

**Holderness Select Board
Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2021**

Select Board Members Present: Jill White and Kelly Schwaner at the Town Office. Vice Chair, Woodie Laverack, Sam Brickley and Peter Francesco were present by remote link.

Others Present: Town Administrator, Michael Capone, at the Town Office, State Representative, Sallie Fellows, Town Moderator, Dan Rossner, Chair, Holderness Central School Board, Carolyn Mello, Larry Spencer, Chair, Holderness Conservation Commission and Bill Nesheim, Conservation Commission Member. Melanie Nesheim, Resident, all by remote link.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM in the Second-floor meeting room. Ms. White, Ms. Schwaner and the Town Administrator were all in the building in separate offices on the first and second floor. All others were attending remotely.

Ms. White read the following into the record: Due to the ongoing emergency orders in place, the Board is operating under RSA 91-A:2 that allows for remote participation by Board Members. Limited socially distanced seating is available in the second-floor meeting room. Remote access to the meeting, is available by invitation.

Ms. White then polled all meeting participants to ask if they had anyone else present in the room with them and if the meeting was being recorded.

New Business: State Representative, Sallie Fellows - was present to discuss the current legislative session with the Board. She mentioned some bills of particular interest including a bill to reinstate a partial contribution from the State to the Retirement System and a bill pertaining to wake boats. She also mentioned two of the bills related to school funding as well as HB 486 which she was sponsoring. This bill would increase the income and property value criteria for claimants of the low- and moderate-income homeowners property tax relief against statewide education property taxes.

Ms. White asked about HB552 which would suspend property tax valuations for the tax year beginning April1, 2021. Board members expressed concern that this bill would impact the statistical update of values schedule for the summer further compounding the disproportionate values that currently exist in the community. Representative Fellows said that she would review the bill and get back to the Board.

Ms. White and the Board thanked Representative Fellows for her time and her service to the community.

Approval and Signing of Payroll and Payables Checks: Mr. Francesco made a motion to approve the payroll and accounts payable manifests and to issue checks accordingly. There was a second from Mr. Laverack. There being no further discussion, the Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion by a roll call vote.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 19: Mr. Brickley made note of one typographical error. And then made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. There was a second from Mr. Laverack. There being no further discussion, the Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion by a roll call vote.

Correspondence File items: None

**Consent Agenda: Tax Map Maintenance Agreement-Cartographics
Solar Exemption Map 213 Lot 004, Smith Road
Special Event Permit at Wolfsburg Farm, June 19th and 20th**

Mr. Laverack made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Ms. Schwaner provided a second. There being no further discussion, the Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion by a roll call vote.

Old Business - Town Meeting Dates -revisit- Ms. White asked if the Board members wished to reconsider the Town Meeting schedule in light of the Governor issuing emergency order #83 which would provide greater latitude to Boards for holding Town Meeting.

Mr. Brickley was in favor of keeping the meeting dates as scheduled noting that changing them could have an impact on the SAU voting. Mr. Laverack was in agreement.

Mr. Francesco noted that rescheduling the meeting to a later date would afford more time for folks to get vaccinated and increase participation. Even with the socially distanced guidelines in place, there would still be a risk of transmission which might keep people away.

Others present felt that the meeting should be rescheduled to another date.

Ms. White mentioned that Mr. Rossner had a scheduling conflict and could not be at the meeting this evening and she would like to have his input.

Ms. Mello commented that the School Board would like to coordinate their meeting with the Town and would want it to be in person.

The Town Administrator asked for clarification with regard to whether we were only discussing the second session and the first session would still be on March 9th as scheduled. This would keep the SAU48 voting on track. Those present confirmed that the discussion was only with regard to the second session.

Ms. White suggested that the Town Administrator contact Mr. Rossner to see if he would be available to attend a meeting to further discuss the matter. Those present were in agreement.

Old Business – Conservation Grant Update – Larry Spencer, Chair of the Conservation Commission was present to provide and update on the grant proposal that had been submitted to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). There was general support for the proposal from the LWCF, but additional review would be required. Mr. Spencer had provided a draft support letter for review by the Select Board. It suggests that the Town of Holderness purchase the lots in question two in Plymouth, one in Holderness and two in Ashland and the Town of Plymouth hold the easements on these properties. It also suggested that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be prepared between the two towns outlining the specifics of the agreement including a stewardship plan inclusive of both Towns.

The Board had a number of questions with regard to the letter and how the management plan might work. There were also questions with regard to the inclusion of the Ashland properties and whether Ashland had been consulted with regard to the proposal. There were other questions with regard to whether the property owners had agreed to convey the lots, what the annual expense to maintain the parcels might be and whether there would be any restrictions placed on the lots that might eliminate

anything that currently occurs there. The Board asked the Town Administrator to collect the information provided on the matter to date and send it to Town Counsel for review and comment. The Board thanked Mr. Spencer for attending the meeting.

New Business – Revised Fund Balance Policy – the Board reviewed the revised Fund Balance Policy that had been prepared by the Town Administration based on a prior discussion at a joint budget work session with the Budget Committee. The only revision was to replace the language “6 to 10% of the total appropriations of the community “with “the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) recommended guidelines”.

Mr. Brickley made a motion to approve the policy as revised. There was a second from Mr. Francesco. There being no further discussion, the Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion by a roll call vote.

Old Business Covid 19 Operational Updates – The Town Administrator had no updates to report.

New Business- Coalition Communities Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - the Town Administrator provided some background on the MOU that had been prepared by the City of Portsmouth to be shared with communities that wished to solicit representation to address the matter of the school funding legislation currently under consideration in the Legislature. The current legislation would essentially reestablish the “donor” and “receiver” town concept. The opinion of the Towns that had been engaged in the discussion to date was that more time should be devoted to developing a more equitable funding solution for education. The Board had previously discussed this at their October 27,2020 meeting and voted to authorize \$3,000 in funding in support of this effort. Those funds would more than cover the contribution contemplated in the MOU.

The Town Administrator noted that exhibit C in the MOU would confirm the Towns participation in this effort and also allow them to appoint a representative from the Town to execute the agreement on their behalf and represent the Town in further meetings/discussions. Mr. Brickley made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the MOU on behalf of the Town and to further authorize that the Town Administrator to represent the Town as a member with regard to any terms contained within the MOU. Mr. Francesco provided a second. Mr. Brickley commented that the Town should commit funds to this effort in support of all of the communities that could be impacted as this could have financial implications Statewide. The other members of the Board agreed. There being no further discussion the Board voted 5-0 in favor of the motion.

Public Participation: Mr. Nesheim commented that he would prefer that the Town Meeting date be moved out to allow the opportunity for more people to participate.

Mr. Nesheim also noted that the goal of the Ox-Bow Conservation grant should be to continue to preserve access to the property.

Town Administrator’s Report to the Select Board

February 1, 2021

1. The public Hearing on the Town and HCS Budgets is being held virtually on Wednesday evening beginning at 6:30PM. All of the materials for the meeting have been posted on line

and if folks would like to request hard copies of the documents, they have been given directions as how to obtain them.

2. The Recreation Board has asked that you take a moment to review the revised Beach Rule for 2021. (attached). They would appreciate any input you may have with regard to the document.

3. The present deadline for petitioned warrant articles is February 2nd. To date, none have been received.

4. I have obtained some input from Counsel with regard to the reporting of sick and vacation time for Salaried employees to be included in the update of the revised employee handbook. It will be added to the draft for final review.

5. We have received a request from the United States Department of the Interior to collect a sample from the Pilote Forest property as part of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) statewide soil survey. *The Board, Mr. Spencer and Mr. Nesheim discussed the matter briefly. There was general agreement to participate in the survey, although it was requested that the Town administrator contact NHDES to inquire as to the liability issues should the soil survey indicate potential contamination issues requiring mitigation.*

5. The following Board/Committee/Commission Members are up for reappointment in March. Bob Maloney, Dayna Titus and Kevin Barrett-Budget Committee. Larry Spencer and Ben Amsden-Conservation Commission. Tom Stepp-Recreation Board. Bob Snelling – Planning Board.

Non-Public Session: RSA 91A:3, II (I), if necessary – None

Board Member Reports: None

Adjournment: With no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Brickley moved, with a second from Ms. Schwaner to adjourn the meeting at 7:20PM. The Board voted 5-0 in favor of adjournment by a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Capone
Town Administrator