

Town of Gorham New Hampshire

PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GORHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN **Gorham Town Hall Public Meeting Room 2nd Floor** **Monday, January 23, 2023** **4:30 p.m.**

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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Vallee, Town Manager; Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk; and Peter Gagnon, Per Diem Manager.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ericka Canales, CEDC (virtually); Deidre Blais, Business Owner/Resident

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 5:30 p.m.

3. New Business

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

No action taken in earlier non-public session. Will be returning to non-public session following public session.

b. Ericka Canales - CEDC: Cultural District

Ms. Canales outlined steps already undertaken and what comes next in designing a more comprehensive marketing and messaging campaign for the businesses within the Cultural District area. The hopeful neighborhood overlays nearly exactly with Subcompact A, which is already zoned accordingly for businesses sought. In conversations with local businesses, Ms. Canales identified needs for local businesses to combine efforts and spread costs of marketing. These targeted partners would be lodging, attractions, artist studios, breweries, etc.

Board Member Zornio asked if the Chamber of Commerce had taken part in this, and the reply was that the businesses approached had stated their needs regarding joint marketing. Chairperson Waddell directed Denise to draft a letter to the Chamber inquiring if the organization would like to take part in this development.

In addition, Chairperson Waddell thought it would be appropriate for the Chamber to hold a seat on the subcommittee recommended by Ms. Canales. Ms. Canales will next design the framework of proposed organization and write a First Year Plan for presentation.

c. 2023 Budget Recommendations

The Board was unable to complete review of the changes coming to the Tax Impact because the numbers had not been included. Chairperson Waddell asked Denise to begin a conversation with Water and Sewer about finding a way to work together without billing back and forth.

In addition, while discussing the damage done to the Family Resource Center, 89% owned by the town, and 11% owned by the School Board, conversation moved into long-term ownership and stewardship of the property. At some point, a single-owner solution might be sought.

d. Elderly Exemption - New Proposed Income Limit for 2023 Warrant Article

While exact presentation of the Warrant Articles awaits recommendations re: ganging, and the language of such an act, the Board did act on a couple exemptions.

Michelle Lutz provided the Board with calculations of the change in value of the Elderly Exemption of \$2,500. Left unchanged since 2014, inflation had greatly reduced the impact of the exemption. Ms. Lutz reviewed a number of scenarios with the Board.

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to Increase the Elderly Exemption by \$3,500 to \$24,400 for a single person or \$32,400 for a married couple. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

e. Disabled Exemption - New Proposed Income Limit for 2023 Warrant Article

After discussion similar to that around Elderly exemptions, the Disabled Exemption, unchanged since the 1990s, Chairperson Waddell asked if there was a Motion.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to make the Disabled Exemption the same as the Elderly Exemption, which brings it to \$24,400 for a single person or \$32,400 for a married couple. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

The State caused the sunset of the \$50 credit for Veterans and a Warrant Article related to reinstating it will be included in the Town Warrant.

f. Railroad Street - ROW on North Side of Road

This particular scenario is emblematic of the importance of continuing the practice of surveying before any and all land work in town. This has allowed for lots with ambiguity to be dealt with. The Board is perfectly fine with abutters to this patchwork of small parcels being allowed to "buy" the identified parcels in question for simply the costs of transferring – lot line adjustment, deed preparations, and any other fees or costs associated with taking on the new land. More conversations to follow.

g. 2022 Encumbrances

The new Encumbrances include Patriot Properties, KRT, and Alta Group, LLC. When added to previously identified, the new carry over is \$102,889.34.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to approve the 2022 Encumbrances. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

h. 2022 Revaluation Form

Ms. Lutz stated that she had reviewed the sales and that the values set as part of the revaluation were set as of April 1st, but the DRA continues to use sales through September 30th. The sales show that we are still in an appreciating market and the sales also show why the EQ rate is less than the 100% goal of the revaluation. The Board was enthusiastic in its comments regarding the great strides Ms. Lutz has made in learning what she has over the past year regarding assessing.

Ms. Lutz submitted reports and Memorandum from Richard Dorset of KRT to substantiate steps taken. Conversation of the difficulty of meeting State mandates while following State guidelines followed for just a moment.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to release all sale statistics from April through the end of the year to DRA. It was seconded by Vice-Chair LeBlanc.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

Chairperson Waddell asked Denise to forward reports to local paper, city manager, and other parties with a vested interest.

MOTION: Selectman Zornio moved to sign the new CAI Agreement at \$2,600. 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

The Board had previously signed the certificate for Bob Gordano to join the Planning Board for 1 year, but the process needed to be repeated for his admission to the Zoning Board, as well. No vote needed, just a signature from the members.

a. Policy Against Harassment

No action taken tonight.

b. Stony Brook Projects RFP Update

Mobilization costs discussed and the proposals seem to come down to decision to pay mobilization costs twice and deplete Capital Reserve substantially or pay a similar amount in interest over the 5-year term for the Bond for a one year project. Eric is finalizing RFP with new insurance numbers provided by Denise and approved by Primex.

c. Bond Terms for Clay Brook Road Project

None.

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

6. Other Business

The Board read the proposed Bill concerning Removing Immunity of Municipalities as promoted within the legislature. Denise was asked to draft a strongly worded response to the irresponsible Bill.

a. Review and Approve Minutes: December 5, 2022 (public), December 29, 2022 (public), and January 3, 2023 (nonpublic), and January 9, 2023 (nonpublic).

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to approve the minutes of December 5, 2022 (public), December 12 (public and non-public), December 29, 2022 (public), and January 3, 2023 (nonpublic). It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

b. Abatements, if any

None.

c. Town Manager Report

• 12/23/22 Storm Damage

Primex adjuster stated the damage to two structures will be a single claim as it is a single policy, saving a \$1,000 deductible. Waiting on FEMA for declaration.

- **HOP Grant**

This new grant, Housing Opportunity Planning, will be useful in a number of ways, including the aforementioned parking issue on Railroad Street. It is an award of \$32,000 over three phases of study.

Board asked to authorize Chairperson Waddell to authorize Denise to submit on behalf of the town for CDFA payments. Judy Motion – Yves Second – Passed.

MOTION: Vice-Chair LeBlanc moved to authorize Chairperson Waddell to authorize Denise Vallee to submit on behalf of the town for CDFA payments. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

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; (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 return to non-public session at 7:38 p.m. It was seconded by Selectman Zornio.

Vice-Chair LeBlanc: Aye

Selectman Zornio: Aye

Chairperson Waddell: Aye

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

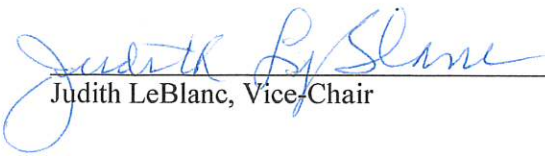
Respectfully Submitted,

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

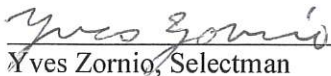
Reviewed and approved on February 13, 2023 by:



Michael L. Waddell, Chairman



Judith LeBlanc, Vice-Chair



Yves Zornio, Selectman