

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
December 2, 2019**



ATTENDANCE

Chairman Adam Munguia; Selectmen Bob Jordan, Cody Belanger and Joe Trombley. Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge. Selectman Mike Yergeau and Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard were excused.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Munguia called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Epping Town Hall.

PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

PAYROLL MANIFEST

Payroll manifest for the pay period ending November 28, 2019 in the amount of \$181,547.19 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the payroll manifest for the pay period ending November 28, 2019 in the amount of \$181,547.19. Seconded by Selectman Cody Belanger. Motion carried 4-0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANIFEST

Accounts payable manifest for the week ending November 26, 2019 in the amount of \$2,164,465.13 (\$1,000,000 School, \$833,828 County Tax, \$30,743.75 Library Expansion Expense and \$299,883.38 Town expenses) was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the accounts payable manifest for the week ending November 26, 2019 in the amount of \$2,164,465.13 (\$1,000,000 School, \$833,828 County Tax, \$30,743.75 Library Expansion Expense and \$299,883.38 Town expenses). Seconded by Selectman Cody Belanger. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Selectman Joe Trombley to withhold the Oyster River check in the amount of \$3,799.50 until an expense analysis can be completed. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Discussion: Selectman Joe Trombley explained that the Oyster River invoice was unexpected and we need to insure that all AIA contracts have been satisfied first. Motion carried 4-0.

MINUTES

Minutes from November 18, 2019 Selectmen's meeting was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Cody Belanger to approve. No second as a quorum of those present for that meeting were not present. Minutes will be submitted for approval at the December 16, 2019 meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT ROOF

Chief Don DeAngelis addressed the Board regarding fixing the Safety Complex roof. He has been working with Selectman Joe Trombley on this and has received bids for the roof work. After a review of all bids it was determined that the roof can be fixed with an acrylic sealant for all the joints which carries a 5-year warranty on labor. The amount for the repair is \$17,450 from Exeter Roofing. Selectman Trombley explained that the 5-year warranty will give the Town five years to come up with or decide on funding to have the roof replaced.

Motion by Selectman Joe Trombley to contract with Exeter Roofing in the amount of \$17,450 to repair the roof at the Safety Complex. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Motion carried 4-0.

Note: Chief DeAngelis will work with Lisa Fogg to have the monies encumbered for this project as work probably would take place until the spring time. A purchase order will be completed so that the funds can be secured.

PUBLIC HEARING

PART 1 – Proposed Project – Water System Improvements

Chairman Adam Munguia called on Donna Lane a CDBG Grant Consultant and Dave Mercier who is an Engineer with Underwood Engineering to begin the Public Hearing on the CDBG grant.

Chairman Munguia opened the Public Hearing

Ms. Lane read a script laying out the purpose of the CDBG grant which is to receive \$500,000 in funding of which \$25,000 is for administrative costs to help fund the water upgrades including the construction of a new water treatment plant at the Epping Crossing Well Site.

Questions were entertained from the Board of Selectmen. Chairman Munguia stated that the Town has been looking at different funding sources to help with the water projects and called on Dave Mercier to elaborate a bit on the goal of the grant. According to Mr. Mercier the Town is unable at this point to treat more than 100 gallons per minute and the goal is to increase that to 435 gallons per minute and to extend water in a westerly direction to homes who have MBTE's in their water. Wells were contaminated with MBTE's and Tim & Joni's was identified as the source. Many other funding sources have been sought and/or applied for and once a funding package is put together the Town can move forward with a warrant article. Selectman Joe Trombley asked if the contamination was risky to surrounding Towns. Mr. Mercier said there is no indication that contaminants are endangering any other public water source.

Public Comments

Selectman Munguia opened the hearing to public comments. There were no public comments and thus this portion of the Public Hearing was closed.

PART 2 – Housing and Community Development Plan

Chairman Munguia opened the second Public Hearing on the Housing and Community Development Plan. Towns that apply for this grant must adopt the goals as laid out with no obligation. Similar plans were adopted by the Town years ago when it had a CDBG grant but they have been updated since. Ms. Lane read through the goals. (See script attached). The goals are consistent with Epping's Master Plan and Ordinances. Ms. Lane asked the Board if there were any questions. There were no questions from the Board of Selectmen

Public Comments

Selectman Munguia opened the second hearing to public comments. There were no public comments and thus this portion of the Public Hearing was closed.

PART 3 – Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan

Chairman Munguia opened the third Public Hearing on the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. Ms. Lane stated that this portion does not relate to this type of project but it is required. The Town has adopted this plan back when they were last awarded CDBG grant money. This project will not result in the displacement of any resident. However

if the plan were to displace anyone this plan would have to be followed but again it does not apply to this type of project. Donna Lane asked the Board if there were any questions. Chairman Munguia reiterated that there would be no displacement of anyone for this project.

Public Comments

Selectman Munguia opened the third and final hearing to public comments. There were no public comments and thus this portion of the Public Hearing was closed.

Motion by Selectman Cody Belanger to adopt the Housing and Community Development Plan. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Selectman Cody Belanger to adopt the Residential and Anti-Displacement and Relocation and Assistance Plan. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the submittal of the application and vote to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to sign and submit the CDBG application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract and any amendments thereto. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Motion carried 4-0.

FIRE MUSEUM

Chief Don DeAngelis came before the Board with Clifton Cray regarding the Fire Museum. The Chief oversees Mr. Cray and the work being done at the museum. It was learned that Mr. Cray spoke of the "Friends of the Museum" organization and that they have properly registered with the State, have their own EIN number and bank account with Citizen's Bank. The discussion continued as to how funds were being used and it was the consensus of the Board that any capital expenses needed Board approval as the building is Town owned. Selectman Belanger suggested entering into a lease agreement with the Friends of the Museum if that was legal or even necessary. Administrator Dodge suggested that if Mr. Cray were to bring a list of projects the "Friends" wanted to fund that he could submit that for Board approval.

The donations coming in through the Friends of the Museum are proper. Selectman Jordan commented on how good the building looks and thanked Mr. Cray for all of his work and the work completed by the Jail Trustees.

RESIGNATION

Selectman Munguia read a letter of resignation from DPW employee George Sanborn. This resignation was to take effect immediately.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to accept the resignation of George Sanborn. Seconded by Selectman Cody Belanger. Motion carried 3-0-1 with Selectman Trombley abstaining.

BUDGET REVIEW

Chairman Adam Munguia stated that the Budget Committee voted at their last meeting to reduce the Town budget by \$150,000. Before discussing the budget itself Chairman Munguia said that a new default budget had been generated. He then called upon Finance Director, Lisa Fogg to give a summary of the change. Ms. Fogg stated that the original default amount did not include some items such as the new wastewater treatment building, library addition and associated costs. After contacting legal it was learned that those costs can be included since you have to operate the new buildings. When including those numbers the default number changed. The original difference between the proposed budget and default budget was \$606,000 and with the changes the new number is \$303,125 which includes Water and Sewer. Chairman Munguia said that the Town portion of the default budget without Water and Sewer is \$184,000 and so if \$150,000 is cut from the proposed budget that number would be \$34,000. He further explained that he is prepared to address this matter with the Budget Committee and explain that making the desired cuts will affect our public safety and our roads. Chairman Munguia said that police cruisers could be removed from the budget and put forth as a warrant article but after years of debating the funding of police vehicles the Budget Committee was adamant that those costs should be carried in the budget. As far as roads are concerned the Town has already been told that they under estimate the road reconstruction line as proven by a recent presentation from RPC (Rockingham Planning Commission). He said that after reviewing the proposed budget there were areas that could be cut a few hundred dollars, such as Patriotic purposes and maybe \$50,000 could be cut but nowhere near the \$150,000 request that has been made. Selectman Bob Jordan agreed with Chairman Munguia. Selectman Joe Trombley said that it was "unrealistic" to look at different scenarios as to where the cuts could or should come from. He said it would be a waste of time to remove the police vehicles from the budget and place them on the warrant since it was just last year that the Committee decided to have the police vehicle as part of the budget and not in a warrant article. Road reconstruction is no different since we have known for a while that we already underfund that line. Selectman Trombley said that he went through the budget thoroughly and highlighted areas to be noted. He began by saying he wondered how many Budget Committee members watched the meetings the Selectmen had with the Department Heads when the budgets were vetted. It was during those budget discussions that the Board cut \$167,000 from the original budget proposal.

So the Board has already made the cut of \$150,000 plus an additional \$17,000. The water and sewer portion of the budget was not part of that cut.

Selectman Trombley said that at the budget presentation with the Budget Committee there were no areas of concern communicated to the Selectmen and to vote on a \$150,000 cut is “disruptive” to the process. The Budget Committee did spend 45 minutes to an hour on just the merit pool line of \$30,000 and seems to be a concern of theirs.

He then went through the discretionary areas that were increased and explained and/or justified those increases.

He personally felt that in regards to road reconstruction and in light of RPC’s presentation that number should be \$800,000. Selectman Trombley didn’t think the timing was right to talk about higher increases since the taxes just went up.

Chairman Munguia agreed with Selectman Trombley. He further stated that the \$30,000 merit pool is a “management tool” used to retain skilled employees and keep unions at bay. If the employees should unionize then he was sure the salaries would exceed the \$30,000.00.

Selectman Bob Jordan and Cody Belanger agreed with the presentation put forth by Selectman Trombley and were in total “alignment” with what he said.

The Board as a whole expressed their displeasure with Budget Committee’s vote to cut the \$150,000 as they feel the Selectmen have scrutinized the budget thoroughly through a long process and presented the best budget to meet the needs of the Town.

This was a lengthy discussion and all of what was said was not captured in the minutes. For details please see meeting tape of December 2, 2019.

At the conclusion of the budget the following motion was made.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to present the 2020 budget as is without the suggested \$150,000 cut by the Budget Committee. Seconded by Selectman Cody Belanger. Motion carried 4-0.

More budget discussion continued.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the new default budget of \$7,152,345.00. Seconded by Selectman Cody Belanger. Motion carried 4-0.

LAND USE CHANGE TAX

A land use change tax form was presented for Paul Cunningham 30 Annika Lee Dr. Map #025 Lot #025 Block #003. The property is no longer eligible for the current use program. The fair market value is \$33,333 and thus the tax would be \$3,333.00.

Motion by Selectman Cody Belanger to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Paul Cunningham 30 Annika Lee Dr. Map #025 Lot #025 Block #003 with the fair market value of \$33,333 and tax of \$3,333. Seconded by Selectmen Bob Jordan. Motion carried 4-0.

WARRANT ARTICLE REVIEW

The Board decided to wait for a full Board to vote on the articles and thus no action was taken. Selectman Joe Trombley asked why the article to rename the Town Hall Trust Fund was removed. Administrator Dodge said that the Board voted to do so at the November 18, 2019 meeting a meeting he was not in attendance.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge

No Report.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

Selectman Belanger

Selectman Belanger hoped all had a good Thanksgiving and welcomed Selectman Trombley back from his vacation.

Selectman Belanger wanted to say that at the December 16, 2019 he will be addressing the Board as he has applied for a Home Occupation permit. He will present from the floor and not as a Selectman. This will be a public hearing which is required.

He asked all to be careful in the snow.

Selectman Trombley

Regarding the budget discussion tonight he stated there was nothing personal there he just had a lot to say about it since a lot of effort was put into it and he wanted to defend his views. There were things that just had to be addressed.

Selectman Trombley said that the Library is not open yet but they are moving back in and a CO (Certificate of Occupancy) is expected within a week. There are two estimates to install the indoor rubber flooring. One of which is \$4,312 and a new bid came in for \$3,683. Selectman Trombley doesn't believe there is a building code issue to leave the inside stairs as wood. Simply put if we don't have the money to do then it won't get done. Once we get a better understanding of what is spent and needed to spend we can decide on the flooring. There are other items that need addressing as well.

As far as the outside stairs are concerned Selectman Trombley stated that whomever we contract with they should have experience with brick work. Administrator Dodge said a quote was pending but he had not yet received it. The front stairs could be used in its current state so long as railings are installed and the landing is extended by a few inches.

Selectman Jordan

Selectman Jordan echoed the sentiments of Selectman Trombley relative to the budget. He felt that there may be a misunderstanding on the Budget Committee's part and he wished Chairman Munguia well when he addresses the Committee..

Selectman Munguia

Hoped everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

Motion by Selectman Belanger to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Gregory C. Dodge
Town Administrator**

Adam Munguia, Chairman

Bob Jordan, Vice-Chairman

Cody Belanger, Selectman

Joe Trombley, Selectman

Note: Selectman Michael Yergeau was excused.

Dated: December 16, 2019