

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HAMPTON FALLS**

**NOVEMBER 15, 2023 – 8:00 AM
TOWN HALL**

FINAL

PRESENT: Ed B. Beattie, Chairman; Lou Gargiulo, Vice Chairman;
Mark R. Lane, Selectman; Karen Anderson, Town Administrator
GUESTS: Ryan Venio, Police Chief; Russ Hilliard, Road Agent; Jay Lord, Fire Chief;
Mark Sikorski, Building Inspector; Scott Bieber, Energy Committee; and
Carol Schutte, Energy Committee Chair
ABSENT: Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator

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

The Board of Selectmen congratulated Karen Anderson, Town Administrator for being named by the NH Municipal Association, "Municipal Advocate of the Year". Chairman Beattie stated that the NHMA is honoring K. Anderson at a dinner tonight at the NHMA's annual state-wide, two-day conference in Manchester, NH where she will be given the award. Chairman Beattie offered some treats and a card signed by all Selectmen in congratulations and appreciation.

Police Department / Animal Control Monthly Report – Police Chief Ryan Venio:

Officer Robert Burrell, recently hired has accepted another position out of state and has given his notice. He will stay on part-time. Police Chief Venio was granted permission to repost the position.

Chairman Beattie asked when the Police Cruiser was being bid, and K. Anderson responded that the vehicle was listed for sale with sealed bids due back in two weeks, by November 30th at 3:00 PM (*for more information, please view the Town Website at www.HamptonFalls.org, News and Announcements, posted 11/08/2023*). Police Chief Venio recognized Officer Bruce Preston for his efforts preparing the vehicle for sale, removing all the police equipment from the vehicle.

Road Agent Monthly Report – Russ Hilliard:

R. Hilliard provided an update regarding the Brush Dump: freon was removed from all appliances, appliances and all left over items were placed in the dumpsters, and all dumpsters were removed from the property. He stated that he has been working with Safety Clean and has separated all waste oil and fuels onsite at their request, for scheduled removal the first week of December. R. Hilliard reported that he discussed with ELM regarding the leftover waste containers from the oil consolidation, and most are recyclable and ELM will dispose of the containers. He stated that in preparation for Winter that 100 tons of Salt would fill the left side to be 100% full, and that would be plenty to get the season started.

L. Gargiulo stated that at the Conservation Commission meeting last night, there was discussion about getting a container for storage of the Green Head traps, to be located at the Brush Dump, and he said that he was under the impression that the Road Agent had no objection to that idea, but asked if it would impede snow removal equipment or anything else? R. Hilliard responded that there is quite a bit of room at the Brush Dump now, and that it could be located off in a corner, and he asked what size was being proposed, and L. Gargiulo responded a twenty-foot (20') drop-off container, without wheels. L. Gargiulo asked if he had an idea where the container could be located, as he is concerned that people will comment about the view. R. Hilliard said that it could go to the left of the salt storage building where the "everything" dumpster was located so that it will not be visible. L. Gargiulo stated that there may be some additional room inside the container available for storage of additional materials by the Town to be determined.

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L. Gargiulo stated that the container would be purchased by the Conservation Commission funds, unless it was eligible for Frying Pan Lane funds, to which K. Anderson responded no, that it would not be eligible for Frying Pan Lane funds. R. Hilliard inquired about timeframe for delivery and L. Gargiulo responded not until February or March, after Winter, so that the Green Head Traps that are currently stored at the Brush Dump will remain as they are for this Winter.

Review of the Road Agent's monthly Core Services bill in the amount of \$11,012.25, for work at the Depot, the Brush Dump, Brown Road, Starvish Lane, Drinkwater Road, Toll Farm Road.

MOTION: To approve the Road Agent's Core Services monthly bill for the month of October 2023 in the amount of \$11,012.25.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Chairman Beattie asked the Road Agent to consider scheduling a half-day of tree work to identify and remove dangerous tree branches overhanging town roads, and the Road Agent agreed to identify those needs.

Fire / Ambulance / Emergency Management Report – Fire Chief Jay Lord:

J. Lord asked if there were any questions regarding his monthly report, and there were none. The Fire Chief stated that the Seabrook Nuclear Drill was held on October 18th, and the report concluded that they demonstrated proper procedures and did fine. The next drill will be in February 2024.

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

M. Sikorski asked if there were any questions or comments regarding his monthly report, and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Reports: General Fund Balance: \$ 401,898.08 K. Anderson reported that tax payments are being received and the school payments have been made.

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

MOTION: To approve Payroll Warrant #615 dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$32,415.82; Accounts Payable Warrant #853 dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$117,038.43; and Escrow Warrant #42 dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$539.00.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

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

OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no Old Business Public Comment

NEW BUSINESS:

FINAL

Executive: Energy Committee: Chairman Beattie called attention to the list of Recommendations for the Public Safety Building, provided by the Energy Committee. Scott Bieber and Carol Schutte presented their findings from an energy audit at the Public Safety Building and their recommendations for HVAC improvements for that building. S. Bieber described the Public Safety Building (PSB) as having layered systems of climate control. The building was built in 1992, approximately 31 years ago, as an open concept building. Over time, the space has been closed off into smaller rooms that has resulted in changing the entire energy profile of the building. It started with forced hot water, then forced hot air for the HVAC system was added, then a mini-split was added in a break room, and there are additional space heaters. The main recommendation was to devise a single mini-split system to manage both heat and air conditioning for the entire PSB building.

- Install two (2) new 48,000 BTU hyper heat pumps, outside the building. Nine (9) rooms will be affected that are four (4) Police and five (5) Fire rooms.
- Install ten (10) ceiling cassettes, thermostatically and independently controllable. Instead of being located on the wall, the cassettes will be located in the ceiling tiles.

Each heat pump can be on heat, or cool, or be off, so it is a system that is controllable and reliable.

The justification for the investment:

- Current HVAC system is inadequate, inefficient, outdated and likely to degrade or fail further.
- Current systems don't work together and are usually on manual over-ride.
- The PSB has non-communicating and "layered" sources of HVAC including forced hot water, forced hot air, mini-splits, space heaters, etc.
- The current climate control system does not deliver equally to all parts of the building causing extreme hot spots and cold spots and generating the need for inefficient and costly stop-gap measures.
- Controllable and comfortable building climate is a vital component of a safe, healthy, and productive workspace for first responders and the public.
-

Scope of Work:

- Decommission some of the old equipment. The forced hot water system will remain.
- Cap off hydronic lines
- Install new Mitsubishi 48,000 BTU hyper heat pumps
- Install Mitsubishi 12,000 BTU and 9,000 BTU ceiling cassettes
- Install necessary condensation drains for each unit
- Provide all necessary and associated electric work and wireless thermostats
- Provide 12-year parts warranty, 1 year labor warranty
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Mitsubishi or equal: S. Bieber explained that the specification recommended by the Energy Committee is Mitsubishi, but an RFP may produce another brand.

Proposed location of new heat pumps on stands: The heat pumps stand roughly sixty-five-inches (65") tall and both will fit in between the windows close to the PSB building on the North side.

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Proposed locations of HVAC Ceiling Cassettes: A diagram was shown with proposed locations of the ceiling cassettes. S. Bieber explained that the Energy Committee considered creating ducts with registers; however issues of privacy and security were concerns. Protocols will be established for heat and AC with anticipated energy savings.

Demolition:

- Remove and dispose of inoperative “Ecopower” boiler and cap off unnecessary forced hot water pipes. Also remove and cap off hydro air units in Police Chief Closet and Evidence Room.
- Remove and dispose of existing AC condensers and associated piping that is accessible. Town will look at locations that may be able to repurpose these units.

Budget Estimate is \$90,000 (estimate from Kearney HVAC Inc):

- Includes \$81,000 for equipment, materials and labor subject to exclusions indicated in contractor estimate.
- Add roughly 10% for additional ceiling tile, finish or other work not covered by HVAC contractor – much of this can be accomplished by building staff and employees.

Alternative Solutions:

- 1) Adding additional ducts and registers, breaking through walls to distribute air better was rejected by the Energy Committee because although cheaper, it does not address the core deficiencies, would be marginally effective and could create safety and privacy issues.
- 2) Install “plug and play”, multi-zone mini-split system with hyper heat pumps. The 10% addition for ancillary work was recommended by the Building Inspector. This solution was recommended by the Energy Committee.
- 3) Install a large commercial Variable Refrigeration Flow (VRF) unit to provide heat and AC at the same time, was rejected by the Energy Committee, as the estimated cost is roughly \$200,000.

The Energy Committee recommends using the Kearney HVAC estimate as a good scope of work to utilize for an RFP. S. Bieber said that ductless systems are one of the most energy efficient systems.

Fire Chief J. Lord stated that the proposal is the most viable option to fix HVAC in the PSB. It makes sense. He said that the Fire staff can help with the demolition and removal of materials.

Police Chief R. Veno said that the heating and cooling is an issue in the building because the system is not reliable. He thanked the Energy Committee for looking into this and the amount of time they put into their recommendations.

L. Gargiulo asked if this proposed system would have an internet-based module to add efficiencies, and S. Bieber responded no, but that he could look into it. L. Gargiulo said that it makes sense because you can monitor the system remotely to turn it on or off, and S. Bieber said that he could see the benefit.

M. Lane asked about heat to the hallways, restrooms, and kitchen areas, and S. Bieber responded that those spaces would remain on the current hot water baseboard systems.

FINAL

M. Lane followed up asking about the comparative cost perspective using electricity for the mini-splits. And Carole Schutte responded that the long-term vision is to have solar to power electricity. And S. Bieber added that compared to a space heater, this is an efficient use of electricity.

S. Bieber asked if this proposal would need to be a Warrant Article, or would it come out of the Budget, and K. Anderson responded that it would need to be a Warrant Article, unless the Selectmen decided to add it to the Budget. She said that typically, for one-time purchases like this, the item is not included in the budget, and it is a Warrant Article.

L. Gargiulo asked if there was any more federal money leftover from ARPA, and K. Anderson responded that there is approximately \$26,000 available, so the Warrant Article would not need to be for the entire proposed amount if the ARPA money was utilized. Chairman Beattie said that he thought it was important for the Selectmen to try to find a way to do this project.

L. Gargiulo asked if there were any energy efficiency monies available from Unitil, to see if there were any funds available from that source.

Chairman Beattie thanked the Energy Committee for their work, and their proposal.

Assessing: Timber Cut Permit: Yield Tax Warrant

The timber cut has been completed at Map 1-18-01 and the tax imposed is \$317.50.

MOTION: To sign the Yield Tax Warrant dated November 15, 2023, in the amount of \$317.50.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Assessing: Abatements:

K. Anderson stated that these abatements are the result of assessments that decreased during the revaluation resulting in negative tax bills. These refunds return the taxes over-collected based on the first-half bill if they have been paid.

790	Map 6 – 039-C-02	\$ 13.00 Refund
791	Map 6 – 039-D-03	\$ 80.00 Refund
792	Map 4 – 001-PE	\$ 213.00 Refund
793	Map 1 – 033	\$ 13.00 Refund
794	Map 6 – 039-D-1	\$ 305.00 Refund
795	Map 6 – 039-A-57	\$ 157.00
796	Map 6 – 039-A-53	\$ 78.00
797	Map 6 – 039-B-11	\$ 230.00
798	Map 6 – 039-E-52	\$ 6.00
799	Map 2 – 144-001	\$1,122.00
800	Map 6 – 039-D -13	\$ 2.00

MOTION: To approve abatement/refunds #790-794 and abatements #795-800.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

FINAL

UNANIMOUS

Assessing: Equalization Certification: K. Anderson reported that Avitar has completed the Equalization Study for 2023 to be submitted to the NH Department of Revenue. The median sales ratio is 98% which is what is used to modify the assessed valuation for properties under review for abatements. The overall equalization assessment is 97.1%. (Hampton Falls was at 64% last year, by comparison.) That ratio is used to equalize the assessed valuation for State purposes for Highway Block grants and school aid. The COD (coefficient of disbursement) is excellent at 6.2 to show that Hampton Falls is equalized appropriately across all neighborhoods.

MOTION: To sign the 2023 Ratio Study Report and authorize Avitar to submit it to the NH Department of Revenue.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Other Selectmen's New Business: L. Gargiulo asked about the current interest rate being paid on the Conservation Commission account with \$150,000, and why it is so low, if it is possible to obtain a higher rate. K. Anderson responded that the Capital Reserve Funds held by the Trustees of the Trust Fund, will not know the gains until year end. She continued, that Town funds are handled by the Treasurer and every year around this time the Treasurer compares rates at other banks. K. Anderson reported that the current rate is 3.56% from M&T Bank. L. Gargiulo said that 3.56% is not what the Conservation Commission is getting on their account, it is much lower. K. Anderson reported that the Treasurer is going to be moving a certain amount of funds to the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool (NH PDIP) for municipalities, and their current rate is approximately 5.47%. L. Gargiulo asked if the rate is locked, and K. Anderson responded no, that the rate changes every month.

L. Gargiulo asked is there a reason that funds are only moved once per year?

B. Mutrie, Brown Road stated that she attended the Conservation Commission meeting last night, where the Chairman MaryAnn Hill reported that the Conservation Commission Fund with a balance of \$145,000 received interest of \$6.00. B. Mutrie said that the Heritage Commission Fund with a balance of \$8,000 is receiving interest of only 0.36% monthly, so she asked if both accounts could be overseen by the Trustees of the Trust Funds (TTTF). K. Anderson explained that it was not possible because the TTTF oversee Capital Reserve Accounts and Trusts, and then you would need to do a Warrant Article to spend anything out of it, and also to put money into it.

Chairman Beattie suggested that M. Hill meet with the Treasurer to sort out the interest rate issue. K. Anderson offered that M&T Bank holds those accounts as Escrow accounts and maybe a portion could be moved out as an investment account.

Chairman Beattie suggested that the following criteria be compared, for the different accounts: length of time, accessibility, and rate, and K. Anderson said that the Treasurer will work with the Conservation Commission and with the Heritage Commission on those issues.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: November 1, 2023 –

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MOTION: To approve the minutes of November 1, 2023 as written.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

M. Lane asked about the agreement for the baseball field in the Selectmen's packet. K. Anderson stated that she included it for informational purposes.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no New Business Public Comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:00 AM

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: M. LANE

UNANIMOUS

Next Selectmen's Meeting is Wednesday, December 6, 2023 6:00 PM

Final Budget Review and First Review of Warrant Articles.

These Minutes prepared by Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator