

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
May 17, 2021**



ATTENDANCE

Chairman Mike Yergeau; Selectmen Joe Trombley, Bob Jordan, John Cody, Tom Gauthier; Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge; Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Yergeau called the public meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DONALD DEANGELIS

EOC Director Don DeAngelis reported the number of COVID cases have decreased significantly. Only 62 new COVID cases were reported today. The state is officially reporting 1,300 COVID cases within the state; 17 of those are in Rockingham County and 4 are new cases in Epping.

The highlight of the Universal Practices the Governor sent out is to change the mask order. Those who have had vaccines don't need to wear masks, those who haven't had the vaccine will still be wearing a mask. This will be maintained by the honor system. Signing in at the door of town buildings should be continued.

With the decrease of state directives and changes in 2.0 from the Governor, Epping's Emergency Operations Center will close June 1st and business will resume as normal. Any COVID information will be taken care of on a day to day basis.

FIRE CHIEF LOMBARDO

Chief Lombardo has been working with the school regarding a safe graduation plan. The school task force will put together a plan for outdoor or indoor graduation and he will review it.

Chief Lombardo announced the full-time position that had been filled is vacant. Mr. Turner turned the position down for personal reasons. The department has 5 new candidates. There may be 2 positions opened as another employee has had an offer from another department. As

one applicant is from inside the department a fire chief from outside the Town of Epping will be used for interviewing purposes.

Chief Lombardo reported there is water at the West Epping Station. Epping Well & Pump completed the installation and Monarch Electric tied in the electrical service. Chief Lombardo thanked Road Supervisor Dave Reinhold and the highway staff for digging the trench and backfilling the project.

Chief Lombardo explained Engine #3 is in for repairs. The transmission failed and has some electrical issues. Ambulance #1 needs a state inspection and will be put in service May 26th.

POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL WALLACE

Chief Wallace informed the board there were no traffic issues at the "Import Face Off Wars" last weekend. Over 7,000 tickets were sold all day and the event was well attended. Meetings are being held to prepare for the NHRA races on June 11, 12 & 13th.

Chief Wallace stated the new hire Greg Huard will be starting tomorrow. As he is the new DARE Office he will be meeting with the school superintendent soon.

Lieutenant Steve Soares explained the Stanton Grant which monetarily supports a Canine Unit for municipalities. The grant covers 100% of what the unit needs for 3 years. The rolling grant pays \$27,000 up front for the cost of selecting a dog, training and the devices needed, kennels, vet bills, bullet proof vest along with equipping the police car appropriately. The dog will be selected through Boston Canine that screens the trainer and the dog for a match to the officer. This program does not need to be continued after the 3 years. Discussion continued regarding local commitments for food and vet bills, the importance for search and rescue, PR for the town along with helping officers with the presence of the dog. If the officer becomes ill the dog can be transferred and retrained with a new officer.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to authorize the police department to go forward with the Stanton Grant for a canine patrol. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

7:15 LIBRARY

Chairman of the Library Trustees John Clark came before the board with Charlie Goodspeed to explain the landscaping at the library. The planting will begin this Friday by the Epping Garden Club, Friends of the Library and staff (not the children's garden). Mr. Goodspeed is doing the preparation work. Pattie from Lorax Landscaping and her staff will be working with the Epping volunteers. Mr. Clark requested permission to block off the parking lot closest to the

library for the woodchips, compost and plants. Mr. Clark asked the police for increased patrols while the plants are being stored before planting. He would also like to borrow some traffic cones from the town on Wednesday.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Purchase Order to Abbot Equipment Sales Inc. for 1 Sweepter Pull Broom in the amount of \$1,800.00 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve the purchase order to Abbot Equipment Sales Inc. for 1 Sweepter Pull Broom in the amount of \$1,800.00. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

Purchase Order to Bellemore Drain for 45 hours of catch basin cleaning in the amount of \$6,975.00 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order to Bellemore Drain for 45 hours of catch basin cleaning in the amount of \$6,975.00. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Purchase Order to Keep It Native for invasive plant (knotweed) control in the amount of \$9,600.00 was submitted for approval. DPW Director Dennis Koch explained last years sprayed sites will be revisited along with new locations. In June and July the knotweed is cut, then in the fall it is sprayed.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order to Keep It Native for invasive plant (knotweed) control in the amount of \$9,600.00. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Purchase Order to East Coast Containers for a 45-yard Octagon Receiver Box and delivery in the amount of \$10,850.00 was submitted for approval. This is replacing an aged can and was included in the budget.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order East Coast Containers for a 45-yard Octagon Receiver Box and delivery in the amount of \$10,850.00. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

7:30 SCHOOL BOARD

School Board members; Chairman Deb Brooks, Vice Chairman Dave Mylott, members Heather Clark, Ben Leavitt and Superintendent Bill Furbush met with the Board of Selectman on shared interests.

Purchase Update: Town of Epping Finance Director Lisa Fogg and the School Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom are evaluating purchases made by the town and the school. The discussion revolved around heating oil, trash removal, copy paper and paving projects. Purchasing medical supplies through the fire department was added onto the school list. The school purchasing their own compactor will be reviewed by the facilities director.

Fields behind the SAU: Heather Clark was on the Fields Committee and discovered the fields behind the SAU belong to the town. Discussion regarding the need for larger fields for the use of EYAA (making the field into 2 fields), who takes care of the fields, grant money, parking issues continued.

Comcast usage: Ben Leavitt suggested sharing e-mail and storage space with the town through the school's internet systems and google domain. Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge explained the town will be in negotiations with Comcast soon. He wasn't happy with the last contract as Comcast didn't fulfill their obligations. The second studio for ETV at the school was brought up but the school has space issues.

Shared IT Services: The town has a contract with an IT provider but Mr. Dodge would like to talk to the School IT director about the town web site redesign.

Space needs – Watson/Recreation: The SAU and the recreation departments switching buildings was discussed briefly. Selectman Trombley offered to create a School Space Needs Committee as the town is growing and more room is needed.

HB1 Impact: This bill would mean the voting polls would need to be open 15 days before and 10 days after voting for Federal Elections. If this HB1 passes the elections would not be able to take place at the school and other accommodations would be needed.

SB Liaison Role: Selectman Trombley explained this position is a communication tool. As he is the liaison this year he can reach out to the School Board Chairman regarding items of interest. Chairman Brooks will be able to reach out to him as they watch each other's meetings.

Selectman Cody asked for an update on the heating system. Superintendent Furbush said the installation is right on schedule and will be completed by opening of school next fall.

School Board Member Dave Mylott told the selectmen Senator Maggie Hassen visited the school and met with staff and students. Epping schools opened early and set an example due to all the efforts of the staff, students and parents revolving around COVID related issues. The students were impressed that a US Senator would visit a small town and school.

The next meeting between the Board of Selectmen and the School Board will be in 3 months at a School Board meeting.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Minutes from the May 3, 2021 Selectmen meeting was submitted for approval.

Payroll manifest for the pay period ending May 13, 2021 in the amount of \$141,277.28 was submitted for approval.

Accounts payable manifest for the week ending May 13, 2021 in the amount of \$1,565,443.36 (\$1,000,000.00 is the school payment, \$188,500.00 in for the water treatment plant, \$155,614.00 is for the SRF Loan and \$221,329.36 is for the town) were submitted for approval

Report of Excavation to Wayne Downs, 26 Hedding Road, map and lot 016-054 in the amount of \$158.00 was submitted for approval.

Timber Tax Levy's for James Derosier, map and lot 028-015 in the amount \$222.82, First Fruit Developers, map and lot 028-013 in the amount of \$2,271.66, Christine Ross, map and lot 028-016-001 in the amount of \$143.07, Jack Lavoie, map and lot 029-022 in the amount of \$277.65 and John, Renee and Billy Victoria, map and lot 029-049 in the amount of \$1,117.05 were submitted for approval.

Abatement for Mark Judd, map and lot 023-039-010-B was submitted for denial.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the Consent Calendar. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. No action was taken due to discussion. Selectman Trombley stated Planner Kellie Walsh will review 2021 Intent to Cuts. Selectman Trombley requested an amendment to the May 3, 2021 minutes.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to remove the May 3, 2021 minutes from the Consent Calendar. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the solar antique lights as long as the Historical Commission approves *and after seeing more light options (preferably without the solar hat on top)*. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 4-0-1. Selectman Jordan abstained.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the rest of the Consent Calendar. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

BUSINESS

FIRE

Purchase Order to Jones and Beach for an engineering site plan to place a cistern on the corner of Blake Road and Prescott Road in the amount of \$12,200.00 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order to Jones and Beach for an engineering site plan to place a cistern on the corner of Blake Road and Prescott Road in the amount of \$12,200.00. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

WATER AND SEWER

Purchase Order to Ayer Electric Inc. for power at WWTF Lagoon for sludge removal in the amount of \$14,500.00 was submitted for approval. This will be reimbursed through the lagoon bond project for temporary power.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order to Ayer Electric Inc. for power at WWTF Lagoon for sludge removal in the amount of \$14,500.00. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

Selectman Trombley explained there was not a recommendation from the Water and Sewer Commission as a unanimous vote to fill the vacant seat on the Commission. Many options were discussed. Selectman Gauthier offered to be appointed until March.

Motion by Selectman Trombley to appoint Tom Gauthier to the Water and Sewer Commissioner position until March. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

ETV

Purchase Order to Castus for the annual hosting and support services to ETV in the amount of \$3,195.00 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the purchase order to Castus for the annual hosting and support services to ETV in the amount of \$3,195.00. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

RECREATION

Appointment for Carol Clapp for the Recreation Commission was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the appointment for Carol Clapp for the Recreation Commission. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

TELEPHONE POLE

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge explained the Senior Class would like to use the telephone poles for graduation banners like last year. Part of the procedure from Eversource is knowing the Board of Selectmen agrees to the banners.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the Senior Class banners on the telephone poles and removing them by July 1st. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

2021 TAX WARRANT – FIRST HALF

2021 Tax Warrant for the first half in the amount of Ten Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty-Five Dollars and Eighty-One Cents (\$10,950,635.81) was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the 2021 Tax Warrant for the first half in the amount of Ten Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty-Five Dollars and Eighty-One Cents (\$10,950,635.81). Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

SHIRKIN ROAD COMMITTEE

See attached response from Fremont Select Board on lifting the weight limit ordinance on Shirken Road. A lengthy discussion followed on how best to proceed. Selectmen Trombley offered to draft a response to the proposal from Fremont with the Epping Board of Selectmen's comments.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge updated the board on the building department office. Building Inspectors from Nottingham and Raymond are assisting Paul Langdon.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge explained there will not be a Memorial Day Parade this year held by the American Legion. The Board of Selectmen were supportive of the parade but

deferred to the American Legion to make the decision. Services at the cemeteries, bridge and at the 4 corners will still be held.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge asked for clarification on next Monday's meeting with Fremont. Both Shirkin Road Committees and select boards will be invited to a live meeting or ZOOM.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge mentioned the next regularly scheduled Board of Selectmen's meeting is Tuesday, June 1st due to the holiday weekend. He will try to have a short agenda.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

Selectman Tom Gauthier

Selectman Tom Gauthier would like to speak to the Road Supervisor Dave Reinhold about the process to change direction on Bunker Ave.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to lift the mask mandate at the town hall due to the new guideline effective June 1st. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0. Selectman Trombley thought the Town Hall mask mandate should consider having the same mandate as the school. Some of the committee members aren't comfortable with meetings in person and have the ZOOM options. EOC Director Don DeAngelis requested the town follow the CDC recommendations.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to follow the CDC recommendations which is no mask wearing necessary in the town hall if you've been fully vaccinated starting June 1st. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Selectman Joe Trombley

Selectman Joe Trombley stated he is glad to see the library project wrapping up with the bricks and the plantings.

Selectman John Cody

Selectman Cody will be attending an on-line workshop for new town officials.

Selectman Cody stated this is EMS Provider week. He thanked all those who work as providers, especially this past year.

Selectman Cody asked if the Fire Department could have new signage restricting people from going to the back of the building, such as restricted access only with permission? As this is a public building Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge didn't think that would be possible.

Selectman Bob Jordan

Selectman Bob Jordan asked Fire Chief Lombardo to talk about Ambulance #1. Mr. Lombardo stated they are waiting for the door seals to be fixed and the state inspection to be done. The ambulance will be ready for service on May 26th. He will have an announcement on the Epping Fire Facebook.

Selectman Mike Yergeau

Selectman Mike Yergeau would like to talk to the Road Supervisor Dave Reinhold about the road budget. The state is now saying the Jenness Road project needs booster pumps. Once they are installed the town owns them and they are very expensive.

ADJOURN

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Joyce Blanchard
Executive Secretary**

Mike Yergeau, Chairman

Joe Trombley, Vice Chairman

Bob Jordan, Selectman

John Cody, Selectman

Tom Gauthier, Selectman

Date: June 1, 2021