96/2/7 | 7 Strouts MH Pk | \$247.28 | 2024 |
| 97/34 | 92 Kingston Rd | \$1,755.87 | 2024 |
| 104/79/209 | 209 Robinhood Dr | denier | 2024 |

Community Action Report from the DRA

This report is for monitoring of sales properties for 2024
For you information only

Religious Exemption

| Map/Lot/Unit | Location | Amount | Year |
|--------------|--------------|---------|------|
| 69/3/13 | 37 Acadia Ln | 585,200 | 2025 |

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
Corey Stevens, Finance Director
David Tovey, Assistant Director
FROM: Greg Bisson, Director of Parks and Recreation
RE: Planet Playground Sub-Contractor Trades
DATE: 03/17/2025

Spring has arrived, marking the final phases of replacing Planet Playground. The renovation encompasses much more than just the playground equipment; it also involves crucial aspects like demolition, fencing, paving, and landscaping for effective site restoration. We released the RFP for all these contractors in early February, with a submission deadline of March 7th. The RFPs were made available on various platforms, including the DOT website and our own, in addition to targeted emails sent to local vendors. These trades are essential to ensure the renovation is completed before the recreation park becomes busy, preventing any disruption of spring and summer activities. These subcontractors are paid through a 50/50 split between the grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Town’s match from the 2024 warrant article.

Demo:

The department will systematically salvage all the pickets, plaques, artwork, and elements before any demolition proceeds. Following our egg hunt, we plan a final opportunity to recognize all past donors on April 12th during our, “Final Send Off” event. We would like to proceed with demolition the following week, giving us plenty of time to complete it and address any issues we may encounter with the site. Five vendors submitted bids for the removal, which included the disposal of all materials. The following companies bid on the project.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| BWP & Sons Excavation | \$10,400.00 |
| S&R Corporation | \$16,300.00 |
| DeFranzo Demolition Corp | \$17,500.00 |
| Pettinelli & Associates | \$18,000.00 |
| Summit Contracting LTD | \$18,600.00 |
| Bright Horizons Environmental Corp | \$24,000.00 |

We recommend awarding the bid for the demolition to BWP & Sons of North Hampton, NH, at \$10,400. This price covers the Dig Safe of the area, demolishing all existing playground structures and fencing, removing all old wood chips, and disposal. It will leave a level area for the playground to be

reconstructed. The estimated time for the demolition is two days. The price will not exceed this amount of \$10,400.

Motion: Authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to contract with BWP & Sons Excavation for an amount not to exceed \$10,400 for the demolition of the Old Planet Playground.

Fencing:

Installing fencing around the playground is crucial for safety. The team will collaborate with the playground contractor to avoid disrupting the construction. A black chain-link fence will be installed, featuring one entry gate and three maintenance gates for playground upkeep and emergency access. We will also install a stockade fence around the power transformer to improve the view. Seven vendors submitted bids for fencing. The following companies bid on the project.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| AAA Fence | \$18,646.00 |
| Pettinelli & Associates | \$20,820.00 |
| Brentwood Fencing | \$21,211.88 |
| Blue Ribbon Property Improvements | \$21,250.46 |
| Reliable Fence Boston | \$23,749.50 |
| Platinum Fence | \$24,000.00 |
| Chase Co | \$27,131.00 |
| Fences Unlimited | \$27,343.00 |
| Summit Contracting LTD Co | \$27,850.00 |

We recommend awarding the fencing bid to AAA Fences of Dover, NH, at a cost not to exceed \$18,646.00. AAA Fences has completed various fence projects for the town.

Motion: Authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to contract with AAA Fencing for an amount not to exceed \$18,646.00 for the fencing for the New Planet Playground.

Paving:

Accessible access to the playground is an essential aspect of the project. We are using this opportunity to widen all pathways to 5' from the parking lot up to the playground entrance, which is currently a wooden walkway. We would extend the existing walkway slightly to make a seamless transition. The contractor would remove all pavement and soft materials, lay a new gravel basecoat, and install new asphalt. We had two vendors submit bids for this project.

| | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| MWS Paving | \$6,250.00 |
| Summit Contracting LTD | \$11,900.00 |

We recommend awarding the paving bid to MWS Paving LLS, Hampton, NH, at a cost not to exceed \$6,250.

Motion: Authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to contract with MWS Paving for an amount not to exceed \$6,250.00 for the paving of the New Planet Playground.

Landscaping/Restoration/Irrigation

The project's final element involves landscaping and restoring the area surrounding the playground. In addition to the playground construction, the adjacent area has become worn and rough with heavy use and shade. With the removal of large trees, there is a lack of grass. Our attempt last year to establish some grassy areas failed, resulting in a dusty environment for park users. We plan to transform the area into an inviting entry space by implementing irrigation for grass growth, installing garden beds with plants that repel mosquitoes, and planting four trees to compensate for those removed last year for safety reasons. The team will work closely with the playground and paving contractor to ensure that the construction of the playground remains undisturbed, as this will be the final phase of the renovation. While two vendors submitted proposals, the lowest bidder declined to proceed without securing the project's other components. Trees and plants will be bought through local vendors and selected by staff to ensure quality.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Summitt Contracting | \$10,700.00 |
| Days Landscaping | \$12,350.00 |

We recommend awarding the landscaping bid to Days Landscaping, Salisbury, MA, at a cost not to exceed \$12,350.00. Days Landscaping is our current vendor for maintaining the irrigation systems in our parks and facilities.

Motion: Authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to contract with Days Landscaping for an amount not to exceed \$12,350.00 for the landscaping restoration and irrigation of the New Planet Playground.

We are excited that the bids for this project are below our previous estimates, providing us with flexibility in case any unexpected issues arise. The total budget for the project is set at \$595,000. Purchase and install of equipment and the above bid work will total \$578,053.50, leaving approximately \$16,946.50 from both funding sources to cover additional plants, trees, tables, benches, and other site amenities.

Respectfully Yours,

Greg Bisson,

Director

Exeter Parks and Recreation

Town Manager Report

Town of Exeter

Outstanding & Potential Projects with Federal Grant Funding

3/17/2025

| Outstanding Projects | Source | Awarded | Received | Outstanding | Comment <i>(italics updated 3/17/25)</i> |
|---|---------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| Winter Street BMP | NHDES/ EPA | 118,000 | 35,000 | 83,000 | <i>3/17 UPDATE - final disbursement has been requested</i> |
| Historic Preservation Grant | Federal | 15,000 | - | 15,000 | <i>3/17 UPDATE - goes before Governor & Council 3/12/25</i> |
| Energy Efficiency & Community Block Grant | DOE | 200,000 | 200,000 | - | <i>3/17 UPDATE - funding is now accessible to the Town</i> |
| Enhancing Climate Resilience | NHDES | 18,000 | - | 18,000 | State is in possession of these funds |
| Solar Array | IRA credits | 1,294,000 | - | 1,294,000 | Credits are applied for after project completion |
| | | Funding status unknown | | 1,410,000 | |
| Webster Ave Sewer Pump Station | Federal CDS | 1,050,000 | 1,050,000 | - | <i>3/17 UPDATE - all funding received</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 | <i>3/17 UPDATE - final disbursement has been requested</i> |
| 10 Hampton Road - CDBG Renovations | CDFA/ CDBG | 841,240 | - | 841,240 | NHCDFR 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 | 1,507,311 | 33,795 | TOE continues to receive reimbursement for this project |
| | | Funding considered secure | | 4,088,244 | |
| | | Total Outstanding Projects | | 5,498,244 | |

| 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 Charging 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 - award will be finalized in April |
| Clean Sweep - Street Sweeper - Article 7 | SRF Loan | - | <i>3/17 UPDATE - warrant article defeated</i> |
| | | 310,000 | Funding considered secure |
| | | Total Potential Projects | 3,573,951 |

Select Board Committee Reports

Correspondence

Town of Exeter, NH
Notice of Public Hearing Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b,III(a)

Notice is hereby given that the Select Board of the Town of Exeter will hold a public hearing in the Nowak Room, 10 Front Street, Exeter beginning at 7:00 PM on the 31st day of March, 2025, for the purpose of complying with the provisions of RSA 31:95-b,III(a) for the following:

To accept granted monies to the Exeter Police Department in the amount of \$32,000 from Stanton K-9 Foundation to be used for items listed in the model budget, including "Green Dog" and trained for the purpose of work/police work. The dog should come with a 1-year health guarantee, along with a guarantee of success in completing a K-9 training course; Initial Training/BPD K-9 Handler course (or comparable facility); In service training, K-9 handler; Cost of cruiser conversion for K-9 team use; Outdoor 6'x12' kennel and doghouse at handler's home; Miscellaneous training and handling equipment (collars, leashes, bite sleeves, exercise balls); K-9 bulletproof vest; Dog food, 3 years @ \$650 per year; Vet care allowance, 3 years @ \$1,000 per year; Reserve for contingencies 10%; Reserve for future K-9 skills training.

Dated: March 4, 2025

Exeter Select Board
Niko Papakonstantis, Chair



Fwd: Loss of Pickpocket Dam and what it means today my family and community.

1 message

Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 12, 2025 at 2:10 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Niko Papakonstantis** <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>
Date: Fri, Mar 7, 2025 at 2:44 PM
Subject: Fwd: Loss of Pickpocket Dam and what it means today my family and community.
To: Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Melissa Roy <mroy@exeternh.gov>

For the packet.....

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Massicotte** <mmassicotte@mascotsurgical.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 7, 2025 at 1:32 PM
Subject: Fwd: Loss of Pickpocket Dam and what it means today my family and community.
To: selectboard@exeternh.gov <selectboard@exeternh.gov>, npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>, mcowan@exeternh.gov <mcowan@exeternh.gov>, jgilman@exeternh.gov <jgilman@exeternh.gov>, nbelanger@exeternh.gov <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>, dchartrand@exeternh.gov <dchartrand@exeternh.gov>
CC: Peggy Massicotte <peggy@mascotsurgical.com>, catedison27@gmail.com <catedison27@gmail.com>

FYI for your consideration for the pending vote on March 11, 2025

Michael E. Massicotte
Founder-Consultant
MASCOT Surgical, LLC
mmassicotte@mascotsurgical.com
Mobile #603-703-5017

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Michael Massicotte" </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=CD337B891C184C519BBDB39EDDFBCF40-MAILBOX1>
Date: March 22, 2024 at 12:00:35 AM EDT
Subject: Loss of Pickpocket Dam and what it means today my family and community.

To whom it may concern in regards to the removal of Pickpocket Dam,

As a land owner on Pickpocket Road with Exeter River frontage, I am unfortunately just learning of the impending risk and potential loss of this dam, which is a treasured recreational outlet for my family along with a lot of my neighbors and community.

My ask in this comment is to merely take the time to look at other alternatives other than the destruction of this mainstay that has been here and appreciated in our community since 1652.

In this regard, I would argue that the vote to just remove the dam is shortsighted, not factoring in the dramatic impact to the landowners abutting the river in Exeter and Brentwood who have treasured the beautiful waterfall

and access point safely provided by this structure.

We moved here 10 years ago, with a great deal of our decision for home purchase based on the setting the Exeter River and dam presented as a special place for our children to grow, explore, appreciate and learn what this beautiful Exeter landscape offers. This dam is a safe and calm launch point appreciated by my family and community that allows easy access into the ecology and beautiful environment provided by the Exeter River. It is a necessity as a launch point, never mind the beautiful waterfall setting and environment surrounding that has thrived as a result of its presence, that would be lost forever with its shortsighted removal.

Please look at these pictures. I am attaching to get a true understanding of what this dam means to my family personally, which is most certainly the sentiment of everyone directly impacted with land abutting the river along with so many more in the community unaware of the vote made to remove by a mere 8% of the town population represented.

To reiterate, my main ask here is to slow down with this rash decision and properly allow the Exeter and Brentwood community to be informed on what this dam removal would mean. It would be appreciated by all to be informed transparently with what this dam removal means along with the safe and viable alternatives that would preserve what we have all been accustomed to enjoying its environmental splendor.

Please just take a moment, and really factor in everything and everyone impacted with this dam removal that can be easily preserved if we all come together to look at alternatives.

Thank you for time and consideration.

Best Regards,

10 Items
share.icloud.com

[10 Itemsshare.icloud.com](https://10itemsshare.icloud.com)

Michael E. Massicotte
Founder-Consultant
MASCOT Surgical, LLC
mmassicotte@mascotsurgical.com
Mobile #[603-703-5017](tel:603-703-5017)

--
Russ Dean
Exeter Town Manager
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833
(603) 773-6102
rdean@exeternh.gov



2 attachments



080wZgXvBnV9Mwf4sCt_RE9oA.jpeg
27K



IMG_6798.heic
681K



Fwd: Please Delay the Pickpocket Dam Vote Until Grants Are Secured

1 message

Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>
To: Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 12, 2025 at 2:10 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Niko Papakonstantis** <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>
Date: Fri, Mar 7, 2025 at 2:44 PM
Subject: Fwd: Please Delay the Pickpocket Dam Vote Until Grants Are Secured
To: Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Melissa Roy <mroy@exeternh.gov>

For the packet.....

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Massicotte** <massicotte@mascotsurgical.com>
Date: Fri, Mar 7, 2025 at 12:40 PM
Subject: Please Delay the Pickpocket Dam Vote Until Grants Are Secured
To: selectboard@exeternh.gov <selectboard@exeternh.gov>, npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>, mcowan@exeternh.gov <mcowan@exeternh.gov>, jgilman@exeternh.gov <jgilman@exeternh.gov>, nbelanger@exeternh.gov <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>, dchartrand@exeternh.gov <dchartrand@exeternh.gov>

Subject: Delay the Pickpocket Dam Vote Until Grants Are Secured

Dear Exeter Select Board,

I urge you to postpone the March 11 vote on Article 4 to remove the Pickpocket Dam until the town fully explores and secures grants for restoration as well as removal.

This rushed decision risks locking us into a costly, irreversible choice without exhausting all options; options that could preserve a valued community asset while addressing safety concerns.

Removal's estimated cost is \$1.5-\$2.1 million, with grants like Great Bay 2030 (\$300,000) and NOAA (\$1.9 million) still pending. Restoration, while pricier at \$3 million, has viable funding paths—like NHDES High Hazard Dam Rehabilitation Grants or U.S. Army Corps Section 206 projects—that could offset taxpayer burden. The town's pursuit of removal grants proves funding is out there; why not pivot to rehab-focused applications before committing?

The 2027 NHDES deadline gives us time to get this right.

The dam's impoundment supports recreation—kayaking, fishing—and upstream wildlife, benefits the 2024 feasibility study downplays against a "high hazard" label tied to a 1,000-year flood. Residents, including Friends of the Exeter River, feel this process has skipped proper debate. Delaying the vote lets us confirm grants and weigh restoration's merits potentially adding fish passage or flood controls against removal's unknowns, like sediment risks downstream.

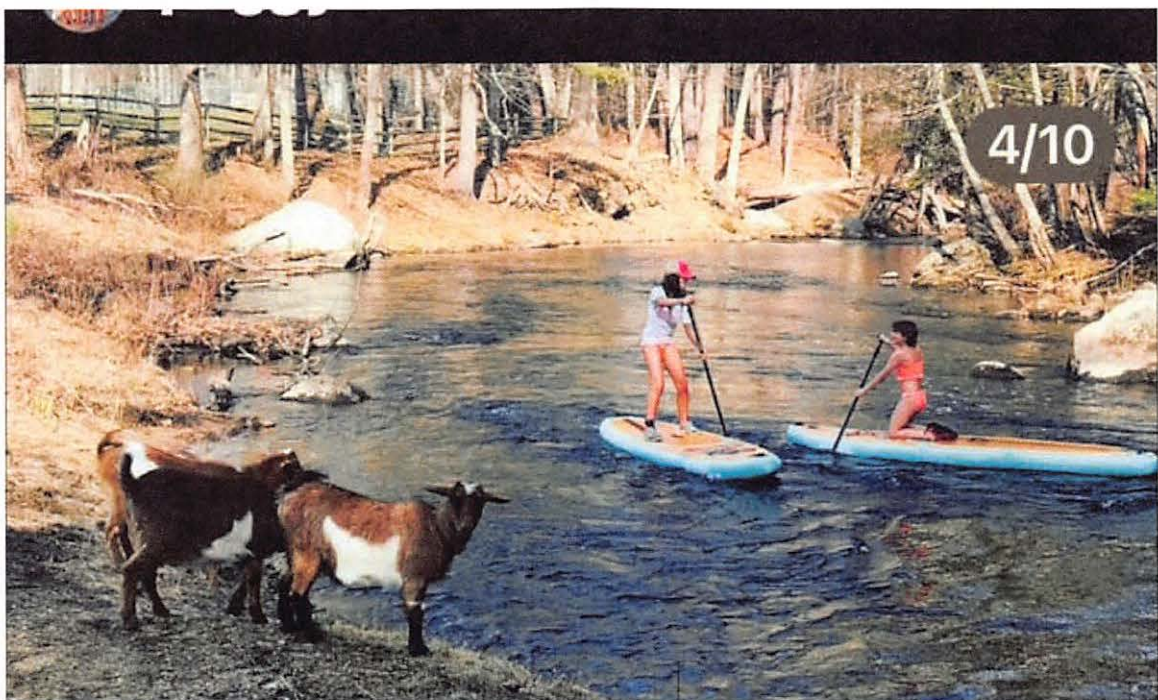
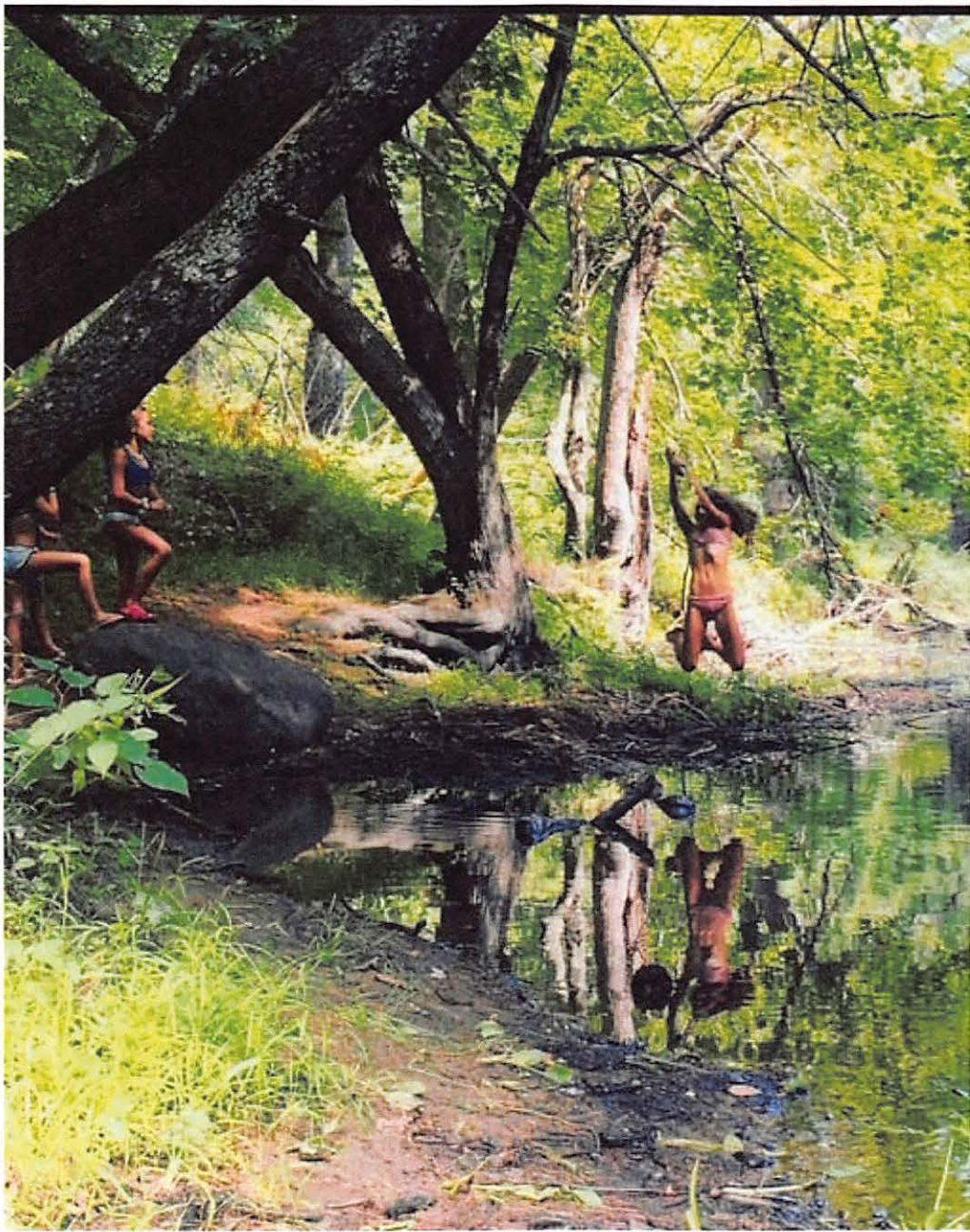
Push the vote to a special meeting after grant deadlines (e.g., NOAA's next cycle) or tie Article 4 to funding confirmation. Don't force a choice now when we can still save the dam without breaking the bank and our taxes, either way. Let's explore all avenues first, this river is an absolute gift to the community and used during all seasons!

Sincerely,
Peggy and Michael Massicotte



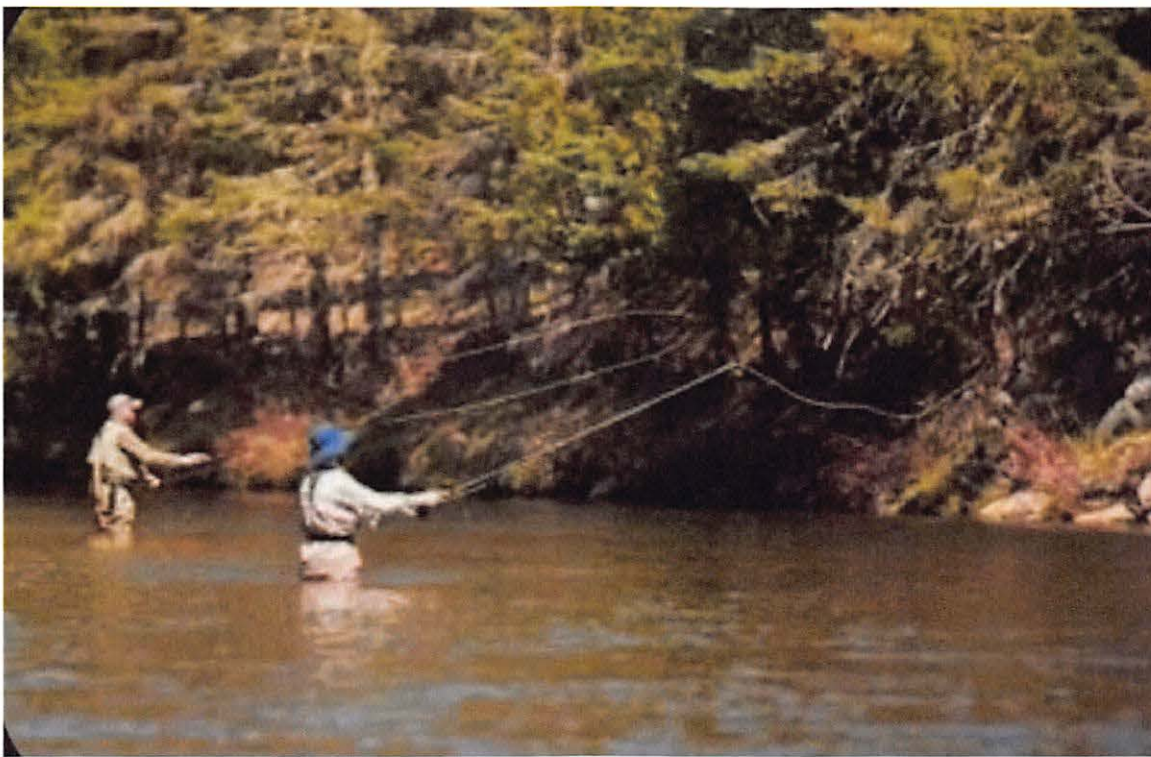








1 Video
share.icloud.com



Thank you for your time and consideration with this most important issue affecting our local Pickpocket Road community.

Best Regards,

Michael E. Massicotte
Founder-Consultant
MASCOT Surgical, LLC
mmassicotte@mascotsurgical.com
Mobile #603-703-5017

--
Russ Dean
Exeter Town Manager
10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833
(603) 773-6102
rdean@exeternh.gov





Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Fwd: Legislative Update – NH Energy Forward Act

1 message

Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>

Wed, Mar 12, 2025 at 8:14 AM

To: Niko Papakonstantis <npapakonstantis@exeternh.gov>, Molly Cowan <mcowan@exeternh.gov>, "Julie Gilman (Town)" <jgilman@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>, "Dan Chartrand (Town)" <dchartrand@exeternh.gov>, Melissa Roy <mroy@exeternh.gov>, Corey Stevens <cstevens@exeternh.gov>, Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Good morning, some disappointing news on energy from the legislative session. The Energy Committee will continue to be active as all of us will be on energy issues.

Russ

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Deana Dennis, Dir. Regulatory and Legislative Affairs** <Deana.Dennis@communitypowernh.gov>

Date: Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 5:32 PM

Subject: Legislative Update – NH Energy Forward Act

To: <rdean@exeternh.gov>



**COMMUNITY
POWER COALITION
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**
For communities, by communities.

Legislative Update – NH Energy Forward Act

Dear CPCNH Members,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to provide you with an important update regarding legislative action on the *NH Energy Forward Act*, including [HB 760](#), [HB 755](#), [HB 759](#), and [HB 761](#). Unfortunately, during the House Science, Technology & Energy (ST&E) Committee's [executive session](#) held yesterday, these bills were all recommended "Inexpedient to Legislate" (ITL) on a party line vote, 10-8.

Regarding HB 760, some legislators voiced a strong preference for allowing the regulatory process to play out at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) before intervening to change the law. Notably, two Republican members of ST&E voiced support for HB 760 and its concept of preventing utility supply cost subsidization by customers served by third-party providers such as Community Power. Ultimately, however, it was not enough to overcome the opposing forces.

While this is certainly not the outcome we have worked toward, we are truly grateful to each of you for the tireless work, action, and outreach you have undertaken to engage legislators in these priorities. **Hundreds of you submitted testimony, wrote letters, made phone calls, wrote letters to the editor, educated your Select Boards / City Councils and members of your community to engage on Community Power's legislative priorities, including HB 760.**

Your efforts in advocating for NH's energy future have had an impact on the legislative discourse this year, and we sincerely appreciate your commitment to making a difference for our communities and customers. Our collective action has raised important awareness about the need for changes to our state's energy policy to unlock cost-saving opportunities through enhanced customer choice and market competition, and we are grateful for your partnership.

Next Steps

As we navigate these legislative challenges and opportunities, we are not deterred. The CPCNH team, with input by the Regulatory & Legislative Affairs Committee, is exploring other avenues to advance our priorities, and we will keep you informed along the way.

We will continue to double down on our regulatory work at the PUC to preserve and expand fair market competition. Together, we can continue to build momentum for securing a fair energy future – one that is market-based, sustainable, and works for all New Hampshire communities and residents.

We invite you to join us for our next Legislative Updates check-in call on March 21st at 3:00 pm.

 [Join the NH Energy Policy Check-in](#)

Thank you again for your dedication, your advocacy, and your unwavering support. We look forward to working together with you to ***move NH's energy forward.***

With deep gratitude and determination,

Deana Dennis

CPCNH Director of Regulatory & Legislative Affairs

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Russ Dean
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10 Front Street
Exeter, NH 03833
(603) 773-6102
rdean@exeternh.gov





Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>

Housing Advisory Committee mtg Friday @ 8:30

Taylor Cray <Taylor@seacoastwhc.org>

Fri, Mar 14, 2025 at 3:05 PM

To: "lssonnett@gmail.com" <lssonnett@gmail.com>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger411@gmail.com>, Megan Spencer <maspence4516@gmail.com>, David Sharples <dsharples@exeternh.gov>, Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>, Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>, Tim Roache <troache@therpc.org>, Darren Winham <dwinham@exeternh.gov>, Doug Eastman <deastman@exeternh.gov>, Pete Cameron <dpgc@islc.net>, Sarah Wrightsman <swrightsmannhhfa.org>, Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Hi all,

This is status of these bills as I could find them today. Not everything is super clear yet, so I'll follow up once we have more information. I'm hoping the Housing Matters newsletter will come out this afternoon. If it does, I'll forward it along.

Thanks!

House Bills:

HB 342: This bill allows property owners to construct buildings on their property without a variance regarding minimum lot size or lot coverage, provided that the resulting property density aligns with that of the surrounding neighborhood.

- The House Housing Committee voted unanimously to support this bill as amended - the bill is on the consent calendar for the March 13th House session.
 - The amendment to this bill would permit a property owner to determine property density alignment using the lot size or lot coverage of the **majority of existing properties** within a 1000-ft radius of their property.

Update as of March 14th: This bill passed the House as amended and now heads to the Senate.

HB 382: Amends existing laws to state that municipalities shall not adopt or enforce any ordinance or regulation requiring a minimum number of off-street parking spaces for any land use or development. Clarifies that planning boards cannot impose parking minimums as a condition for site plan reviews for non-residential or multi-family residential developments.

- The House Housing Committee voted unanimously to support this bill as amended - the bill is on the consent calendar for the March 13th House session.
 - The amendment to this bill would prohibit municipalities from requiring **more than one parking spot** per unit.

Update as of March 14th: Passed the House as amended and now heads to the Senate.

HB 459: For areas not serviced by municipal or community sewer systems, municipalities cannot require larger lot sizes than those required by DEP for individual sewage disposal systems, unless they can provide empirical evidence demonstrating that community health or safety would be significantly compromised. This bill will not impact development potential of lots created before July 1, 2025, and it does not override existing municipal zoning regulations unrelated to minimum lot sizes

- This bill is currently retained in the House Housing Committee.

Update as of March 14th: Still retained in House Housing Committee.

HB 572: This bill establishes the "partners in housing" program under the existing Housing Champion fund. The goal of this fund would be to assist municipalities and developed in building workforce housing (specifically single-family starter homes, duplexes, small apartment buildings, and other missing middle housing) on municipal and county-owned land suitable for residential development.

- The House Housing Committee voted unanimously to support this proposal as amended - the bill is on the consent calendar for the March 13th House session.
 - The amendment to this bill reduced the original fiscal request of \$1m to a smaller appropriation of \$150k for the program.

Update as of March 14th: Referred to House Finance Committee for consideration.

HB 577: Expands the definition and regulations surrounding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by allowing detached units and increasing their maximum allowable size. Mandates that municipalities adopt zoning ordinances to permit one ADU, either attached or detached, as a matter of right in all zoning districts that allow single-family homes, without imposing additional requirements for lot size or other controls beyond those applicable to single-family dwellings.

- This bill passed unanimously on the March 6th House Consent Calendar and is heading to the Senate.

Update as of March 14th: Referred to Senate Commerce Committee for consideration.

HB 631: Allows multifamily or mixed-use developments as a permitted use by right in commercially-zoned areas in certain urban municipalities. It defines key terms such as "adaptive re-use," "mixed-use development," and "multifamily development," and specifies that these developments can occur on parcels serviced by municipal water and sewer systems and zoned for commercial, office, retail, or parking uses.

- This bill is currently still in the House Housing Committee.

Update as of March 14th: On House consent calendar for vote on March 20th.

HB 685: This bill amends the definition of manufactured housing and mandates its acceptance in all residentially zoned areas across municipalities in the state. The new definition specifies manufactured housing as structures that are transportable, meet certain size requirements, and are designed for use as dwellings. The bill explicitly excludes campers, recreational vehicles, pre-site built housing, and modular buildings from this definition.

- This bill is on the consent calendar for the March 13th Senate session. *I originally had this listed as House consent calendar - this bill is in the Senate at this time.*

Update as of March 14th: Referred to Senate Commerce Committee.

Senate Bills:

SB 78: Amends the existing law regarding the appeal process to the zoning board of adjustment by establishing a non-discretionary 30-day period for filing appeals. Aim of the bill is to create a more consistent and predictable timeline for individuals and entities wishing to appeal decisions made by the administrative officer.

- This bill passed on the Senate consent calendar and now heads to the House.

Update as of March 14th: Passed in Senate, not yet heard by the House.

SB 84: This bill sets baseline minimum lot sizes for the majority of land zoned for single-family homes. Specifically, establishes that for lots not serviced by municipal or community sewer, the maximum lot size cannot exceed 66,000 square feet (note, a football field in the US is 57,600ft or 1.3 acres). For lots with municipal or community water, the limit is set at 44,000 square feet, provided there is adequate water system capacity. In cases where lots are serviced by municipal or community sewer, the maximum lot size is reduced to 22,000 square feet, again contingent on the sewage system's capacity.

- This bill is on the calendar for the March 13th Senate session.

Update as of March 14th: This bill was special ordered to be moved to the March 20th Senate session.

SB 188: Seeks to streamline development processes in New Hampshire by allowing property owners to engage independent third-party providers, such as licensed engineers and architects, for building code inspections and plan reviews instead of relying solely on local enforcement agencies.

- This bill passed the Senate by voice vote and now heads to the House.

Update as of March 14th: Passed by the Senate, not yet heard by the House.

SB 279: This bill would appropriate \$5 million to the Department of Business and Economic Affairs to continue the Housing Champions Program, which was established in the FY 24-25 State Budget. This incentive-based program rewards communities that take pro-housing steps with access to additional grant funds.

- This bill received a unanimous vote out of the Senate Commerce Committee and is on the consent calendar for the March 13th Senate session.

Update as of March 14th: Passed the Senate, now headed to the house.

Take care,

Taylor Cray
(she/they)
Housing Navigator
Workforce Housing Coalition of Greater Seacoast
(207) 931-8425

From: Lindsay Sonnett <lssonnett@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 2:35 PM

To: Nancy Belanger <nbelanger411@gmail.com>; Megan Spencer <maspence4516@gmail.com>; David Sharples <dsharples@exeternh.gov>; Nancy Belanger <nbelanger@exeternh.gov>; Russ Dean <rdean@exeternh.gov>; Tim Roache <troache@therpc.org>; Darren Winham <dwinham@exeternh.gov>; Doug Eastman <deastman@exeternh.gov>; Pete Cameron <dpgc@islc.net>; Taylor Cray <Taylor@seacoastwhc.org>; Sarah Wrightsman <swrightsmann@nhhfa.org>; Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Subject: Re: Housing Advisory Committee mtg Friday @ 8:30

[Quoted text hidden]



Pam McElroy <pmcelroy@exeternh.gov>

Bulletin #8: A Chance to Speak Up on Zoning, Planning Bills

1 message

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

Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 2:47 PM

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 8

2025 Session

February 28, 2025



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

A Chance to Speak Up on Zoning, Planning Bills

On **Tuesday, March 4**, beginning at **10:00 a.m.** in **State House (SH) Room 100**, the **Senate Commerce Committee** will hold public hearings on a number of planning and zoning mandates which would take away local control and voter authority.

Municipal officials are encouraged to testify or [sign in](#) against these attempts to usurp local decision making or, if that isn't possible, [contact](#) Senate Commerce Committee members directly to register opposition.

Bills opposed by NHMA:

- **SB 90** (10:00 a.m.) requires municipalities to allow high-density residential development on land zoned for commercial use, provided that adequate infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewage systems, is available or provided to support the development. NHMA opposes this bill because it is a zoning mandate that takes a one-size-fits-all approach that does not work for all communities, as well as the potential impact high-density developments could have on municipal revenue and expenses.
- **SB 174** (10:15 a.m.) prohibits planning boards from considering the number of bedrooms a given unit or development has during the hearing and approval process. Municipalities often regulate

the number of bedrooms per dwelling unit in dense zoning districts to ensure the infrastructure capacity exists to support the developments and housing in those zoning districts. These requirements also limit the number of parking spaces required for the development, which might be necessary if there is limited land for parking.

- **SB 175** (10:30 a.m.) allows municipalities to adopt ordinances that allow the enforcement of private covenants enacted by past landowners or homeowners' associations. Workforce housing is exempt. Although this is a local option, we are concerned this bill could put municipalities in the uncomfortable position of interpreting and enforcing private covenants if they adopt ordinances to do such. The primary reason for NHMA's opposition is that the bill would restrict municipalities from requiring or encouraging the establishment of covenants as a condition of any zoning or land use approval. Municipalities do have an interest in ensuring that new private developments have enforceable private covenants to protect landowners and prevent conflicts.
- **SB 281** (10:45 a.m.) prohibits municipalities from denying building or occupancy permits for property adjacent to class VI roads under certain circumstances. Municipalities may restrict building on class VI to prevent overdevelopment of undeveloped infrastructure and, in this case, unmaintained roads and to control scattered and premature development. While the bill requires that landowners "sign a liability waiver acknowledging that the municipality shall not maintain the highway nor provide any services to any lot accessible by the highway," it does not consider whether the class IV roads and abutting properties can sustain new development. Additionally, it increases the chance that property owners who live on the class IV road request the road become regularly maintained, which increases costs.
- **SB 163** (11:30 a.m.) prohibiting local moratoria and limitations on building permits. In rare circumstances, municipalities need to delay or restrict the issuance of permits. Municipalities do this when they have infrastructure failures, typically water and sewer systems, and can no longer sustain increased development. These municipalities must do several things to abide by RSA 674:23, which permits these ordinances and requires providing information, in writing to the state. This is a comprehensive and last resort option for municipalities struggling with failing or already failed infrastructure that cannot support new development.

Other bills NHMA is following:

- **SB 283** (11:00 a.m.) relative to the calculation of floor-area-ratios under local building ordinances.
- **HB 399** (11:45 a.m.) establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act.

For detailed instructions on ways to share your position on these and any other bills, see "How to Make Your Voice Heard" below.?

Risk Pool Regulation Bill Introduced

On **Tuesday, March 4**, at **1:00 p.m.** in **SH Room 103** the **Senate Finance Committee** and **Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee** will hold a joint public hearing on **SB 297**, which relates to the operations and oversight of risk management pools. **SB 297** was introduced after the deadline to file legislation as a "late bill."

Pools are created by cities, towns, counties, and school districts to reduce risks and associated costs, shifting risk from an individual political subdivision to the pool. NHMA supports the ability of members to establish and govern the pools and understands that clear regulations that protect the members and allow the pools to operate are necessary. We are monitoring this bill closely due to its potential impact on municipal budgets and operations.

The language of the bill only became public this week, but it contains several provisions that could potentially increase costs for cities, towns, counties, and school districts that are members of the pools:

- The requirement to begin collecting additional contributions (assessments) from participating members if an annual audit or actuarial determination, or secretary of state investigation, shows that the assets of the pooled risk management “appear” insufficient could create unbudgeted municipal expenditures for members outside the annual budget cycle, depending on the timing of the members’ fiscal years. Failure to address funding issues within 30 days of receiving an abatement order from the secretary of state’s office could lead to the pool being put in receivership.
- The requirement that the risk pool reimburse the secretary of state for costs incurred for oversight would be a new administrative cost for the pool that could be passed along to the members.
- New contingency reserve requirements may impact the rates members pay. Staying within the maximum and minimum contingency reserve percentages may increase rates or create volatility for annual contribution rates.

We are recommending that members who participate in a risk pool monitor this legislation or reach out to your senator if he or she sits on the Senate Finance Committee or Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee.

New SAG Funding Removed in Proposed Budget

Remember what we said about the devil being in the details when it comes to the state budget? Well, the [draft trailer bill language](#) released as part of the governor’s budget proposal includes a repeal of \$15 million set aside for each of the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years to fund the state share of wastewater projects under the State Aid Grant (SAG) program pursuant to RSA 486. These funds were appropriated in the state budget adopted in 2023.

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 always been included in the state budget. The governor’s budget does include maintenance funding for existing grants (\$8.9 million in FY 26 and \$8.6 million in FY 27), but no funding for new grants.

This creates uncertainty for municipalities that have recently begun their projects or are trying to plan out the costs of new, big projects that would be eligible for grants.

Since infrastructure capacity is related to increasing housing units, SAG grants have a tangible impact on everyone who calls New Hampshire home. Testifying on an unrelated bill about extending public water infrastructure in the southern tier earlier this month, one legislator said it better than we could: “Simply saying ‘let’s build more and change zoning’ will not solve the housing crisis without the necessary municipal services of water, sewer, and electricity.”

The good news is that the Senate has already passed, then tabled, [SB 240](#), an NHMA-supported bill, that appropriates \$15 million each for SAG grants in 2026 and 2027. It is normal for the Senate to pass and table this type of appropriations bill for potential inclusion in the budget, as the Senate gets its stab at the budget later in the session when revenue projections will be more concrete. While we hoped [SB 240](#) would further supplement the program, it would at least provide some new funding. A similar House bill, [HB 97](#), was retained in committee earlier this month.

Please contact [House](#) and [Senate](#) finance committee members to support including SAG funding in the state budget.

Senate to Vote on “Building Permits by Default” Bill

The Senate is expected to vote on [SB 188](#) when it meets next **Thursday, March 6**.

SB 188, which NHMA opposes, would allow property owners or developers to use licensed, insured private providers for building code plan reviews and inspections related to the state building code and any local technical amendments, excluding fire prevention and fire safety codes. If an owner or contractor retains an independent provider, 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 time limit. (In comparison, the expedited state permitting process proposed by the governor has a 60-day window!)

NHMA believes **SB 188** creates a troubling “building permits by default” model and would have multiple impacts on municipal revenue and expenses.

Supporters of this bill have alluded to unnamed towns that are said to drag their feet on the review process or have “bad apple” building inspectors who “had it out” for some builders. Without any specific examples of behaviors that go beyond reasonable differences of opinion over the interpretation of codes and ordinances, it’s hard to counteract that narrative; however, it does beg the question: Does it make sense to create an entirely new framework for building code plan reviews and inspections in New Hampshire in response to anecdotes? Or is **SB 188** an overreaction that will need to be modified through future legislation?

Members are **strongly** encouraged to reach out to [individual senators](#) and explain how this bill would impact on your ability to manage planning and zoning compliance and inspections.

Also on the Senate calendar are 13 bills NHMA has taken a position on, including two additional priority bills.

Priority Bills:

SB 84 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. Recommendation: OTP-with amendment. NHMA opposes the bill.

SB 130, as amended, this bill establishes a commission to study delivery models for emergency medical services in New Hampshire. Recommendation: OTP-with amendment. NHMA supported the original bill, which dealt with ambulance reimbursement rates.

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

SB 71 (oppose), relative to cooperation with federal immigration authorities. Recommendation: OTP-A.

SB 78 (oppose), setting the zoning board of adjustments appeal period at 30 days. Recommendation: Ought to pass (OTP).

SB 81 (support), increasing the annual real estate transfer tax revenue contribution and making an appropriation to the affordable housing fund. Recommendation: OTP.

SB 115 (support), making an appropriation to the Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project. Recommendation: OTP-A.

SB 155 (support), allowing for the use of highway toll credits by municipalities as a match for federal highway funds for certain projects. Recommendation: Re-refer to committee.

SB 217 (oppose), relative to public notice of historic tax rates and tax impacts of proposed projects. Recommendation: OTP-A.

SB 220 (oppose), relative to public hearings and deliberation for the denial of tax exemptions. Recommendation: Re-refer to committee.

SB 225 (oppose), requiring public notice before reassessment of property values for local tax purposes. Recommendation: OTP-with amendment.

SB 242 (oppose), relative to the cost-of-living adjustments for certain police and fire retirees in the NH retirement system. Recommendation: OTP.

SB 261 (oppose), requiring that custodial interrogations be recorded and establishing a fund to make grants to law enforcement agencies to purchase equipment. Recommendation: Re-refer to committee.

SB 289 (oppose), relative to use and preservation of body-worn camera recordings in certain matters. Recommendation: Re-refer to committee.

Meanwhile, in the House ...

The House also meets Thursday and 14 bills NHMA has a position on are on the agenda, including two priority bills.

Priority Bills:

HB 425, allow religious organizations to keep their tax exemption even if they rented the property. NHMA opposes this bill as it will increase property taxes for all other taxpayers, which would be a material reallocation in communities where religious organizations own land that they don't use and is currently taxed. Recommendation: OTP.

HB 577, allows 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. The amendment clarifies tools municipalities can use to regulate ADUs by being able to determine aesthetic requirements and mandate one of the structures remains owner-occupied; however, the bill would repeal several other provisions that provide for local regulation in the current ADU statutes. Recommendation: OTP-with amendment.

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

HB 114 (oppose), removing fees and charges for governmental records under the right-to-know law and reinstating potential liability for disclosure of information exempt from disclosure. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 143 (oppose), relative to the issuance of no trespass orders on municipal or school district property. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 230 (oppose), relative to the adoption of public health ordinances by municipalities. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 294 (support), removing the ability of 10 voters to postpone the processing of absentee ballots until after the polls close. Recommendation: OTP.

HB 305 (support), relative to speed and red-light cameras for traffic enforcement. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 624 (support), establishing a local river management advisory committee grant program and making an appropriation therefor. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 625 (support), relative to enabling municipalities to levy payments against non-profits at a percentage of their assessed property values. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 649 (oppose), eliminating the requirement of a physical safety inspection and on-board diagnostics testing for all private passenger vehicles. A portion of inspection fees go to municipalities. No recommendation.

HB 683 (oppose), expanding the list of counties where off-highway recreational vehicle (OHRV) operations are allowed on designated roads. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 685 (oppose), mandating manufactured housing by right in residentially zoned areas. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 691 (oppose), prohibiting the addition of fluoridation chemicals to public water systems. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 746 (oppose), relative to an award of attorney's fees upon a successful appeal of a local property tax assessment. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 782 (oppose), expanding property tax exemptions for certain elderly and disabled persons and raising public awareness regarding tax credits and exemptions. Recommendation: ITL.

Local Option Public Safety Assessment Fee

On **Monday, March 3**, the **House Municipal and County Government Committee** will hold an executive session on **HB 544**, an NHMA-supported bill that would give municipalities the option to adopt a fee on no more than \$2 per day to be assessed on hotel occupancies for municipal public safety services, helping offset the cost of services associated with increased tourism and transient traffic.

Currently, no state law authorizes municipalities to assess and collect a local option hotel occupancy fee. **HB 544** would help ease the financial burden placed on property taxpayers from added public safety 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. Please [contact committee members](#) to express your support for this local option.



C-PACER Update Signed Into Law

NHMA was pleased to attend the signing ceremony for **SB 4**, the first bill signed into law this session by the [governor](#). This bill updates, clarifies, and adds more detail to RSA 53-F, a statute created in 2010

that gives municipalities the option to create energy efficiency and clean energy tax assessment districts. The current acronym used to describe these districts is C-PACER, which stands for commercial property assessed clean energy or resiliency.

Owners of commercial properties in C-PACER districts may seek long-term financing from private lenders for clean energy and resiliency improvements. Participating property owners repay the financing through special assessments placed on their properties, which are billed and collected as part of their annual property tax bills.

The statute designates the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority to administer the program statewide with administrative costs borne by the owners of eligible properties participating in the program. In addition, municipalities will be reimbursed by the BFA for any local expenses incurred to administer the special assessments.

NHMA supported this bill and worked with the sponsor on drafting it last year.

We're Past the Quarter Turn

The February school vacation week roughly marks the end of the first quarter of the legislative session, which won't end until June when committee of conference reports are acted on.

The next big date will be crossover day on April 10, the deadline for all House and Senate bills to be acted on. Between now and then, the biggest thing to watch for is the introduction and hearings on the House version of the state budget, HB 1 and HB 2.

Sixteen bills we are following have been killed and 14 have been retained in committee, thus far, but that still means NHMA continues to track well over 300 active bills. Stay tuned!

How to Make your Voice Heard

The adage goes that "life is all about showing up." The same can be said for legislative advocacy. If a bill is of importance to your municipality, it's always best to make your case – for or against – in person. Every Friday, NHMA posts a [Bill Hearings Schedule](#) for the upcoming week. However, if you can't make it to Concord, you can use the Legislature's online portal to put your position on the hearing record.

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Bulletin #9: Anti-Lobbying Effort Just Won't Go Away

1 message

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

Fri, Mar 7, 2025 at 2:41 PM

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

**LEGISLATIVE
BULLETIN****Legislative Bulletin 9****2025 Session****March 7, 2025****Live Bill Tracker
Bill Hearings Schedule**

Alert: Anti-Lobbying Effort Just Won't Go Away

HB 314, the anti-speech bill targeting local governments and organizations like NHMA that was retained in committee just weeks ago, is trying to stage a comeback in [Amendment 25-0721h](#), a non-germane, “replace all” amendment to [HB 456](#). The [House Legislative Administration Committee](#) will consider the amendment at a public hearing **on Wednesday, March 12 at 9:30 am in LOB 203**. **We are urging local officials to attend the hearing, [contact the Legislative Administration Committee](#) and tell them to reject the amendment, or sign in opposition online (select **March 12, House Legislative Administration Committee, HB 456, I am “a member of public,” representing myself; then click both “I oppose this bill” and “Testimony is for non-germane amendment.”**) If your representative sits on the committee, please [reach out to them directly](#).**

The proposed amendment allows the legislature to micromanage the speech and decision-making authority of local officials by limiting organizations like NHMA to providing “information” only to the legislature, while prohibiting such organizations from registering a position, nullifying NHMA’s member-adopted policies and principles. In a not-so-subtle way, this would make NHMA a tool of the *state legislature*, as opposed to *the voice of the cities and towns* that are members. And while the amendment specifically permits “an individual public official” to register a position, this is a red herring. As local officials know, organizations like ours are formed because it is not possible for individual local

officials to follow the pace of the legislative session or attend hearings regularly; in fact, delegating such responsibility to a voluntary organization is by far the more efficient and responsible manner of engaging in the legislative process while ensuring local officials can focus on serving their communities. Therefore, the amendment is a hampering of local efficiency that would lead to one of two outcomes: Less local government perspective and input in the legislative process or more time for local officials spent away from their regular duties to follow and engage in the process. Either result is to the detriment of local governments and their taxpayers especially since the private sector would continue to lobby for their interests as the local governments' voice and perspective diminish. Any argument that that outcome better reflects the needs and interests and taxpayers is patently false. As we testified to at the **HB 314** hearing, most bills NHMA takes positions on do one of two things: Downshift costs onto taxpayers or take away voter authority.

The amendment also explicitly prevents lobbying by the New Hampshire Association of Assessing Officials and the New Hampshire City and Town Clerks' Association and the New Hampshire Tax Collectors' Association, and contains the same prohibitions on organizations receiving local, state, or federal funds that would sweep into its speech ban nonprofits and even for profit entities that receive any of their funding from those public sources.

For detailed instructions on how to share your voice on this and any other bills, see "How to Make Your Voice Heard" below.

A Chance to Weigh in on the State Budget

On **Wednesday, March 12**, at **2 p.m.** in **Representatives Hall**, the **House Finance Committee** will host a public hearing on the proposed state budget contained in **HB 1** and **HB 2**. While House Finance divisions have been meeting on various aspects of the spending plan for a couple of weeks, this is the public's chance to chime in.

Municipalities are encouraged to use this opportunity to testify or submit written testimony opposing any cuts to municipal aid and explaining how **downshifting** hurts taxpayers, as well as any other specific concerns your community has.

Crunch Time for Ambulance Reimbursement Bills

On **Wednesday, March 12**, at **1:15 p.m.** in **LOB Room 302-304**, the **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** will hold executive sessions on two competing bills regarding ground ambulance services that eliminate balance billing— *i.e.* billing a patient for the difference between the full cost of the service and the amount their insurance plan pays—and set reimbursement rates for private insurers. Municipal ambulance services are essential services and not profit-driven; thus, appropriate reimbursement rates are crucial for their sustainability.

Now is the time to **reach out to committee members** regarding these bills.

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 725 also would eliminate balance billing but set the reimbursement at 325% above the current Medicare reimbursement rate. NHMA supports **HB 725** because it strikes a fair balance between competing interests.

Ahead of the work session, the New Hampshire Insurance Department will host an information session on **Monday, March 10**, from **1:00 to 3:00 p.m.**, at the **Department of Safety Main Auditorium** in Concord. The session, which is in-person only, will review findings from the **New Hampshire Ground Ambulance Cost Study** conducted last year by Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) in collaboration with New Hampshire Health Plan. The study was mandated under **SB 407** in 2024. If any of the invited

parties are unable to attend in person, questions may be submitted in advance. If you plan to attend or have questions, email Jennifer Smith at the New Hampshire Insurance Department at Jennifer.l.smith@ins.nh.gov.

NHMA will be attending the informational session and suggests all interested parties attend or at least submit questions. The report is problematic and doesn't seem to contain the full picture of the costs associated with providing ground ambulance services. It would be useful for stakeholders to raise questions that help highlight that fact that **HB 316** relied heavily on this report to come up with its 200% rate, which would severely impact the financial viability of all ambulance services and would require property taxpayers to further subsidize municipal ambulance services.

Meanwhile, the Senate is scheduled to vote on two related bills on **Thursday, March 13**.

SB 245, which NHMA supports, eliminates balance billing with the reimbursement rate set at 325% of the current urban, rural, or super-rural Medicare rates, depending on the geographic area where the ambulance service originated. An amendment has been adopted that clarifies balanced billing prohibitions, removes co-pay caps and waivers, and points to statute regarding prompt pay requirements.

SB 130, as amended, simply establishes a commission to study delivery models for emergency medical services. NHMA is neutral on the bill.

This issue is coming to a head next week, so please:

- Attend Monday's presentation on the 2024 cost study or submit questions in advance.
- Contact members of the **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** to oppose **HB 316** and support **HB 725**.
- **Contact senators** to support **SB 245**.

Senate to Vote on Statewide Zoning Mandate and More

The Senate is expected to vote **Thursday, March 13** 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 because it would essentially eliminate all agricultural zoning districts and increase property taxes.

What would **SB 84** do to Granite Staters in agricultural zones?

- Mandate lot sizes inadequate to support farming, limiting future agriculture in New Hampshire.
- Incentivize subdividing prime agricultural land that would be forever lost to dense housing development.
- Promote dense development next to farms, creating potential hindrances on farmers who have worked their land peacefully for years.

What **SB 84** would do to most Granite Staters:

- **INCREASE THEIR PROPERTY TAXES** because their property tax assessment would increase if their land could suddenly be subdivided into multiple lots.
- Overburden their municipality's local infrastructure, increasing costs and property taxes for residents.
- Override voter's decisions on zoning ordinances made at Town Meeting.

Contact senators now to oppose **SB 84**.

The Senate is also scheduled to vote Thursday on another NHMA priority bill, **SB 291**, which expands religious tax exemptions. NHMA opposes this bill because, even as amended, it would reduce assessed property value, shifting the tax burden to other property taxpayers, and would represent a major expansion of the religious property tax exemption by exempting rental housing that the religious institution profit.

Contact senators now to oppose **SB 291**.

The Senate will also act Thursday on seven additional bills NHMA has a position on.

Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

SB 44 (oppose), relative to hand counts of ballots in elections. Recommendation: OTP-A.

SB 103 (oppose), relative to the number of polling stations that are available for certain towns. Recommendation: OTP-A.

SB 218 (support), relative to absentee ballot outer envelopes. Recommendation: OTP.

SB 231 (oppose), relative to road frontage requirements and setbacks for wetlands. Recommendation: Re-refer to committee.

SB 245 (support), prohibiting surprise ambulance billing and regulating ground ambulance reimbursement. Recommendation: OTP-A. (See above for more information on this bill).

SB 259 (support), creating an exception to physical attendance and quorum requirements under the right-to-know law for individuals with disabilities. Recommendation: ITL.

SB 279 (support), establishing the housing champion business loan program and making appropriations to the department of business and economic affairs and the business finance authority. Recommendation: OTP.

HB 123: A Common-Sense Solution

On **Thursday, March 13**, the House will vote on **HB 123**, which would enable municipalities to tax standing wood and timber on land used for carbon sequestration. This bill, as amended ([amendment 25-0654h](#)), modifies the existing yield tax on cut timber in RSA 79, often called the “timber tax,” to include taxing the yield of the metric tonnage of carbon sequestered from standing timber. **HB 123** is not a new tax or a “carbon tax,” as opponents will surely argue.

Carbon sequestration is a type of yield from timber that RSA 79 does not account for because the concept of profiting from forests absorbing and sequestering atmospheric carbon did not exist when the state statute was originally written in 1949. The market for sequestered carbon is growing and the revenues municipalities receive from the timber tax are already being negatively impacted, with the burden shifting to local property taxpayers.

The state has a history of using timber tax revenues to offset the loss of local revenues when private or public conservation efforts impact municipal revenue. The yield tax of 10% on timber has existed for 75 years and is constitutionally permitted by an amendment to Part II, Article V of the state constitution, which was ratified in 1942. RSA 79 was created as an alternative to taxing standing timber under a general property tax. All **HB 123** ensures is that timber yields—whether cut or sequestered—are treated the same.

HB 123 supports the North Country and other heavily timbered areas where less timber is being cut and, instead, being put into carbon sequestration agreements. The bill will promote local property tax relief.

Please [tell your state representatives](#) to support **HB 123** as amended.

HB 123 came out of the [House Municipal and County Government Committee](#) with an 18-0 recommendation of ought to pass as amended (OTP-A) and is currently on the House consent calendar. However, an attempt may be made to bring the bill to a floor vote, so we are also asking members to contact the [House Speaker](#), [Deputy Speaker](#), [Majority Leader](#), and [Minority Leader](#) and ask them to leave **HB 123** on the consent calendar.

Also in the House This Week

The House will vote on another problematic zoning mandate on Thursday. **HB 382**, as amended, would restrict the ability of municipalities to require more than one parking space per residential unit in a development removing. 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. The bill has a recommendation of ought to pass as amended (OTP-A).

Please [contact your state representatives](#) to oppose **HB 382** as amended.

The House will also act Thursday on 14 additional bills NHMA has a position on.

Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

HB 149 (oppose), relative to warrant article approvals at ballot referenda form of town meeting. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 185 (support), relative to reimbursement rates for ambulance service providers. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 247 (support), authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum on whether to allow historic horse racing. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 342 (oppose), relative to the approval process for new construction. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 451 (support), establishing the paint product stewardship program. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 490 (support), relative to indemnification for municipalities adopting policies to address homelessness. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 512 (oppose), relative to preventing municipal employees from being paid under multiple municipal contracts simultaneously. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 521, authorizing online voter registration. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 536 (oppose), relative to a cost of living adjustment in the state retirement system. Recommendation: OTP.

HB 562 (oppose), relative to the filling of vacant positions on elected municipal boards and school boards. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 569 (oppose), relative to the establishment of county-wide communication districts. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 572 (support), establishing the “partners in housing” program, a low-interest loan and grant program under the housing champions fund to assist municipalities, counties, and developers in building workforce housing. Recommendation: OTP-A.

HB 668 (support), authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind the licenses of historic horse racing facilities. Recommendation: ITL.

HB 688 (support), authorizing municipalities to tax charitable gaming facilities based on their enterprise value. Recommendation: ITL.

Monday Features Myriad Municipal Bills

On **Monday, March 10**, beginning at **9:30 a.m.** in **LOB room 301-303**, the **House Municipal and County Government Committee** will hold executive sessions on more than a dozen bills NHMA is following:

HB 124 (support), enabling a city or town forest committee to offer surplus money to the town for deposit in the city or town general fund.

HB 138 (oppose), relative to tax impact notation on warrant articles with multi-year tax impacts.

HB 168 (support), relative to including municipal public works facilities as eligible capital facilities for the assessment of impact fees.

HB 200 (oppose), relative to the procedure for overriding a local tax cap.

HB 228 (oppose), relative to petitioned articles at annual or special town meetings.

HB 229 (neutral), repealing the alternative procedure for adoption of zoning ordinances.

HB 284 (oppose), requiring tax impact statements on municipal warrant articles.

HB 372 (oppose), relative to lease agreements of equipment for building or facility improvements.

HB 373 (oppose), relative to the management and regulation of town real property.

HB 374 (neutral), relative to clarifying references under local tax cap and budget laws.

HB 413 (oppose), relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits.

HB 432 (oppose), relative to recovery houses.

HB 475 (oppose), relative to the reductions from the default budget for official ballot town meetings.

HB 495 (oppose), requiring cities and towns to provide a breakdown of tax changes and information on bills sent to residents.

HB 613 (oppose), relative to enabling local political subdivisions to vote and set a reduced default budget option.

Members are encouraged to [contact committee members](#) and express their positions on any or all of these bills before Monday's session.

Senate Votes This Week

The Senate met Thursday and acted on 12 bills NHMA has taken a position on, including **SB 188**, a priority bill opposed by NHMA. As amended ([am 25-0563s](#)), the bill allows property owners or developers to use licensed, insured private providers for building code plan reviews and inspections related to the state building code and any local technical amendments, excluding fire prevention and fire safety codes, and 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 time limit.

NHMA believes **SB 188** creates a troubling “building permits by default” model and would have multiple impacts on municipal revenue and expenses. The bill will cross over to the House, where we will continue to oppose it with your help.

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

SB 71 (oppose), relative to cooperation with federal immigration authorities. **Passed**; the bill moves to the House.

SB 78 (oppose), setting the zoning board of adjustments appeal period at 30 days. **Passed**; the bill moves to the House.

SB 81 (support), increasing the annual real estate transfer tax revenue contribution and making an appropriation to the affordable housing fund. **Passed**; referred to Senate Finance Committee.

SB 115 (support), making an appropriation to the Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project. **Passed and tabled.**

SB 155 (support), allowing for the use of highway toll credits by municipalities as a match for federal highway funds for certain projects. **Re-referred to committee**; no further action expected this session.

SB 217 (oppose), relative to public notice of historic tax rates and tax impacts of proposed projects. **Passed**; the bill moves to the House.

SB 220 (oppose), relative to public hearings and deliberation for the denial of tax exemptions. **Re-referred to committee**; no further action expected this session.

SB 225 (oppose), requiring public notice before reassessment of property values for local tax purposes. **Passed** with [amendment 25-0602h](#); referred to Senate Finance Committee.

SB 242 (oppose), relative to the cost-of-living adjustments for certain police and fire retirees in the NH retirement system. **Passed and tabled.**

SB 261 (oppose), requiring that custodial interrogations be recorded and establishing a fund to make grants to law enforcement agencies to purchase equipment. **Re-referred to committee**; no further action expected this session.

SB 289 (oppose), relative to use and preservation of body-worn camera recordings in certain matters. **Re-referred to committee**; no further action expected this session.

Meanwhile, in the House ...?

The House also met Thursday and 14 bills NHMA has a position on were acted on, including two priority bills.?

Priority Bills:

HB 425, allowing religious organizations to keep their tax exemption even if they rented the property, was **tabled**. NHMA opposes this bill as it will increase property taxes for all other taxpayers, which would be a material reallocation in communities where religious organizations own land that they don't use and is currently taxed.

HB 577, allowing 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. The amendment clarifies tools municipalities can use to regulate ADUs by being able to determine aesthetic requirements and mandate

one of the structures remains owner-occupied; however, the bill would repeal several other provisions that provide for local regulation in the current ADU statutes. **Passed** with [amendment 25-0449h](#); the bill moves to the Senate.

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

HB 114 (oppose), removing fees and charges for governmental records under the right-to-know law and reinstating potential liability for disclosure of information exempt from disclosure. **Inexpedient to legislate (ITL)**.

HB 143 (oppose), relative to the issuance of no trespass orders on municipal or school district property. **Passed** with [amendment 25-0408h](#); the bill moves to the Senate.

HB 230 (oppose), relative to the adoption of public health ordinances by municipalities. **Passed**; the bill moves to the Senate.

HB 294 (support), removing the ability of 10 voters to postpone the processing of absentee ballots until after the polls close. **Passed**; the bill moves to the Senate.

HB 305 (support), relative to speed and red-light cameras for traffic enforcement. Recommendation: **ITL**.

HB 624 (support), establishing a local river management advisory committee grant program and making an appropriation therefor. **Passed with amendment** (25-0368h); referred to House Finance Committee.

HB 625 (support), relative to enabling municipalities to levy payments against non-profits at a percentage of their assessed property values. **ITL**.

HB 649 (oppose), eliminating the requirement of a physical safety inspection and on-board diagnostics testing for all private passenger vehicles. A portion of inspection fees go to municipalities. **Passed**; referred to House Ways and Means Committee.

HB 683 (oppose), expanding the list of counties where off-highway recreational vehicle (OHRV) operations are allowed on designated roads. **ITL**.

HB 685 (oppose), mandating manufactured housing by right in residentially zoned areas. **Passed with amendment 25-0392h**; the bill moves to the Senate.

HB 691 (oppose), prohibiting the addition of fluoridation chemicals to public water systems. **ITL**.

HB 746 (oppose), relative to an award of attorney's fees upon a successful appeal of a local property tax assessment. Recommendation: **ITL**.

HB 782 (oppose), expanding property tax exemptions for certain elderly and disabled persons and raising public awareness regarding tax credits and exemptions. **ITL**.

Protecting the Competitive Energy Market

On **Monday, March 10**, in **LOB Room 302-304**, the **House Science, Technology and Energy Committee** will hold a work session at 9:00 a.m. and executive session at 1:00 p.m. on **HB 759** and **HB 760**. The aim of these bills is to protect and enhance the current framework that allows for a competitive energy market.

HB 759 introduces true competition for net-metered distributed energy, ensuring cost reductions without shifting expenses to the broader utility customer base. **HB 759** also will allow municipalities and commercial entities to develop local power generation and use the output to offset wholesale load obligations for their suppliers or Community Power Aggregations.

HB 760 will protect the continued viability of NH’s competitive retail energy market, by ensuring that customers of community power and competitive suppliers are not forced to subsidize utility supply rates. **HB 760** will prevent utilities from setting artificially low utility supply rates, which will stop the growth of the state’s competitive market.

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Bulletin #10: Zoning Mandates Take Center Stage

1 message

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

Fri, Mar 14, 2025 at 1:37 PM

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 10

2025 Session

March 14, 2025



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

Editor's note: Many local officials completed their terms of office this week, and some will next week. Whatever the timing, we thank all of you for the time and energy you have devoted to public service, including your work on behalf of NHMA. For those who have never served in local government, it is difficult to appreciate how much work and time are involved, and how thankless the task can be. We hope you will enjoy your time off. Meanwhile, we enthusiastically welcome all of the new officials. We look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Keeping Score of Zoning Mandates

There are so many zoning mandates under consideration this year that you need a scorecard to keep track of them. These proposals, broadly framed as a response to the state's housing shortage and the ever-rising costs to own or rent, could significantly shift control away from local voters and municipal authorities.

Focusing primarily on zoning and planning downplays the fact that the lack of affordable housing stems from a combination of complex economic factors, the majority of which cannot be addressed through statewide mandates, including low inventory, sky-high home prices and monthly rents, higher interest rates, rising construction costs, and rising labor and materials costs.

NHMA's overarching concerns with these zoning mandates include:

- **Loss of Local Control:** Municipalities may lose the ability to manage zoning and planning effectively, impacting the character and development of their communities. This includes loss of voter rights, as voters approve or reject zoning in most New Hampshire municipalities.
- **Increased Administrative Burdens:** New mandates, particularly those allowing more ADUs and high-density developments by right, could increase administrative workloads and costs.
- **Parking and Infrastructure Strain:** Removing parking requirements and promoting high-density developments could lead to parking congestion and overburdened infrastructure.

It's essential for local officials and residents to engage with legislators, share their concerns, and advocate for balanced, practical approaches to zoning and housing development. For detailed instructions on ways to share your position on these and any other bills, see *"How to Make Your Voice Heard"* below.

Here's a status update on the bills NHMA has been following.

Priority bills

HB 382 (oppose), as amended, would restrict the ability of municipalities to require more than one parking space per residential unit in a development removing. NHMA opposes this bill, as well as a similar bill, **SB 284**, 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. Passed by the House as amended (25-0687h); sent to the Senate.

HB 410 (oppose), as amended, prohibits municipalities from enforcing or adopting any "extraordinary restriction of residential property" unless the ordinance is directly necessary for the health or safety of the community, based on empirical evidence published by a non-partisan source. Bill recommended ought to pass with amendment (25-0979h) and will be on the House consent calendar at a future session.

HB 432 (oppose) redefines the term "recovery house" and mandates that such facilities be treated like family housing in zoning ordinances, which could undermine municipal zoning authority. The bill is in the **House Municipal and County Government Committee**.

HB 577 (oppose), allowing either one detached or attached accessory dwelling unit (ADU) by right on single-family lots. The bill clarifies tools municipalities can use to regulate ADUs by being able to determine aesthetic requirements and mandate one of the structures remains owner-occupied; however, the bill would repeal several other provisions that provide for local regulation in the current ADU statutes and would essentially turn single-family residential zones into two-family residential zones. Passed by House as amended (25-0449h); sent to the Senate.

HB 631 (oppose), as amended permits residential building in commercial zones by right, pushing for mixed-use developments. While promoting urban density, it may lead to conflicts over land use priorities and contradicts one of the key purposes of zoning in RSA 674:17: to "consider the character of the area involved and its peculiar suitability for particular uses." Bill recommended ought to pass with amendment (25-0667h) and in on the **Thursday, March 20**, House consent calendar.

SB 84 (oppose), 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. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass as amended recommendation; however, further amendments are expected.

SB 163 (oppose) prohibiting local moratoria and limitations on building permits. In rare circumstances, municipalities need to delay or restrict the issuance of permits. Municipalities do this when they have

infrastructure failures, typically water and sewer systems, and can no longer sustain increased development. These municipalities must do several things to abide by RSA 674:23, which permits these ordinances and requires providing information, in writing to the state. This is a comprehensive and last resort option for municipalities struggling with failing or already failed infrastructure that cannot support new development. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass recommendation.

SB 170 (oppose), as amended (2025-0807s) limits various development and related requirements in cities, towns, and municipalities. The bill significantly reduces municipal autonomy and undermines the ability of local governments to address the needs of their individual communities. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass as amended recommendation.

SB 188 (oppose), as amended, the bill allows property owners or developers to use licensed, insured private providers for building code plan reviews and inspections related to the state building code and any local technical amendments, excluding fire prevention and fire safety codes, and 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 time limit. NHMA believes **SB 188** creates a troubling “building permits by default” model and would have multiple impacts on municipal revenue and expenses. Passed by Senate with amendment (25-0563s); sent to the House.

SB 284 (oppose), 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. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass recommendation.

The above bills are the most concerning of all the zoning mandates and we really need members to speak out against them; however, there are many more proposals that could impact local autonomy.

Other bills (with NHMA position)

HB 229 (neutral), repealing the alternative procedure for adoption of zoning ordinances. Bill is in the **House Municipal and County Government Committee**.

HB 272 (oppose), exempting certain agricultural practices from municipal noise regulation. Passed the House and Referred to **Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee**.

HB 342 (oppose), as amended (25-0579h), allows property owners to build on their property without seeking a variance for minimum lot size or lot coverage if the proposed building density conforms to that of the surrounding neighborhood. Passed by House; sent to the Senate.

HB 413 (oppose), relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits. Bill is in the **House Municipal and County Government Committee**.

HB 428 (oppose), prohibits municipal amendments to the state building code. Bill is in the **House Executive Departments and Administration (ED&A) Committee**.

HB 457 (oppose), as amended, prohibits municipalities from adopting any ordinance that discriminates based on the familial or non-familial relationships or marital status among the occupants of the dwelling unit or restricts the number of occupants of any dwelling unit to less than 2 occupants. Bill recommended ought to pass with amendment (25-0917h) and will be on the House consent calendar at a future session.

HB 568 (support), allowing planning boards to request water supply studies to ensure adequate water availability as housing density increases, and mandates that provisions be included to guarantee sufficient water quantity for existing and future land uses. Bill recommended inexpedient to legislate and will be on the House calendar at a future session.

HB 685 (oppose), mandating manufactured housing by right in residentially zoned areas. Passed by House with amendment (25-0892h); sent to the Senate.

SB 78 (oppose), setting the zoning board of adjustments appeal period at 30 days. Passed by Senate; sent to the House.

SB 94 (oppose), prohibits municipal amendments to the state building code like **HB 428**, albeit with different wording. Passed by the Senate and sent to the House.

SB 174 (oppose) prohibits planning boards from considering the number of bedrooms a given unit or development has during the hearing and approval process. Municipalities often regulate the number of bedrooms per dwelling unit in dense zoning districts to ensure the infrastructure capacity exists to support the developments and housing in those zoning districts. Also, there is no definition of bedroom in the building or fire code in the bill. These requirements also limit the number of parking spaces required for the development, which might be necessary if there is limited land for parking. Finally, the bill unintentionally creates new definition of planning board and planning board authority, giving planning boards authority to review and approve building permits instead of select board or building official. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass recommendation.

SB 281 (oppose), prohibits municipalities from denying building or occupancy permits for property adjacent to class VI roads under certain circumstances. Municipalities currently may restrict building on class VI to prevent overdevelopment of undeveloped infrastructure and, in this case, unmaintained roads and to control scattered and premature development. While the bill requires that landowners sign a liability waiver, it does not consider whether the class VI roads and abutting properties can sustain new development. Additionally, it increases the chance that property owners who live on the class VI road request the road become regularly maintained, which increases costs. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on Thursday, March 20, with an ought to pass as amended recommendation (25-0947s).

SB 283 (oppose) relative to the calculation of floor-area-ratios under local building ordinances. The Senate is scheduled to vote on the bill on **Thursday, March 20**, with an ought to pass recommendation.

Bills that have been killed, tabled, or re-referred/retained in committee:

HB 459 (oppose), mandates certain acreage requirements and zoning regulations for single family properties depending on whether they are serviced by public water and sewer. This bill is similar to SB 84, as introduced. Retained in House Housing Committee.

SB 90 (oppose), requires municipalities to allow high-density residential development on land zoned for commercial use, provided that adequate infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewage systems, is available or provided to support the development. This bill takes a one-size-fits-all approach that does not work for all communities; it also does not take into account the potential impact high-density developments could have on municipal revenue and expenses. Rereferred to Senate Commerce Committee

SB 231 (oppose), relative to road frontage requirements and setbacks for wetlands. Rereferred to committee.

Finally, the governor this week signed **HB 399**, which establishes a commission to study the historical evolution of the 100-year-old New Hampshire Zoning Enabling Act. Its objectives include evaluating the

relevance and effectiveness of the current zoning powers, assessing the appropriateness of existing regulations, and exploring potential legislative alternatives.

Hmmm ... wouldn't it make more sense to let this commission do a deep dive on zoning issues outside the time constraints of the legislative session, rather than passing dozens of mandates now and seeing how it works out? The fact is, under current zoning laws, nearly 20,000 units have been added in the state between 2020 and 2024 [according to](#) the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, and approximately 5,000 more unit will be added by later this year.

Weigh in on Anti-Lobbying Amendment NOW!?

The [House Legislative Administration Committee](#)? will hold an executive session on a **non-germane amendment** to **HB 456** that essentially allows the legislature to dictate the speech and decision-making authority of local officials by limiting organizations like NHMA to providing “information” only to the legislature, while prohibiting such organizations from registering a position, nullifying NHMA’s member-adopted policies and principles. Under the amendment, other organizations similar to NHMA would be prohibited from using any public funds from engaging in lobbying. The session is scheduled on **Wednesday, March 19 at 1:00 p.m. in LOB Room 203.**

We are urging local officials to [contact](#) members of the Legislative Administration Committee and tell them to reject the amendment.

While the amendment specifically permits “an individual public official” to register a position, this is a red herring. As local officials know, organizations like ours are formed because it is not possible for individual local officials to follow the pace of the legislative session or attend hearings regularly; in fact, delegating such responsibility to a voluntary organization is by far the more efficient and responsible manner of engaging in the legislative process while ensuring local officials can focus on serving their communities. Therefore, the amendment is a hampering of local efficiency that would lead to one of two outcomes: Less local government perspective and input in the legislative process or more time for local officials spent away from their regular duties to follow and engage in the process. Either result is to the detriment of local governments and their taxpayers.

If any of your representative sits on the committee, please [reach out to them directly](#)?

Risk Pool Regulation Bill Advances

The [Senate Finance Committee](#) this week approved an **amendment** to **SB 297**, which relates to the operations and oversight of risk management pools. The bill will go to the Senate floor on **Thursday, March 20**, with a unanimous recommendation of ought-to-pass.

Pools are created by cities, towns, counties, and school districts to reduce risks and associated insurance costs, shifting risk from an individual political subdivision to the pool. NHMA supports the ability of members to establish and govern the pools and understands that clear regulations that protect the members and allow the pools to operate are necessary.

NHMA is opposed to **SB 297** because it contains provisions that will affect city and town expenses and change the terms of membership with risk pools.

- **Creates additional costs for members:** Pools would be required to collect additional funds from municipalities, in the form of special assessments, if losses fall below certain minimum reserve amounts specified in the statute or if the pool is deemed insolvent.
- **Establishes a new mandate for municipalities:** Municipalities would be required to create a non-lapsing reserve fund (a health care stabilization fund) to participate in a health pool. These reserve funds would be used to pay for assessments that may be levied during the year if the pool’s reserves fall below the mandated levels in the bill or the pool becomes insolvent.

- The bill requires the municipal member to fund the reserve fund in amount equal to at least 1% of the municipality's health contribution, until the fund is equal to 4% of contributions. If the reserve fund is used to pay a special assessment, then the municipality must again rebuild at the rate of at least 1% per year until the fund is at 4%. In the end, this is a state mandate to appropriate more money than would otherwise be required to be a member of the health pool.
- Additionally, although the bill does say the municipality cannot participate in the health pool if the reserve fund isn't in place, we do not know what would happen to a health pool member if the legislative body did not appropriate the necessary minimum amount, especially since, for most municipalities, pool membership renewals each year occur before the annual meeting at which reserve fund appropriations are approved.
- **Changes to pool members' responsibilities:** These changes include that municipality must agree in writing that they are ultimately the responsible party for any potentially losses incurred while participating in a risk pool and that municipalities that terminate coverage are responsible for losses that occurred during the prior year.

Chiming in on the State Budget

The **House Finance Committee** held a lengthy public hearing on **HB 1** and **HB 2** (the state budget) on Wednesday in Representatives Hall. In advance of the hearing, NHMA submitted written testimony urging the committee to recommend a budget that continues to maintain and build on recent legislative efforts to strengthen a state-local partnership that delivers property tax relief to New Hampshire citizens.

While we are pleased that HB 2 does not contain any adverse changes to the meals and rooms tax distribution formula* or other dedicated funds from which municipalities receive a percentage, there are several areas of concern in the budget, as introduced. ***Note: On Friday, March 14, House Division I began a conversation about reducing the meals and rooms distribution from 30% to 25% and altering the distribution formula. It was stated that under the proposed new formula, some municipalities would get no distribution at all. Please contact House Finance Committee members and remind them about the history of this important state aid, particularly that municipalities only began receiving 30% in 2021, after more than a decade of receiving far less than the statutory amount of 40%.**

You can read the [full testimony here](#). Below are some key points:

- **Ensure full state funding for any retirement system changes:** HB 2 proposes to roll back various retirement reforms instituted by the legislature in 2011 that impact Group II (police and fire) members of the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) who were hired prior to July 1, 2011. Unlike similar legislation in prior years, HB 2 does propose funding the full cost of these changes, including the municipal costs, by appropriating \$27.5 million in each fiscal year of the upcoming budget. HB 2 also calls for that amount to be funded annually through FY 2034; however, we are concerned that commitment could be changed by a future legislature. The revenue needed to insulate municipalities from the cost of these changes would be generated by a new revenue stream from legalizing video lottery terminals (VLTs). We recommend that the House send this portion of the revenue into a dedicated fund or otherwise restrict the revenue to ensure that the long-term, ongoing cost of these retirement changes is not borne by property taxpayers.
- **Continue funding for the state's share of wastewater projects:** We urge the House to add back additional, nonlapsing funding for new SAG projects, and recommend at least \$5 million per biennium, so that we do not return to days of a "delayed and deferred" list.
- **Granite Advantage changes:** HB 2 proposes changes to CHIP, Medicaid, and Medicaid Advantage programs that will add new out-of-pocket costs for participants. NHMA opposes these

changes because of their impact on local welfare budgets.?

- **Keep RSA 31-A revenue sharing in the law:** We were disappointed to see that House Finance Division I voted to recommend repealing RSA Chapter 31-A, as opposed to simply suspending it. Although we support reinstatement of RSA 31-A with necessary statutory revisions, we understand that 2025 is not the year for such an action. However, in the future, revisions to RSA 31-A would be possible and could bring much-needed revenue to municipalities to offset property taxes and provide relief at the local level
- **Restore the state share of municipal employer pension costs:** For more than 30 years the law required the state to fund 35% of the municipal employer's contributions to the NHRS for teachers, police, and firefighters, all of whom are mandatory members of the retirement system. Reduction and then ultimate elimination of the state contribution in FY 2013 have created incredible strain on municipal budgets.

The House deadline to pass a budget is April 10. The three divisions of the House Finance Committee have been meeting regularly to review sections of the budget and make recommendations for the full committee to vote on.

The House phase is on the second step in a grueling four-month marathon. 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.?

Some outstanding issues that could significantly impact the budget between now and June 30 include:?

- The growing cost of settlements tied to abuse at the state's youth detention center decades ago.?
- The availability of federal funds in light of recent executive branch efforts to reduce or eliminate various programs.?
- The education funding lawsuits currently with the NH Supreme Court.?

In summary, the budget process is fluid and requires close, ongoing scrutiny to ensure municipal interests are protected.?

Funding Cut Flying Under the Radar

On **Tuesday, March 18**, at **10:00 a.m.** in **LOB Room 201**, the **House Public Works and Highways Committee** will hold a public hearing on **HB 25**, the capital budget.

This hearing particularly relevant for the **two dozen communities** that have public airports, as the governor's proposed budget did not include funding for NH's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) airport projects in FY 2026-2027. This omission impacts the future of airport capital funding in the state.

The NHDOT/Bureau of Aeronautics had requested approximately \$62.6M in FAA flow-through funding and \$4.7M in state matching shares for FY 2026-2027 airport capital projects, which has not been included in the budget. For more than two decades, with one exception, the capital appropriations for airport improvement projects have always included the FAA and NHDOT matching shares.

While the budget does propose extending the lapsing dates for certain previously appropriated accounts, these funds are likely to run out by the end of this year, leaving a funding gap until July 1, 2027.

This hearing provides an opportunity for stakeholders to voice their concerns and advocate for airport capital funding needs. We are urging local officials to attend the hearing or **contact** the Public Works and Highways Committee.

If your representative sits on the committee, please [reach out to them](#) directly.

Ground Ambulance Rates Saga Continues...

It's clear that legislators and ground ambulance service providers agree that eliminating balance billing — *i.e.* billing a patient for the difference between the full cost of the service and the amount their insurance plan pays—is a good thing; however, the House and Senate have sharply different opinions on how much private insurers should reimburse providers.

This week, the Senate passed **SB 245**, which NHMA supports, eliminating balance billing with the reimbursement rate set at 325% of the current urban, rural, or super-rural Medicare rates, depending on the geographic area where the ambulance service originated. As amended, the bill clarifies balance billing prohibitions, removes co-pay caps and waivers, and points to statute regarding prompt pay requirements. The Senate also passed **SB 130**, which as amended, establishes a commission to study the issue.

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

Meanwhile, on **Wednesday, March 19**, at **10:00 a.m.** in **LOB Room 302-304**, the **House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee** will report out two competing bills that set reimbursement rates for private insurers at different rates.

A subcommittee of the full panel met earlier this week and endorsed **HB 316**, which would set a reimbursement rate for non-Medicare/Medicaid health insurance carriers at approximately 200%. NHMA opposes this rate because in many cases reimbursement is much lower than the actual cost. The argument some committee members made for a 200% reimbursement rate was that it was recommended by the NH Department of Insurance and a higher rate would unfairly burden the private insurance industry. Regarding any budget shortfalls municipal ambulance services could face due to the inadequacy of a 200% reimbursement rate, the response was that it would become the responsibility of the *local property taxpayers!* The subcommittee also recommended tabling **HB 725**, which set the reimbursement at 325%. NHMA supports **HB 725** because it strikes a fair balance between competing interests.

Last Monday, the insurance department hosted an information session to review the [New Hampshire Ground Ambulance Cost Study](#) completed last year pursuant to **SB 407**. Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG), which conducted the study, presented its methodology and answered questions, but would not discuss the financial impact of a 200% reimbursement on ground ambulance services. The questions from participants, who included representatives, senators, ground ambulance service providers, and fire chiefs, highlighted the confusion and concerns with the methodology of the report.

The debate over this issue will continue the next two months, as the competing bills cross over to the other chamber.

House Roundup This Week

The House met Thursday and acted on 14 bills NHMA has a position on, including four priority bills.?

HB 123, an NHMA-supported bill modifies the existing yield tax on cut timber in RSA 79, often called the “timber tax,” to include taxing the yield of the metric tonnage of carbon sequestered from standing timber, passed as amended (25-0654h) on a roll call vote, 197-158. **HB 123** supports the North Country and other heavily timbered areas where less timber is being cut and, instead, being put into carbon sequestration agreements. The bill will promote local property tax relief.

The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Other Priority Bills:

HB 185 (support), relative to reimbursement rates for ambulance service providers. **Inexpedient to legislate (ITL).**

HB 382 (oppose), removing authority for municipalities to regulate mandatory on-site parking requirements. **Passed** with amendment.

HB 572 (Support), establishing the “partners in housing” program, a low-interest loan and grant program under the housing champions fund to assist municipalities, counties, and developers in building workforce housing. **Passed** with amendment and referred to House Finance Committee.

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

HB 149 (oppose), relative to warrant article approvals at ballot referenda form of town meeting. **ITL.**

HB 185 (support), relative to reimbursement rates for ambulance service providers. **ITL.**

HB 247 (support), authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum on whether to allow historic horse racing. **Passed** with amendment.

HB 342 (oppose), relative to the approval process for new construction. **Passed** with amendment.

HB 451 (support), establishing the paint product stewardship program. **Passed** with amendment.

HB 490 (support), relative to indemnification for municipalities adopting policies to address homelessness. **ITL.**

HB 512 (oppose), relative to preventing municipal employees from being paid under multiple municipal contracts simultaneously. **ITL.**

HB 521 (support), authorizing online voter registration. **ITL.**

HB 536 (oppose), relative to a cost-of-living adjustment in the state retirement system. **Tabled.**

HB 562 (oppose), relative to the filling of vacant positions on elected municipal boards and school boards. **ITL.**

HB 569 (oppose), relative to the establishment of county-wide communication districts. **Passed** with amendment.

HB 668 (support), authorizing municipalities to hold a referendum to rescind the licenses of historic horse racing facilities. **ITL.**

HB 688 (support), authorizing municipalities to tax charitable gaming facilities based on their enterprise value. **ITL.**

Senate Roundup This Week

The Senate met Thursday and acted on seven bills NHMA has a position on are on the agenda, including two priority bills.?

Priority Bills:

SB 231 (oppose), relative to road frontage requirements and setbacks for wetlands. **Rerefer** to committee.

SB 245 (support), prohibiting surprise ambulance billing and regulating ground ambulance reimbursement. **Passed** with amendment (25-077s). *See related article above.*

Other Bills (with NHMA position on the bill):

SB 44 (oppose), relative to hand counts of ballots in elections. **Passed.**

SB 103 (oppose), relative to the number of polling stations that are available for certain towns. **Passed** with amendment.

SB 218 (support), relative to absentee ballot outer envelopes. **Passed.**

SB 259 (support), creating an exception to physical attendance and quorum requirements under the right-to-know law for individuals with disabilities. **ITL.**

SB 279 (support), establishing the housing champion business loan program and making appropriations to the department of business and economic affairs and the business finance authority. **Passed and tabled.**

House, Senate Sessions Next Week

On **Thursday, March 20**, beginning at **10:00 a.m.**, the House and Senate are both meeting. To see what's coming up for a vote, see the [House Calendar](#) and [Senate Calendar](#). NHMA will send out a priority bill alert on Monday listing any key proposals that we are asking members to contact their legislators about.

How to Make your Voice Heard

The adage goes that “life is all about showing up.” The same can be said for legislative advocacy. If a bill is of importance to your municipality, it's always best to make your case – for or against – in person. Every Friday, NHMA posts a [Bill Hearings Schedule](#) for the upcoming week. However, if you can't make it to Concord, you can use the Legislature's online portal to put your position on the hearing record.

The House has an [online testimony submission system](#) that allows you to indicate your position on the bill with an option to attach testimony. If you want to email all the members of a House committee, you will have to copy their email addresses individually from the [committee page](#).

The Senate has a [remote sign-in sheet](#) where you can indicate whether you are supportive of a bill, opposed, or neutral. Written testimony can be submitted via the “Email Entire Committee” link found on the [Senate committee page](#).

If you have time to follow along, livestreams of [House](#) and [Senate](#) sessions and committee meetings are available on YouTube. Prior sessions and committee meetings are also archived.

Finally, if you just want to contact your legislators, there are [Contact a Senator](#) and [Contact a Representative](#) links on the [General Court](#) website.

Because the House and Senate have moved to digital calendars, committees can now reschedule when there is bad weather, absences, or when issues with bills haven't been worked out. If you are planning to attend a hearing or work session in person, we strongly recommend checking the [House Digital Calendar](#) and [Senate Digital Calendar](#) before heading to the State House. For those of you with an interest in a particular bill or set of bills, please use the ‘subscribe’ feature on [FastDemocracy](#) to get email updates when those bills are scheduled or rescheduled.

Reminder: Sharing is Caring ... About Good Public Policy!

If you know of anyone who may benefit from the NHMA Legislative Bulletin feel free to pass this email along and encourage them to sign up!

Members can subscribe to the Bulletin through our member portal at: <https://nhmunicipal.weblinkconnect.com/portal>

Once you are logged in, click “edit this profile” and “newsletter management.” You can sign up for the *Legislative Bulletin*, *Newslink*, and *Town & City* magazine in one place! (If you are having trouble logging into your account, [follow these steps.](#))

Nonmembers can email info@nhmunicipal.org to be added to our email list for the *Legislative Bulletin*.

**NHMA Events Calendar
2024 Final Legislative Bulletin**

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Review Board Calendar