

Town of Gorham New Hampshire



VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor Monday, June 14, 2021 5:00 p.m.

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Michael Waddell; Judy LeBlanc; and Adam White.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Vallee, Town Manager.

OTHERS PRESENT VIA VIDEO: Edith Tucker, Reporter, Berlin Sun; and Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk.

1. Non-Public Session - 5:00 p.m.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; and (e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with any body or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph.*

2. Public Session Call to Order - 6:00 p.m.

Chairperson Waddell called the public session to order at 6:10 p.m.

3. New Business

a. Announce action, if any, taken in nonpublic session

None.

b. NH Fish & Game OHRV Patrol Grant 2021

Denise Vallee indicated that the Board has initially signed paperwork for \$2,200 at the last meeting, and another \$2,000 was approved for which she received the paperwork, which she signed and returned.

c. First Half 2021 Property Tax Commitment

Tabled until 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 17, 2021, at a nonpublic meeting. Chairperson Waddell inquired whether the Board could set the tax rate in public session at 4:15 p.m., so the Town could send out first-half bills.

d. 2020 Abatements

Chairperson Waddell indicated these were reviewed in nonpublic session at the last meeting. Michelle went over each property, as follows:

- Mitchell and Sally Berkowitz, 9 Alpine Street, Assessed Value: \$169,400

Michelle indicated that KRT Assessors are recommending a denial on that as no comparables were provided that are new construction.

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved that the abatement request for Mitchell and Sally Berkowitz on 9 Alpine Street be denied, as recommended by KRT Assessors. It was seconded by Selectman White.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

- Samuel and Jesse McCreedy, 2 Prospect Terrace, Assessed Value: \$340,500

Michelle indicated that KRT Assessors are recommending a denial on that for many reasons, including that some of the comparables provided were not actually comparable properties and that the physical data issues that they described would not affect a change in value.

MOTION: Selectman White moved that the abatement request for Samuel and Jesse McCreedy, 2 Prospect Terrace, be denied, as recommended by KRT Assessors. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

- Jay and Vilma Holmes, 26 Alpine Street, Assessed Value: \$205,300

Michelle indicated that KRT Assessors did an in-person review on both buildings on the property, and they did find that there were considerable discrepancies, as they hadn't been able to get into the back building. She went on to state that KRT Assessors are recommending a reduction in value on that to \$165,700, which is a reduction of \$39,600.

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved that the abatement request for Jay and Vilma Holmes, 26 Alpine Street, be approved, as recommended by KRT Assessors. It was seconded by Selectman White.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

- James and Nancy Moran, 26 White Birch Lane, Assessed Value: \$84,100

Michelle indicated that when KRT Assessors went out to look at the property, at first glance it seemed like a full foundation which was later confirmed to be a raised slab. She went onto state that this reduced the value by \$9,200 to \$74,900.

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved that the abatement request for James and Nancy Moran, 26 White Birch Lane, be granted, as recommended by KRT Assessors. It was seconded by Selectman White.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

- Debra and Nicholas Rano, 28 Wilson Street, Assessed Value: \$85,400

Michelle indicated that when KRT Assessors did the pickups, the garage was inadvertently changed in style, and that amending it to the correct style created a reduction of \$4,600, which reduces the value to \$80,800.

MOTION: Selectman White moved that the abatement request for Debra and Nicholas Rano, 28 Wilson Street, be granted, as recommended by KRT Assessors. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

Ms. Vallee provided the Jack and Corrine Jennings abatements for '18, '19, and '20 per the spreadsheet that had previously been provided to the Board. Chairperson Waddell provided background regarding the abatements, reflecting a total refund for 2018, including interest, of \$4,974.90; for 2019, \$4,497.67; and for 2020, \$3,949.40.

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved that the abatement request for Jack and Corrine Jennings be granted for 2018, 2019, and 2020 in the amounts listed. It was seconded by Selectman White.

**Selectman LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman White: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

e. Moratorium on Building Permit Reduced Fees

Chairperson Waddell indicated that approximately a year ago, the Board did a moratorium/reduction of Building Permits fees, which did not include commercial properties. Discussion was had as to whether or not the moratorium should continue.

MOTION: Selectman White moved to keep the fees as they are currently, until such time as the other Permit issues come forward. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

f. Final Logo Designs

Ms. Vallee showed the two recommended designs. She went over the amendments made. Discussion was had regarding the logos.

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved to accept both logos. It was seconded by Selectman White.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

g. Multimodal Path Name Contest

Ms. Vallee indicated there were 23 different submissions. Discussion was had regarding the different choices.

MOTION: Selectman White moved to accept "Casey's Way" for the formally hereto known multimodal path. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

Chairperson Waddell suggested creating a memorial at either end of the trail in honor of Casey. Discussion was had regarding Casey and his work for the Town.

4. Old Business/Updates

a. Main Street - NHDOT Paving Project - Update

Ms. Vallee indicated that the paving is going to go from June 20, 2021 to June 24, 2021. She also provided a timeline of the milling and grinding work being completed.

- 5. Public Comment:** Public comments can be sent in via email to dvallee@gorhamnh.org prior to the Public Comment session. Any comments received via email will be read. Those in attendance will have the opportunity for public comment.

Ms. Vallee read an email from Angel King, 7 Dublin Street, regarding the repairs of the sidewalks on Main Street. She responded that the cost for that project is anywhere between \$1.5 million and \$1.8 million, and that the Town has applied for multiple grants, which have not been awarded to-date. She added that, as a backup plan, the Town

has applied to NHDOT to have the Main Street project added to the next Ten-Year Plan, which would not be completed for several more years, as the Ten-Year Plan does not begin until October 2023.

Edith Tucker spoke about a previous executive session and the availability of the minutes. Chairperson Waddell responded that the executive session was extended as the personnel issue was still ongoing.

Ms. Tucker indicated that a State Representative who's on the Resources Committee asked whether it was true that there still were a lot of ATVs going through and getting onto the rail trail at Route 2, to which Ms. Tucker was not able to respond, as she did not know. She suggested that either the Police Chief or the Town Manager could provide a Report on the status of the ATV usage. Selectman LeBlanc replied that the traffic has decreased substantially since the Route 16 trailhead has opened. She went on to describe the actions taken to improve the trailhead area. Discussion was had regarding the status of the rail trail.

6. Other Business

a. Approve Minutes of May 24, 2021 and May 26, 2021 (Regular & Nonpublic Meetings)

MOTION: Selectman LeBlanc moved to approve the Minutes of May 24, 2021 regular meeting and nonpublic meeting, and May 26, 2021 nonpublic meeting, as presented. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye, abstained from May 26, 2021 minutes

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

b. Town Manager's Report

- **Libby Pool**

Ms. Vallee indicated that the water intake did come in on its own, wherein Jeff had to drain it a tad, because there's no outlet currently. She noted that a sign will be erected indicating that swimming in Libby Pool will be at people's own risk. She added that an Emergency Application has been filed with DES, for which they are awaiting response.

- **July 4th Celebration Schedule**

Ms. Vallee indicated the schedule has been posted on the website, on Facebook, and physically by way of posters. She noted that the responses from the residents have been positive regarding the events. Discussion was had regarding the shortened schedule of events planned.

- **Intent to Excavate**

Ms. Vallee distributed it to the Board for their signatures.

- Ms. Vallee indicated that Paula wrote in from the Chamber requesting extended hours to end at 10:00 p.m. for September 11th and October 16th for OHRVs, as have been approved in the past, for Wingzilla and River Fire. Discussion was had regarding whether this extension would run contrary to State requirements and guidelines.

MOTION: Selectman White moved to approve the extended hours, as long as it didn't contradict State requirements and guidelines. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

- Ms. Vallee indicated that she spent two hours last Friday with Craig Rennie and Bill Lambert where they went out to the different parking areas on Route 2, Route 16, as well as to the trestle bridge and down through town to Bangor Street and analyzed the ATV signage. She noted that they would develop a proposal that's a combination of State Park symbols and highway signs, which would be unique to denote ATV usage.
- Ms. Vallee indicated that Craig Rennie may be able to meet on June 28, 2021, but if not, the board would meet with him in July.

c. Other

Selectman White inquired where you can find ordinances, as he can only locate mask ordinances and ATV ordinances. Ms. Vallee responded that the current Town Code is scanned, and she has to send it off to Municode to get the quotes on it, and therefore she's working on it. Discussion was had regarding removing the mask ordinance.

Ms. Tucker spoke about the inconsistency of weekly reporting from Town Departments.

7. Non-Public Session

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, **unless** the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted; and (e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with any body or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph.*

MOTION: Selectman White moved to reenter nonpublic session at 7:10 p.m. It was seconded by Selectman LeBlanc.

Selectman LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman White: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (3-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria O'Connor, Recording Secretary
O'Connor Legal, Medical & Media Services LLC
www.oconnorlmms.com
(603) 865-1255

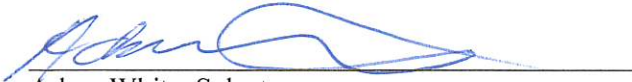
Minutes approved on June 28, 2021 by:



Michael L. Waddell, Chairman



Judith LeBlanc, Selectperson



Adam White, Selectman