



Town of Gorham New Hampshire

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor Monday, April 11, 2022 4:30 p.m.

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Michael Waddell; and Yves Zornio.

SELECTMEN ABSENT: Judy LeBlanc.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Vallee, Town Manager; and Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk

OTHERS PRESENT: Shannon Buteau, Library Director; Nicole Eastman, Library Trustee; Victoria Hill, Library Trustee; and Edith Tucker, Reporter, Berlin Sun.

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; 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 meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

3. New Business

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

None.

b. Library Trustees - Discussion, Re: Storage at Public Library

Chairperson Waddell began by informing the two Trustees of the Board's legal responsibilities toward their hard copy records, applications, and legal records. He relayed the importance and necessity of having a room that could be locked with a key where the Board could store all of their permanent records and data that they do not need to access frequently. He added that the information was not a security risk and that, in the future, the Town would follow the State by digitizing all of these records, and in fact they have already started, but for now they really need the room to store these special documents.

Trustee Nicole Eastman asked when the Board would need this room, how long would the Town need the space, who would be able to access this room, and how large of a space would they need? Director

Shannon Buteau asked if the insurance the Town has would cover any damage incurred by the person accessing the stored records.

Chairperson Waddell answered yes, the Town's insurance would cover any damage at the library location. He stated that the Town would cover the cost of the premiums of the insurance whatever that may be. He added that the Town would probably need the space for approximately 5 to 10 years. He also discussed the personnel policy.

The Trustees told the Board that they had to leave to go to their Library Board meeting that was being held that night at 6:30 pm. They both thanked the Board and left.

c. 2022 Equalization Rate

Discussion was had regarding the 2022 Equalization Rate, including the Summary Report that was previously distributed to the Board. The Board was informed that the Single-Family Homes came in at 67.4, Residential Land came in at 54.42, but the biggest surprise was with Commercial Land & Building rate that came in at 91.45.

Chairperson Waddell stated that this information was generated off of sales and done by the State of New Hampshire, which usually run from November to October. Discussion was had as to the actual dates that sales were run, including the fact that there were 344 total sales, and the majority of those sales fell into the Single-Family Homes category.

Michelle explained COD (coefficient of diversion) and noted that the Town sales percentage is currently at 30.69. She stated further that she thought that it was high because of all the Single-Family Homes sales that had been sold throughout the year which she equated to be a good thing for the Town. All the members present agreed that it was encouraging news.

d. Commercial Building Permit Fees

Chairperson Waddell started a general discussion about the \$35.00 fee not being enough to cover the expenses of the Code Enforcement Officer on large Commercial projects, and whether the Town be reimbursed for the expenses incurred.

Michelle asked the members if it really made sense to charge \$75.00 to a commercial business that needs to fix a roof as opposed to a business that needs to fix a window that is only charged \$35.00. Selectman Zornio suggested a fee for five visits of the Code Enforcement Officer or per visit because we are encouraging responsibility.

Chairman Waddell stated that now is the time to do some research on the process, requesting suggestions from everyone, including Vice-Chair LeBlanc, as to what and how they should charge Commercial Businesses. He added that he wanted the fees for Residential to stay the same.

Michelle began a discussion about homeowners who are trying to get around building permits for their projects, which included first writing a letter to the homeowner to try and get them to pay for the permits, and then waiving the fee for basic maintenance or very incidental issues. Chairperson Waddell asked Michelle for a draft on the changes discussed here at this meeting.

e. Bench Memorial Program

Denise Vallee began a discussion about people who wanted a bench in memory of their loved one to be placed on the Town Square. She stated that there were 9 or 10 previous requests.

Chairman Waddell said that as long as it was tastefully done it was fine. He continued to say that the benches would be serving the public, but not other kinds of different things. He said that they would have

to determine how much they could charge, and the benches would have to be of good quality. Ms. Vallee said that she would find out all of the bench details and have it for the next meeting.

f. Grant Agreement - Water Department

Ms. Vallee defined MS-535 as the Town's Financial Report that is posted on the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration website portal, and this is actually for the year 2020. She determined that the Town's position financially was in pretty good shape. She stated that they still do not have the printed audit because it was during COVID, and the employees were all working from home. Ms. Vallee insisted that the year 2020 would arrive soon.

g. Water & Sewer Asset Management Grant

Ms. Vallee stated that she had a \$71,600.00 Asset Management Grant from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the Asset Manager Grant. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

h. Field/Facility Use Policy Update

Ms. Vallee began the discussion about two changes that were highlighted in the Policy document, which each selectman had for reference.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the changes to the Field/Facility Use Policy. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

i. Insufficient Funds Policy

Ms. Vallee stated that the Insufficient Funds Policy was based on RSA 80:56 for uncollectible remittances which limits the Town to charging a \$25.00 fee together with any protester legal fees. She described the Policy, wherein if someone's check bounces, the Town's bank would charge them a \$20.00 fee. She added that the Town would still be owed the \$25.00 but not be charged any fee. She noted that the Town was experiencing a rash of credit cards being rejected.

Selectman Zornio suggested that there should be a sign where people are paying for their fees that they will have to pay in cash hereafter if they bounce a check or cancel a credit card payment. A discussion ensued amongst the members of how to handle the problem of bounced checks, insufficient funds, and credit card cancellations.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to proceed with the check cashing policy, as presented, including penalizing for insufficient funds checks. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

j. DTC Lawyers Representation Agreement

Selectman Zornio initiated the discussion about the DTC Lawyers Representation Agreement.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to accept the DTC Lawyers Representation Agreement. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

k. Project Report from Bronson Paradis

Ms. Vallee discussed the audit the Town underwent by the New Hampshire Retirement System. She stated that they had to create some additional payroll codes and they are going to reclassify some of the stipends that have been paid out as well as retroactive pay. She added that Bronson Paradis is working on researching that going back to 2017 and is hoping that Mr. Paradis can get this job done quickly.

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.

Edith Tucker inquired regarding the right of way on the land near a Railroad intersection at St. Lawrence and Atlantic, adding that there were ATV riders using that land beside the railroad tracks and near the trestle, which seemed dangerous to her.

Chairman Waddell stated that it's not in their jurisdiction to tell the State of New Hampshire anything. He continued to say that he certainly encouraged The State of New Hampshire to move the trail near the intersection and that the Town would make an official response over this issue through the Town Attorney.

Discussion was had regarding several properties, the idea of a tax holiday, an Airbnb platform, and tax responsibilities on short term rentals. Further discussion was had regarding upcoming projects in the Town.

6. Other Business

a. Approve Minutes of March 28, 2022 (public and nonpublic).

MOTION: Chairperson Waddell moved to approve the Minutes of March 28, 2022 (public and nonpublic). It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

b. Town Manager's Report

- Ms. Vallee announced that Big Day Brewery opened this past Wednesday.
- Ms. Vallee stated that the Marshall's Grand Opening is April 28th at 8 a.m.
- Ms. Vallee informed the board that Mike is out-of-state until April 25th, so the next meeting date is changed to May 18th.
- Ms. Vallee noted that the repairs have been completed at the Storage Building at Public Works, which cost \$2,500.00 to bolster it up.
- Ms. Vallee informed the Board that the Communications Committee had a meeting on Friday morning, wherein the members discussed the multi-site radio repeater system, mapping, and the different companies that it concerned. She stated that the reason she brought this up was because she wants to get into conducting a communications study and mapping study. She noted that she was given a quote by Ossipee Mountain Electronics, in the amount of \$8,150.00, and that she would like to see the work started on this as soon as possible and stated that the Town had the funds to cover the cost.

MOTION: Chairperson Waddell moved to approve the expenditure of \$8,150.00 to Ossipee Mountain Electronics. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

- Ms. Vallee stated that Dog Day in Gorham was slated for September 11, 2022.

MOTION: Chairperson Waddell moved to approve Dog Day on September 11, 2022. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

- Ms. Vallee indicated that Jeff has an application in to the NH Liquor Commission for a Food and Fun Festival for June 18th.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the Application for the Food and Fun Festival for June 18th. It was seconded by Chairperson Waddell.

Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

- Ms. Vallee noted that the Cathedral Ledge Distillery is asking to be able to operate on July 7, 2022 at the Farmer's Market, wherein they are permitted to have patrons taste their wines.

MOTION: Chairperson Waddell moved to approve the Application from Cathedral Ledge Distillery for July 7, 2022. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

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

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

7. Adjournment

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

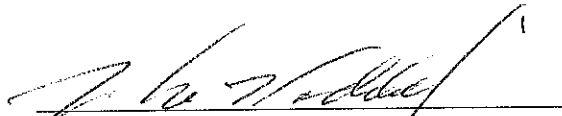
**Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye**

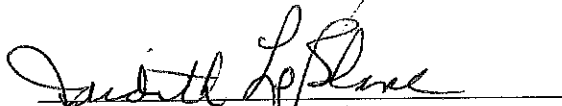
The motion carried. (2-0-0).

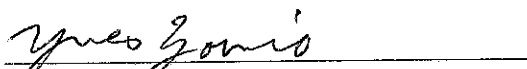
Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Morgan, Recording Secretary
O'Connor Legal, Medical & Media Services Inc.
www.oconnorlmms.com

Approved by the Board of Selectman on July 27, 2022:


Michael Waddell, Chairman


Judith LeBlanc, Vice Chair


Yves Zornio, Selectman