

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HAMPTON FALLS**

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 – 8:00 AM
TOWN HALL**

FINAL

PRESENT: Ed B. Beattie, Chairman; Lou Gargiulo, Vice Chairman; Mark R. Lane,
Selectman; Karen Anderson, Town Administrator
ABSENT: Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator
GUESTS: Lt. Justin Ranauro

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

PUBLIC HEARING: The Public Hearing is to accept comments on the acceptance of a grant from Rockingham County ARPA Funds in the amount of \$12,000 for welfare assistance. This grant was applied for and approved to assist the Town with the costs that have been incurred when the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) ended and households that were not from Hampton Falls that had been housed at the Hampton Falls Inn were displaced and assistance was required.

There were no comments from the public and public hearing was closed.

Chairman Beattie commended K. Anderson for the efforts put forward with the impact of the assistance program ending and working with the numerous displaced households and noted that adjustments may be appropriate in the 2024 budget on how welfare is handled in town.

L. Gargiulo asked if this grant covers the costs the town incurred. K Anderson said that it does not cover all of the costs, however it does offset the out-of-pocket funds that have been expended. She continued that the Police Department and herself spent numerous hours dealing with the relocation issues. K. Anderson pointed out that she worked with the households that contacted her to get them assistance from the towns that they were residents of prior to being placed in Hampton Falls. At one point there were 28 households being assisted, three needed extended housing assistance and at this time Hampton Falls is only assisting one household.

L. Gargiulo noted that the hotel benefitted financially from this program and asked how the town can prevent a similar situation in the future. K. Anderson told the Board that the State Legislature passed a Bill this year that clarifies, for municipal welfare departments, which town is responsible for assisting households that have been placed in a hotel or shelter. The law, as it was written, required the town that someone in need requested assistance to provide emergency assistance and then could seek reimbursement from the appropriate community. A difficulty of the ERAP program was that it was challenging to prove prior residency in some cases.

MOTION: To accept the Rockingham County ARPA Funds in the amount of \$12,000 for welfare assistance grant.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

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OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Reports: General Fund Balance: \$2,140,266.86

Executive: Payroll Warrant, Accounts Payable, and Escrow Warrant:

MOTION: To approve Payroll Warrant #609 dated 8/16/2023 for \$34,841.65; and Payroll Warrant #610 dated 8/30/2023 for \$ 37,017.17. Accounts Payable Warrant #847 dated 8/16/2023 for \$1,128,553.18; and Accounts Payable Warrant #848 dated 8/30/2023 for \$141,269.62. Escrow Warrant #36 dated 8/16/2023 for \$1,114.05; and Escrow Warrant #37 dated 8/30/2023 for \$33,244.74

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

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OTHER OLD BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Highway Safety Grant

Authorization for the Hampton Falls Police Department to apply for a Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$9,600 with a \$2,400 town match for directed patrols for Distracted Driving, DUI and Speed Enforcement.

MOTION: To authorize the Chairman to sign the grant application.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Audit Management Letter

K. Anderson prepared the *Management Discussion and Analysis* of the 2022 audit. The audit shows that the town is in good financial standing and that the undesignated fund balance increased. There is also \$47,000 as a designated fund balance that will be on the 2024 warrant as an article to be returned to the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund. That amount is what was spent from the CRF on the last cruiser purchase and subsequent to that the town received a grant of \$50,000 which was to offset the cruiser purchase. The auditors, in conjunction with DRA, determined that those funds should be returned to the CRF. There will be no need to submit the annual warrant article to appropriate funds toward new police vehicles for two years.

Budget Review Schedule

K. Anderson prepared a review schedule for the 2024 operating budget. Department budgets are due on September 20th with the Board of Selectmen's first review on September 27th. The Board had no changes to the proposed schedule.

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Establishment of Electric Aggregation Committee

The Energy Committee has recommended that the Board authorize the establishment of an Electric Aggregation Committee. This is the first step in being able to provide lower electric costs to residents through the NH Power Aggregation Plan.

MOTION: To authorize the establishment of an Electric Aggregation Committee and encourage residents interested in serving on the committee to contact the Town Administrator.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

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Requests for Use of Town Hall

Tameson O'Brien submitted a permit request to use the meeting room in the Town Hall on October 29th and January 7th from 1:00 -4:00 PM for the NH Spinners and Dyers Guild. The public would be able to watch the craft of spinning the wool.

Priscilla Lord submitted a permit request to use the meeting room in the Town Hall on November 11th for a 90th birthday party for her father, Jeremy Sawyer.

E. Beattie noted that it was good to see the meeting room being used for these purposes.

MOTION: To approve the Use Permits for October 29, 2023 and January 7th, 2024 for the NH Spinners and Dyers Guild, and on November 11th, 2023 for Priscilla Lord.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Kearsage Energy

A letter has been received from Kearsage Energy asking if the town has any interest in investigating the possibility of a solar installation at the Brush Dump on Parsonage Road. K. Anderson noted that there was no room at the Brush Dump to dedicate to this purpose on a long-term basis. L. Gargiulo agreed that the contracts were long-term and that he would not be in favor of it.

L. Gargiulo asked about the siting of personal solar panels on residential properties and if there were regulations about where they could be placed, specifically in the front of the property. E. Beattie said that proposals for location of solar panels have to follow the setback regulations, as for any structure.

Charity Bicycle Ride Permit

An application has been received for the annual charity bike ride that goes through Hampton Falls town roads – Sanborn to King to Drinkwater on October 21 from 9 AM- 11AM. Chief Veno is working with the organizer on any Police Details, if needed.

MOTION: To approve the permit request for the annual charity bike ride October 21, 2023 from 9 AM to 11 AM.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

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Other Selectmen's New Business:

K. Anderson told the Board that the town has \$12,333 remaining in ARPA funds to be used and suggested that those funds be used to replace the interior entrance door of the town office and install ADA compliant door openers for the two doors adjacent to the entrance ramp. The Board responded that was a good project and the Town Administrator will return with prices and options for the Board's approval.

K. Anderson said that last year some of the ARPA funds were used to provide small bonuses to support staff based on a specific formula. She suggested that a bonus based on the same formula be given to the Road Agent this year due to the extraordinary weather-related issues he has had to deal with this year. The Board agreed to the bonus for the Road Agent based on the same formula used last year.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:

Carol Schutte recommended that the Board look at the Better Business Bureau when considering using vendors that send similar solicitations as the one reviewed today from the solar company.

Monthly Reports: Selectmen's Representative Reports:

Conservation Commission: L. Gargiulo reported that the Conservation Commission has some trees that may need to be removed at the Raspberry Farm and asked that the Road Agent take a look at them. The Conservation Commission is in need of some trail clearing work needing to be done to the trails at both the Raspberry Farm and also at the Marsh Lane Preserve. The Conservation Commission doesn't have the volunteers that they used to who could help cut back the brush along the trails. Anyone interested in volunteering for trail clearing please contact the Town Administrator and the Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission also reviewed the Greenhead Trap Program that they operate and had considered a storage unit for the traps. This winter season the traps will be stored at the Brush Dump (as they have in the past) and the Conservation Commission will look into having Dragon Mosquito add the storage service to the mosquito control program.

Heritage Commission: L. Gargiulo reported that the Heritage Commission will likely be meeting next week.

Lincoln Akerman School (LAS): M. Lane reported that school is back in session and everything is going well. The School Board was going to have a representative at this meeting but was unable to attend this morning when the time was changed. The date of the Joint Deliberative Session is confirmed for February 6th, 2024 and coordination of the time needs to be established.

Recreation Commission: M. Lane reported that the Family Field Day in August was considered a success although the Commission hoped for more participants. The cost for the event was

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\$7,100. Upcoming events include working with the Library for a Holiday Ornament project, Chair Yoga at Avesta, and the Herbal Wellness programs.

The Wreaths Across America Program is looking for volunteers for their event on Saturday December 16, 2023.

Planning Board: Chairman Beattie reported that for the second month in a row, the Planning Board didn't have any new applications. The meeting this month (similar to the August meeting) will focus on Ordinances and Regulations. There is some concern with the Sign Ordinance, specifically enforcement of the temporary signs on the Town Common, as well as electronic signs. Applecrest has permission for their free-standing sign on the Town Common and a temporary sign when there is a special event. L. Gargiulo suggested that policy be established with clear guidelines that would be part of the Selectmen's Use Permit to use the Town Common. E. Beattie noted that the current signs are blocking the view of the Veteran's memorials. Electronic signs are a larger issue that the Ords and Regs Committee plans to continue to discuss.

Library Trustees

E. Beattie noted that the parking lot lines have been painted at the Library and look good. In addition, the cement apron at the Public Safety Building has been replaced and looks good.

OTHER BUSINESS:

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: August 09, 2023 and August 30, 2023

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 09, 2023 as written.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 30, 2023 as written.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

K. Anderson noted that Rachel Webb is not here today as she is taking part in a Leadership Academy through Primex.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

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Next Selectmen's Meeting is Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 8:00 AM.

These Minutes prepared by Karen Anderson, Town Administrator.