

# Town of Gorham New Hampshire

## **PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN** **Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor** **Monday, March 27, 2023** **4:30 p.m.**

**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** Michael Waddell and Yves Zornio.

**SELECTMEN ABSENT:** Judy LeBlanc (excused)

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Denise Vallee, Town Manager; and Peter Gagnon, Town Manager in Training.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Adam & Mary White; Elaine Riendeau & Bill Dooan, residents; and Ray Gorman, Coos County Commissioner.

---

### **1. Non-Public Session - 4:30 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; (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee; and (c) 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.*

### **2. Public Session Call to Order - 5:30 p.m.**

Chairperson Waddell called the public session to order.

### **3. New Business**

#### **a. Announce Action, if any, Taken in Nonpublic Session**

None.

#### **b. Ray Gorman, Coos County Commissioner**

Ray Gorman introduced himself, his role, and what towns he represents as the Commissioner. Chairperson Waddell inquired regarding the County Tax for Gorham, to which he responded that it will be level for the third year in a row. Discussion was had regarding the budget process.

Chairperson Waddell asked about the status of hiring a new Administrator. Commissioner Gorman responded that he believes they have a new County Administrator that they will announce after Easter. Discussion was had regarding potential next steps in bringing on people to fill roles in the County Administrative Staff and whether there would be a change from the current way of doing things.

Mary White clarified regarding County-wide dispatch for Towns, and the fact that each Town has their own separate form of dispatch. Commissioner Gorman indicated that he's part of Northern Border Dispatch, which includes Colebrook (North) to Galloway, Maine (East) to Vermont (West) and 4 Canadian Townships. He went over the challenges they face.

Mrs. White further inquired whether the Northern Border Dispatch would consider taking in more towns from Coos County. Discussion was had regarding the possibilities of doing so, as well as pushback that is faced by taking on that endeavor. Further in-depth discussion was had regarding other dispatch options.

**c. Appointment of Town Clerk**

The Selectmen signed the Appointment for both Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

**d. Organizational Meeting - Selectmen's Representative Appointments & Appointments to Boards/Committees**

Tabled to April 10, 2023 meeting.

**e. Stony Brook Development Road Projects - Bid Award & Project Schedule**

Denise Vallee indicated that it was the recommendation of Eric Grenier of HEB Engineering that the project be awarded to Lee Corrigan, who bid \$1.514 million for all three roads.

**MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to award the bid to Lee Corrigan. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.**

**Selectman Zornio: Aye**

**Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

**The motion carried. (2-0-0).**

Ms. Vallee stated that Eric has spoken with Lee about a construction schedule, but not ahead enough in time to have it for tonight. She added that, based on earlier discussions, Lee plans to start with Hemlock and Evergreen once the road bans are off, and he anticipates them to be paved by June 2023, having Clay Brook Road completed by fall.

Chairperson Waddell requested that abutters be notified regarding the construction schedule, as well as keep them up-to-date as work progresses.

**f. Building Code Enforcement**

Chairperson Waddell indicated that the Town's Code Enforcement Officer is unavailable for the next few weeks, and therefore the Selectmen are going to step in and approve Building Permits, as submitted. He noted he received a pile of Permits earlier in the week and would like to make some recommendations. Selectman Zornio stated that he heard the recommendations and that they are good.

- **Home Occupation Appointment - Bob Gargano - Railroad St.**

Town is sending out abutter notices per the Ordinance. It will be voted on by the selectmen on April 10, 2023 to give abutters time to make comments.

- **Building Permit - 21 Union St. - New Trailer Lot**

More information is needed and should be ready to vote on at the April 10, 2023 meeting.

- **Matt Dercole - 9 Crestwood**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

- **Gary Belanger - 141 Lancaster - Handicap Access**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

- **Matten - Furnace Replacement - 14 Second St.**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

- **Bathroom Reno - 17 Jewel St. - Snyder**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

- **Demolition Permit - Koxarakis Trust**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

- **Renovation of Mr. Pizza - Rick Savage**

Recommended to be approved by Chairperson Waddell, under the condition that all work done meets all State, Federal, and Code Requirements.

**MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve all above-mentioned recommended Building Permits. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.**

**Selectman Zornio: Aye**  
**Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

**The motion carried. (2-0-0).**

**MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to authorize the Selectmen to review and approve Building Permits. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.**

**Selectman Zornio: Aye**  
**Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

**The motion carried. (2-0-0).**

**g. CDFA Loan - Authority to Apply and to Sign Grant Documents**

Ms. Vallee indicated she is working on an Application for a USDA Grant for the solar project at Public Works. She noted that one of the requirements for that grant is to have a Letter of Commitment from the CDFA for the loan. She stated that part of the Loan Application requires that Ms. Vallee has authorization to submit the Loan Application and then to sign any documents as required. She added that the authority can be changed over at a later date.

**MOTION:** Selectman Zornio moved to authorize Denise Vallee to apply for the grant and sign grant documents. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye  
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (2-0-0).

**h. Cemetery Deed**

For Dianne Doherty 22 Jewell Street

**MOTION:** Selectman Zornio moved to approve the Cemetery Deed for \$400 to Dianne Doherty of 22 Jewel Street. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye  
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (2-0-0).

**i. Public Event Permit**

Ms. Vallee indicated that this Permit was for the Farmer's Market for Cathedral Ledge Distillery to sell tastings and bottles of wine at the Farmer's Markets.

**MOTION:** Selectman Zornio moved to accept the Permit, subject to the State Liquor Commission approval. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye  
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

The motion carried. (2-0-0).

**4. Old Business/Updates, if any**

None.

**5. Public Comment:** Those in attendance will have the opportunity for public comment of two (2) minutes or less.

Discussion was had regarding the survey of the parking on Railroad Street and the impact on Bill Dooan, the abutter present.

Elaine Riendeau provided background regarding the renovations done on her property, wherein the garage was assessed as a house. She added that she hasn't requested an abatement, as she was told the clerical error was going to be corrected. She went on to say that this year she never received the new valuations, and when she did see them, they had gone up over 100%. She noted that she's at \$262,000 and that \$120,000 of that is the garage. She indicated she now has filed an abatement for 2022.

Discussion was had regarding residential and commercial appeals and the need to review the spreadsheet prior to the April 10, 2023 meeting. Chairperson Waddell outlined the abatement process to Ms. Riendeau.

Ms. Riendeau thanked Peter Gagnon for taking on the Town Manager role.

## **6. Other Business**

- a. **Review and Approve Minutes: February 27, 2023 (public and nonpublic) and March 12, 2023 (nonpublic).**

**MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the minutes of February 27, 2023 (public and nonpublic) and March 12, 2023 (nonpublic). It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.**

**Selectman Zornio: Aye**  
**Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

**The motion carried. (2-0-0).**

- b. **Abatements, if any**

None.

- c. **Town Manager Report**

- **Railroad Street Parking / HOP Grant - Update**

Ms. Vallee stated that there was a Planning Board meeting last Thursday night with Kaela Tavares and Tara Bamford on Zoom. She noted that Kaela did a nice presentation about the HOP Grant and that the focus is going to be parking on Railroad Street. She added that it will be a yearlong effort. Discussion was had regarding the meeting presentation. Further discussion was had regarding meetings to discuss Railroad Street parking.

- **Heating Oil Contract**

Ms. Vallee stated the Town entered into a contract for #2 heating oil that starts July 1, 2023, at \$3.07/gallon with CN Brown.

- **Cyber Security Review**

Ms. Vallee stated ATOM did a Cyber Security check on the town's network and that the report was good as no suspicious log in activity was found.

- **FEMA Disaster - Dec. 23 & 24, 2022 Storm**

Ms. Vallee stated that it was declared and there was a little over \$13,000 in damages to Town property. She added that Phil will submit the damage report to FEMA and to get a 75% reimbursement for repairs.

Chairperson Waddell inquired if there was ever a figure submitted regarding Public Works' loss. Ms. Vallee responded that there may not have been a loss as none of the equipment was reported as damaged. Discussion was had regarding the old salt shed/workshop and what should be done with it moving forward, due to its current state.

- **Rooms & Meals Tax for FY 2023**

In 2022 the town had received an extra \$90,000 in Rooms & Meals Tax over what was anticipated. When the budget was being prepared for 2023, the Department of Revenue advised that it was a one-time increase and that it would not happen again. Ms. Vallee stated she attended

a virtual State Revenue Webinar last week and found out that after review of the revenues, the Department of Revenue is going to be funding at the same level in '23 as it was in '22, which gives the Town \$90,000 more than budgeted and should reduce the projected tax rate increase of \$1.48 down to \$1.25.

- Chairperson Waddell inquired regarding retirement discussions in the Legislature.

**7. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to adjourn. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.**

**Selectman Zornio: Aye**

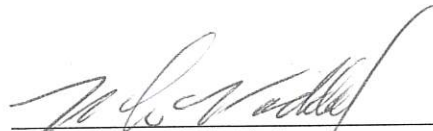
**Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

**The motion carried. (2-0-0).**

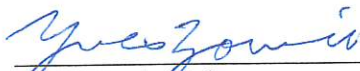
Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria O'Connor, Recording Secretary  
O'Connor Legal, Medical & Media Services Inc.  
[www.oconnorlmms.com](http://www.oconnorlmms.com)

Reviewed and approved on April 10, 2023 by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Waddell, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judith LeBlanc, Vice-Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Yves Zornio, Selectman