

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HAMPTON FALLS**

**MAY 17, 2023 – 8:00 AM
TOWN HALL**

FINAL

PRESENT: Ed B. Beattie, Chairman; Lou Gargiulo, Vice Chairman; Mark R. Lane, Selectman;
Karen Anderson, Town Administrator; Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator
GUESTS: R. Venio, Police Chief; R. Hilliard, Road Agent; J. Lord, Fire Chief;
M. Sikorski, Building Inspector.

Chairman Beattie called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

Police Department / Animal Control Monthly Report – Police Chief Ryan Venio: Police Chief Venio presented his monthly report to the Selectmen. He stated that he had a meeting with the Energy Committee and discussed ways that the Town could save some money at the Public Safety Complex. He stated that the Energy Committee had already met with Fire Chief Lord, and their initial recommendation is for programmable thermostats. Chief Venio said that the building has a heating and cooling system that has been added onto over the years, and to address the entire system would be expensive, so in the near term a smaller change to save some energy cost is to install programmable thermostats.

Chairman Beattie asked about any issues at the Castleberry Fair held on the Town Common the prior weekend, and Police Chief Venio said there were a couple of parking issues in addition to typical Lost and Found items that the Police will hold until someone claims the items.

K. Anderson reported that she spoke with the Castleberry Fair Coordinator yesterday and she had commendations for the Fire Department. There was one vendor that had a serious medical issue, and, because the Fire Department was there onsite, they could help immediately. She continued that the woman spent a couple of days in the hospital but was released and was able to return to Vermont and was very appreciative of the services she received.

K. Anderson said that a second incident at the Castleberry Fair was that a vendor punctured a line of the irrigation system that was discovered when they pulled up their tent, but there have been assurances that the damage will be remedied. She continued that the irrigation system on the Town Common is scheduled to be turned on today, so it will be possible to identify exactly where the punctured line is located at that time.

Chairman Beattie asked the Selectmen for any questions for the Police Chief. L. Gargiulo said that he had a comment about the traffic management on Rt 88 during the tree work details. He noticed that when there are two (2) Police officers present that traffic moves well, but when there is a person in a yellow vest, the traffic does not move as efficiently. He asked if there is a problem getting a second Police Officer to cover that location, and the response was that it is challenging to fill all details. After going through the typical procedure to identify people to fill the shifts, Police Chief Venio said that they are also looking at Fire Department personnel who complete a specific training program to be able to direct traffic on State roads (Rt 88 is a State road), to be eligible to fill the shifts. Police Chief Venio said that he would compare pay rates with other towns to see if Hampton Falls' detail rate is competitive.

K. Anderson recognized Police Chief Venio that on May 1st, 2023, he completed his first year as Chief of Police of Hampton Falls. Everyone present applauded the Police Chief. He thanked the

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Selectmen, K. Anderson, Fire Chief Lord, and R. Webb for all of the support, assistance, and camaraderie he has received in the past year.

Road Agent Monthly Report – Russ Hilliard:

- The Road Agent, R. Hilliard, reported that April was a busy month preparing the Brush Dump for the start of the monthly White Goods Days (through October). The first White Goods Day went well with no problems, and the result was that he pushed back a record quantity of leaves and brush.
- R. Hilliard spoke with the fence company about the installation timeframe for the planned new fence at the Brush Dump and the company is approximately 3-4 weeks from the installation date.
- R. Hilliard spoke with the Town's engineer, Brad Jones, about completion of road work at Glenwood and gave him a punch list of work for JAMCO to complete in the next two (2) weeks. Chairman Beattie asked if there were any issues with the paving, and R. Hilliard responded the paving is good, the elevation is right, and he is just waiting for the vendor to return to finish the work. K. Anderson reported that with the heavy rains a couple of weeks ago she received no complaints that the drainage was not working. R. Hilliard noted that the driveways were clear during rain now, whereas previously driveways were backing up with a foot of water.
- R. Hilliard spoke with Indus regarding Crack Sealing in town and determined that they are approximately 5-6 weeks out for scheduling work. R. Hilliard asked the Selectmen if they wanted to implement approximately \$25,000 of crack sealing annually, and L. Gargiulo requested a list of proposed critical roads by linear feet for the next Selectmen's meeting. K. Anderson stated that \$150,000 was put in the Capital Reserve Fund rather than \$250,000 this year. Chairman Beattie asked for the current balance and what funds are already committed from that account? K. Anderson responded that there is \$38,000 remaining with \$10,000 of that committed for Woodlawn, and then there is the \$150,000 so there is approximately \$175,000 total available. L. Gargiulo asked from which fund the cost for the new fence would be paid, and K. Anderson responded Government Buildings and there are enough funds in that account for that expense. K. Anderson added that she hoped she would hear the result by the Selectmen's next meeting of the grant application she applied to last year from FEMA for \$140,000 for the culvert work in the vicinity of 70 Drinkwater Road. Chairman Beattie asked R. Hilliard to make a list of roads that may need paving and those that may need crack sealing and present the list to the Selectmen at the next meeting. K. Anderson reported that there is an extra \$32,000 the Town received last year from the State that can only be used for bridge maintenance work, that will be used for the Old Stage Road pedestrian bridge. L. Gargiulo stated that the Town does not pay fully for that bridge, as it is owned half by the Town of Hampton.
- R. Hilliard reported that the funding from the State for the treatment of Knotweed eradication at the Brush Dump is no longer available. He said that he obtained a price for treatment of the parcel at \$750 and asked for the Selectmen's input. He said that he has noticed a lot of Knotweed coming out this year. M. Lane confirmed that it is the plant that

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looks like Bamboo, and that it is proliferating in his neighborhood. R. Hilliard asked if there may be a larger grant available to treat the entire town, and K. Anderson said that she would look into whether there may be a grant available through the Conservation Commission's resources to combat invasive plant species such as Knotweed. R. Hilliard clarified that his inquiry with the State for funding was for the *Brush Dump only*, so he didn't know if there may be other funds available from the State for *town-wide treatment* of Knotweed. There was a brief discussion of whether the Conservation Commission's Summer Interns could work on the Knotweed at the Brush Dump, and L. Gargiulo said that their list is long enough handling Conservation properties, and that it was his opinion that it would be more efficient to spray the invasive plant species at the Brush Dump.

- R. Hilliard presented a Worksheet to Burn Brush at the Brush Dump in the amount of \$850.00 for ten (10) hours of work with equipment, when the weather conditions are appropriate, at some point in the future.

MOTION: To approve the Non-Emergency Highway Department Project Worksheet to burn brush at the Brush Dump in the amount of \$850.00 for ten (10) hours of work with equipment, when the weather conditions are appropriate. The cost is to be paid from the account # 573 that has an available budget balance of \$18,167.50.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

- R. Hilliard presented his monthly Core Services report and bill for April 2023 in the amount of \$5,943.50.

MOTION: To approve the Road Agent's monthly Core Services bill for April 2023 in the amount of \$5943.50.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

- K. Anderson reported that the Town is still looking for a regular Brush Dump Attendant. She said that there are some people scheduled to "fill in" through mid-August, but the Town needs a regularly scheduled person to fill the position permanently, for Saturdays 8am to 12 noon, starting mid-August.

Fire / Ambulance / Emergency Management Report – Fire Chief Jay Lord: Fire Chief Lord reviewed the monthly report from April 2023 and reported many medical calls and a couple of fires. He stated that it is currently Brush Fire season and there is no anticipation of any rain in the near future so there is going to be a little bit of a drought. He stated that Hampton Falls is not officially on the "Drought Map" currently, but fire danger is high.

- Last month Fire Chief Lord completed the Medicare Report, that is a nationwide survey encompassing every ambulance transport company, air, sea, or ground, private, or municipal.
- Ordered the Mini-Pumper Fire Truck by providing a 75% deposit of \$306,000, and the vehicle will be ready for acquisition in two (2) years.

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- On one of the fires Hampton Falls attended, the side mirror on the tank truck was bent, due to a very narrow driveway. Primex has examined the damage and is looking for a replacement door for the 1992 truck.
- Fire Chief Lord reported that, in terms of staffing, two (2) people are completing Firefighter I in East Kingston. There is another person at the recruit school who will do Firefighter I and II in a compressed timeframe of 7 weeks in Concord. Fire Chief Lord reported that he has several new people, and he's lost a couple, but his average number of staffing is 30 to 35 people.
- After this Selectmen's meeting, Fire Chief Lord said that most of the people in the room (Department Heads and Selectmen) were invited to the Fire Station for the first 2023 LEOP (Local Emergency Operations Plan) meeting with Jane Hubbard starting at 10:00 am.

Building Inspector, Code Compliance, Health Officer Monthly Report – Mark Sikorski:

The Building Inspector, M. Sikorski highlighted three large projects for the month in his monthly report, namely:

- 5 Kensington Road's proposal for a three (3) lot subdivision will be continued to the Planning Board meeting May 23rd.
- 1 Lafayette Road's proposal for a site plan application to change use from function hall to retail sales (fireworks), may be on Planning Board agenda for June meeting, pending complete application.
- 3 Weare Road code enforcement issue of wetlands disturbance and fill, home occupation, and storage of commercial or industrial vehicles. Reports in progress to NH DES.

There were no questions from the Selectmen regarding the Building Inspector's monthly report.

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Reports: General Fund Balance: \$660,346.92 K. Anderson reported the General Fund balance of \$660,346.92. She stated that the Tax Warrant will be signed by the Selectmen at this meeting today, and that the tax bills are being printed today and will be mailed by the end of the week, with a due date of July 3rd. K. Anderson stated that the Town is holding the May school payments until the second manifest of the month.

Executive: Payroll Warrant, Accounts Payable, and Escrow Warrant: K. Anderson presented the Payroll Warrant #601 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$32,983.11; Accounts Payable Warrant # 840 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$129,431.14; and Escrow Warrant # 29 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$816.90.

MOTION: To approve payroll warrant #601 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$32,983.11; Accounts Payable Warrant # 840 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$129,431.14; and Escrow Warrant # 29 dated May 12, 2023, in the amount of \$816.90.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Executive: Large Groundwater Withdrawal Application: K. Anderson reported that the State Groundwater Bureau was notified that Hampton Falls would like a Public Hearing on the

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application proposal from the Town of Seabrook to install two (2) wells on Weare Road with an estimated withdrawal rate of 280,000 gallons per day. That Public Hearing has been scheduled for June 7th at 6:00 PM at the Hampton Falls Town Hall. K. Anderson said that June 7th is the Selectmen's regular meeting date, so instead of meeting at 6:00 PM, the Selectmen will meet at 8:00 AM. The Selectmen's regular meeting cannot be part of the Public Hearing. The State (NHDES) will run the Public Hearing, and, the Town of Seabrook is required to publish and post notices of the Public Hearing. The Town of Seabrook's engineer (Geosphere) will give an overview of the proposed project and the State will listen to questions and concerns that are raised by the public. The State (NHDES) will take those concerns raised at the Public Hearing into consideration as they review the application. After the Public Hearing, there is a 45-day "comment period" within which to submit comments to the State.

K. Anderson reported that the Town was able to hire Ms. Danna Truslow, of Truslow Resource Consulting, who is a hydrogeologist who will represent the Town at the Public Hearing and will be present to assist Hampton Falls with questions. K. Anderson said that she has a Zoom meeting with D. Truslow today at 11:00 am to go over some details, following her review of the application, and to provide some initial comments, with an opportunity for K. Anderson to provide D. Truslow with preliminary issues on which to focus at the Public Hearing, such as:

- What recourse would there be for any resident whose well is impacted?
- Concerns about Whittier Pond in terms of primary fire protection, within radius of impact;
- If analysis shows significant impact, can NHDES require a smaller proposed withdrawal rate?

L. Gargiulo asked if this meeting room is going to be large enough for the Public Hearing, and K. Anderson responded that she believed that it would be big enough, because the furniture in the room can be reconfigured to allow the addition of more seating, and the meeting will be live streamed on TownHallStreams.com. NH DES provided the Public Hearing notice, and K. Anderson stated that the postings for the Public Hearing were completed yesterday. Today Geosphere is taking photographs to document the postings at the Post Office and at Town Hall for NH DES to prove that the Public Notices were officially posted. K. Anderson stated that she has created a Mail Merge document with all of the addresses of the people impacted, and she plans to send the Public Hearing notice to those addresses. Chairman Beattie stated that there are 160 houses impacted. L. Gargiulo said to put it on the Town's website, and K. Anderson agreed that was the plan. Chairman Beattie asked if K. Anderson could contact the LAS school about posting the Public Hearing information on their electronic sign, and she responded that she already had contacted the LAS school.

Chairman Beattie asked about the houses shown on a map within the engineering report that are within the area of impact, and yet were not identified for testing. He said that that needs to be clarified why some houses are included and others are not, yet both are within the area of impact. K. Anderson said that NHDES told her that Geosphere acted too soon and sent letters, prior to the Public Hearing, to a selected grouping of impacted property owners to ask if they wanted their well monitored. She reported that people had started to call her after receiving the letter, so she spoke with NHDES who told her that it was inappropriate for those letters to have been sent ahead of the Public Hearing. K. Anderson said that she has encouraged people, who have

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discussed the subject of the letter with her, to respond “Yes” to allow the monitoring of their well. Chairman Beattie thanked the State NHDES for their efforts in notifying the Town of Hampton Falls about the groundwater withdrawal permit. K. Anderson shared the maps with the Selectmen showing properties highlighted in yellow as within the impact area, and properties outlined in red as identified for well monitoring. She said that the properties identified for well monitoring follow fracture lines, and the aquifer is very deep. After looking at the maps L. Gargiulo asked how could people on Kensington Road have one house impacted, the second house not, and then the third house impacted? K. Anderson said that this could be an issue raised at the Public Hearing, and D. Truslow may have a response to that question. She added that a request at the Public Hearing could be to update the listing of properties within the impact area. Chairman Beattie restated what K. Anderson has said earlier that NHDES is not going to be answering questions at the Public Hearing but rather collecting all of the questions to take into consideration when evaluating the impact, as they review the permit application.

M. Lane asked if NHDES determines that there is an impact can NH DES deny the application, and K. Anderson responded yes, it is totally the NHDES’s decision on granting (or not) the permit for the Large Groundwater Withdrawal. The land was donated for recreation purposes to the Town, so the Town is proposing a Disc Golf (frisbee golf) course on the parcel. The Town of Seabrook is looking to supplement their Town Water with water to be pumped from the site of the proposed Disc Golf. Chairman Beattie provided some context that the Town of Seabrook has been looking for water (new well sites) for a while.

Other Selectmen’s Old Business: There was no Selectmen’s Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bev Mutrie, Brown Road, pointed out the difference between dug wells and artesian wells, that dug wells are shallower and may not be as affected as deeper drilled artesian wells. K. Anderson stated that the list provided within the engineer’s report lists all wells within the impact area, and the type of well permitted.

Tracie Healey-Beattie, Drinkwater Road, asked if the electronic sign from the Fire Department could be utilized to inform people about the Public Hearing date, time and location.

Chairman Beattie said that copies of the maps of impact areas should be made available if people come to Town Hall in search of information. K. Anderson said that the maps can be added to the Town’s website. Chairman Beattie said that this could be largest aquifer in the region. M. Lane asked if there was a map of the aquifers, and K. Anderson responded yes, within the application, it is in the engineering report.

NEW BUSINESS

Executive: Memorial Day Services: Chairman Beattie announced that the Memorial Day Service will be conducted by the Hamptons’ American Legion Post 35 on the Hampton Falls Town Common on Monday, May 29th at 9:00 AM. K. Anderson added that it is always noted that Hampton Falls has the largest turnout of the three (3) towns the American Legion services.

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K. Anderson reported that the Selectmen have also been invited, by the Hamptons American Legion Post 35, to attend a memorial service rededicating the “Lady of the Sea” Marine Memorial on Saturday June 3rd at 8:00 AM, across from the Ashworth Hotel at Hampton Beach. The ceremony is to honor NH sailors RD2 Ronald Thibodeau and QM3 Gary Vigue. They were lost at sea when their ship, USS Frank E. Evans, was involved in a collision with an Australian aircraft carrier in June 1969.

Tax Collector: First Half Tax Warrant: Chairman Beattie reported that the first half tax warrant is being prepared for 2023, in the amount of \$5,281,354.00. Values are based on the 2022 value, with changes based on improvements made during the year prior, as of April 1, 2023.

MOTION: To approve and sign the 2023 first half tax warrant in the amount of \$5,281,354.00.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Executive: Finance Software: K. Anderson said that she does not yet have the proposal for the financial software; it was expected this week, but is not in hand yet, so that will get moved to the next Selectmen’s meeting.

Tricentennial: History Books: K. Anderson described how the Historical Society originally assisted the Town with \$5,000 towards the writing of the history book at the time of the contract with the author, with the understanding that when the books were sold that the Historical Society would be reimbursed. B. Mutrie stated that the original amount was \$15,000, and K. Anderson clarified what was being discussed at this meeting was \$5,000. The Tricentennial Fund currently has a balance \$6,462.00 and it would be appropriate to reimburse the Historical Society at this time. The account is remaining open and is where the money from the sale of the books is being deposited. The LAS 3rd grade class is doing a project on the history of Hampton Falls and the students are creating their own bus trolley tour. With the Chairman’s approval, the twenty-four (24) students were each given a history book for the project.

L. Gargiulo asked if there could be someone available to offer books for sale at the Public Hearing for the Large Groundwater Withdrawal permit June 7th, and also at the next Castleberry Fair? K. Anderson responded that the Town would not be allowed to sell books at the Castleberry Fair because they do not have spaces for non-profits, but the Town could sell the history books at the Farmers Markets. She said that she would speak with the Castleberry Fair organizer to ask the question, but she was doubtful the request would be allowed. B. Mutrie suggested to sell books at the Bandstand Concerts, and Chairman Beattie said that that was the intention. Someone asked how many books are left, and K. Anderson responded over 1,500. K. Anderson said that she will continue to investigate every opportunity to sell the history books. M. Lane suggested that the LAS school office should have a few copies to sell to parents. K. Anderson said that the books could be given as 8th grade graduation presents to each graduating student.

MOTION: To approve the request of \$5,000 from the Tricentennial Fund to reimburse the Historical Society for helping to fund the publication of the History Book up front.

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MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Chairman Beattie requested that K. Anderson send a thank you note to the Historical Society for their generosity, funding the history book up front.

Other Selectmen's New Business: There was no Other Selectmen's New Business.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tracy Healey-Beattie, Drinkwater Road, reported that the Historical Society is developing a flyer about the Historical Society and the history of the town, but also wants to include information about other entities in town such as the Fire Department and the Library. The idea is that this flyer would be given to new residents by the Town Clerk. She suggested that new residents could be given the opportunity to purchase a history book at that time. T. Healey-Beattie reported that at a recent Historical Society meeting discussion questioned whether a price reduction on the cost of the history book from \$40 to \$30 would be considered. Chairman Beattie said that the Town paid \$17.80 per book and he asked the Selectmen to contemplate what to do about the price of the history book for the next meeting. Another comment was to be sure to save a quantity of history books for future use, to not sell them all.

Donation of second Clara Brown painting for the Town Hall Meeting room, by the Historical Society, from Lisa Brown-Kucharski. T. Healey-Beattie said that the Historical Society has several smaller Clara Brown paintings on display at the Museum but they just did not have the wall space to hang this larger painting. She said that she recently spoke with L. Brown-Kucharski who was delighted that the Historical Society has found a spot to hang the painting. It was noted that B. Mutrie suggested including a brief description of each painting, either next to or underneath each, on the wall.

T. Healey-Beattie said that the Historical Society is due to have a Yard Sale on Saturday June 3rd.

L. Gargiulo said that he is working, together with Jon Ringel, to organize a work party to do some deferred maintenance to a person's property that has become overgrown. He is asking if Jim Ziolkowski of ELM Services can donate his services to provide a person, a truck and a wood chipper for this cause. He said that he is planning to do the work mid-June, if they can get the equipment. He is looking for volunteers to assist with the project. He was wondering if there may be some firefighters who may want to help. Fire Chief Lord said for L. Gargiulo to get him some information with details, and he can post the request for consideration by his staff. L. Gargiulo said that he is trying to coordinate the project with the American Legion and the Veterans' organizations in town, and he may need to arrange to have the Brush Dump open mid-week to accommodate receipt of the removed brush, as he anticipates a lot of material. Chairman Beattie said that the result will let a lot of light into the property owner's home. L. Gargiulo added that it will make a huge difference for the man who lives there.

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REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: May 3, 2023

R. Webb said that there has been an adjustment to the date of the Perambulation of the Town's boundaries with the Town of Kensington to May 23rd at 9:00 am at the Kensington Town Hall.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 3, 2023, as amended.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENT: B. Mutrie asked if the Perambulation of the Town's boundaries was for the entire boundaries, or only the corners. K. Anderson said that the group will locate the corners and any bounds in between.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn the Selectmen's meeting at 8:55 AM.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Next Selectmen's Meeting is Wednesday, June 7, 2023 8:00 AM
These minutes prepared by Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator