

Town of Gorham New Hampshire

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor Monday, January 9, 2023 4:30 p.m.

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Michael Waddell; Judy LeBlanc; and Yves Zornio.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Vallee, Town Manager.

OTHERS PRESENT: Roger Corvell, Resident.

OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Eric Grenier, HEB Engineering

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; (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community; 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.*

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

Chairperson Waddell called the public session to order at 5:37 p.m.

3. New Business

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

No actions taken during the earlier non-public session.

b. 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule

The draft schedule submitted includes change of meeting schedule during the month of May to reflect Wednesday meetings.

c. New Tax Rate Analysis

The analysis has found that the value of stick-built homes outpaced the values of the other three sectors. Values of manufactured homes, commercial and utility properties increased, but not at the same pace. Therefore, including a lower tax rate at the State's direction, the proportion changed to weigh more heavily on the residential properties. This ratio will remain until the statistical update can be done in 2024. When the Statistical Update occurs in 2024, the proportion will likely fall more in line with historical norms with new tax rates established based on the new utilities valuation.

The members of the Board encouraged any members of town who feel their assessments are out of line with the value of their properties to buyers, or if dimensions or measurements are incorrect, to contact the Assessor. All valuations are guided by State law, and administered by the Board.

d. Stony Brook Projects RFP - Eric Grenier, HEB Engineering

Eric Grenier, of HEB Engineering, outlined his perspective on the plans of re-constructing Hemlock Road, Evergreen Drive, and Clay Brook Road, and scenarios of seasons, bonding, mobilizations and order of operations. Questions from the members brought to a point the project's financial impact and timeline with respect to each 'phase'. The Board was encouraged to hear the scale of the project, and order, would not prohibit smaller, local firms from bidding for the earthwork contracts.

The Board did not want to pay a second mobilization cost if the work were not completed in a single construction season. Mr. Grenier suggested the contract specify if that needs to be a tenet of the agreement, but he saw no harm to the integrity of the work if left as binding pavement for a winter before completion the following year.

Even with this major outlay, however financed, this still leaves other needs in town, including Cascade Flats, etc. The Board wanted to ensure the ability to increase preventive maintenance, reducing the Pavement Deterioration Curve, and extending the life of roadways. Still further, funding these projects will remain difficult without some significant financial savings for such inevitable work.

The Road Reconstruction & Resurfacing Capital Reserve, Capital Outlay, disaster preparedness and matching FEMA funds were all discussed at length. The Board sought to declare a number as future annual goal, and with forecasting difficult, stuck with \$250,000 as though each year is in preparation for a large project with minimal Bond offerings, as each carries a burden that can easily compound.

MOTION: Chairperson Waddell moved to propose a Five Year Bond to pay for the Clay Brook project and continue \$250,000 annual contribution to Capital Reserve for Road Resurfacing & Reconstruction to the Budget Committee. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

4. Old Business/Updates, if any

a. Purchasing Policy

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to approve the Purchasing Policy, as written. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

b. Policy Against Harassment

Denise Vallee has submitted a query concerning the Statute and is awaiting response from Town Attorney Brenda Keith.

5. Public Comment: Those in attendance will have the opportunity for public comment of two (2) minute or less. There were no comments from the public.

None.

6. Other Business

a. Review and Approve Minutes: December 22, 2022 (public and nonpublic) and December 29, 2022 (public and nonpublic), and January 3, 2023 (nonpublic).

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to approve the minutes of December 22, 2022 (public and nonpublic). It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the minutes of December 29, 2022 (public and nonpublic). It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye
Selectman Zornio: Aye
Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

January 3rd Meeting Minutes not available.

b. Abatements / Settlements

Abatement agreement reached with D.J. Bouchard, and the warrant was signed by the Chairman to issue a \$500 settlement check.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve payment of a \$200 check to Robert Ouellette due to a missed Veteran's Exemption. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

c. Town Manager Report

- **Tax Bills - USPO Delivery**

Chairperson Waddell and the other members expressed dismay at reports of tax bills taking seven days, or even more, to reach residents from Town Hall. Having been told by local USPS staff there is nothing to be done concerning the routing of mail to distribution centers and then back to town, the Chairperson requested Denise Vallee draft the required letters to Congressional delegation expressing the unacceptable time taken regularly.

- **12/23/22 Storm Damage**

Damages from the storm of the 23rd resulted in work on the 24th, 25th, 29th and 30th. The County is trying to bundle all the information for FEMA, and current damage repair cost is over \$19,000 in town and does not yet include expense of Gorham Heights.

7. Nonpublic 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;* (b) *The hiring of any person as a public employee;* (d) *Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community; 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.*

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. and return to nonpublic session. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Dennis O'Connor, Recording Secretary
O'Connor Legal, Medical & Media Services Inc.
www.oconnorlmms.com

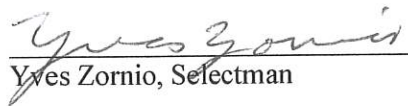
Reviewed and approved on February 13, 2023 by:



Michael Waddell, Chairman



Judith LeBlanc, Vice-Chair



Yves Zornio, Selectman