

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MINUTES FOR MAY 4, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Shawn Talbot Chairman; John Veaser, Jason Somero  
Town Administrator Scott Butcher

**John Veaser made motion to go into Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 at 5:15, Jason Somero seconded the motion.**

**Returned to Public Session at 6:00**

**HR 1 discussion with Moderator Bob Romeril:**

HR1 has passed the House of Representatives, and has moved to the Senate SP-1. Secretary has made a point to let moderators know that it will include drastic changes. It will dramatically change who wants to be election officials and the cost of running election. If anyone (BOS or citizens) has an opinion on this they should contact the US Senate they are the only ones left to vote on this.

HR 1 is an act to expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants and implement other anti-corruption measure for the purpose of fortifying our democracy and for other purposes.

Briefing focused on the Division A – Elections portion of HR 1.

The majority of the law is based on the way other states run their elections. We do it locally, but others do it by counties, Hillsborough County has nothing to do with New Ipswich elections. Bob asked Scott to post the slides to the Moderators link. (Slides can be found on towns home page, under Moderator or at these links <https://www.townofnewipswich.org/home/town-moderator/files/hr-1-presentation-slides-elections-law-changes-federal-level> and <https://www.townofnewipswich.org/home/town-moderator/files/hr-1-summary-slides> )

The Slides have more detail, but in summary some concerns were logistics (we can have the gymnasium for 30 straight days), staffing, cost, timing between primary and election to get the absentee ballots out.

There would be a lot of changes to NH law if this were to pass. Also if law were passed it would need to be done well in advance of November elections to make the changes, both in NH and then local changes would need to be made accordingly to allow time to train and implement.

Can get a lot of ballot clerks to rotate in and out over the 15 days, however local officials such as, Supervisors of the Checklist, Moderators and Selectmen, that are required to be there will have to do exponentially more work. Also, will there be job protections for them like there is for military personnel? Also, what is the effect on self-employed who also do these jobs?

Rank choice voting – study to be conducted on the implementation and impact of ranked choice.  
Electronic poll books, a way of checking people in, go to a station, get a ticket, and get ballot to vote.  
Avoids the lines by alphabet that we do now. How we clean people off the rolls becomes more difficult.  
Bob encourages everyone to take a look at this bill and express their opinions.

New voting machines sometime in the next 18 months will be a requirement by the state to use the same ones they use.

#### **Discussion on SAU 87 Payment Arrangement:**

Scott did a Review of the documentation sent over by the school with the payment schedule and various changes in the payment amounts. The end result is that it appears that we have an overage. Sometime this month we should see what the appropriation will be for next year.

#### **Minutes:**

Audience question regarding the minutes. Scott noted staffing issues had occurred that caused delay. Shawn noted that this has been addressed and the videos are available until we catch up.

#### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS:**

John wanted to discuss **holiday pay for FT employees who work alternate hours**, such as 4 - 10 hour days, or similar arrangements. Feels holiday pay should be 8 hours, and the employee can request 2 hours in personal time if they desire.

There was a general discussion of the pros and cons of different options.

Alan (audience) noted that after many years of government work he never heard of getting more than 8 hours holiday pay, even if your regular day is a 10 hour day.

John feels that we should make it as simple as possible, to avoid complicating the policy. The policy should apply evenly across the board.

Jason – **rough cost estimate on PD improvements**, handed out estimates to the Selectmen to review. There was discussion on material price increases for wood, metal etc. Jason talked with the Chief and he would like to get background checks on the volunteers.

Shawn brought up **planters around town**, and asked how they get planted. Noted a resident told him about planters in Smithville before the memorial event.

It was noted that Volunteers, DPW and Mason Brook Nursery have been used in the recent past.

Shawn brought up the **sharp corner on Greenville Rd**, and how many accidents have occurred there. Scott had suggestion at minimum to put the yellow sharp turn arrow signs up. Scott Peter and Tim to go around and see if other areas should be marked as well. Also discussed guardrail, but it was felt the car could ricochet into oncoming traffic.

John also noted the guardrail could collect snow and that could also cause an issue.

Road Striping could also be an option but budget needs to be reviewed. But at bare minimum get some signs up.

John made **motion** to get signs posted on Greenville Rd, Jason seconded the motion.

Scott hasn't received all the **roofing quotes**, just has two, will give Tyler a call to get that quote in by next Tuesday.

Shawn noted it was **Town Clerk week** and he would like to thank all the clerks, both past and present. His sentiment was echoed by the rest of the board.

Scott got a notice from NH Municipal Association the some things between town council and Selectmen/Administrator may not be protected from right to know requests. NHMA will analyze and update on what potential effects this may have.

Scott brought up the **cleaning contract**, the company they were considering doesn't do the background checks, they are asking us to do them. The bigger issue is that they can't guarantee that in the case someone is sick or out that the replacement person will be background checked. The checks are comprehensive and expensive. Scott to respond to the company, and note that they were supposed to be pre-qualified.

Shawn asked if this doesn't work do we reach out to another company, or ask another town like Rindge or Jaffrey who they use.

Scott exchanged some emails with **Comcast**, and will have a conversation tomorrow at 10 about all the services, and that we want to be better able to manage the phone system that we have. Meredith had mentioned she was told that some things we cannot manage and would have to have Comcast do those. Scott would rather have the ability to do quick updates in house. We are at the end of the 3 year agreement, and would like to have Comcast address this before thinking about change.

Also our franchise agreement expires in July, there are things we many want to negotiate before the renewal. He will review the contract agreements. We may want to tweak the franchise feels upwards a bit. Also our station 22 is not HD, should discuss that. Also ZOOM most likely will not fully go away even when the executive orders go away, we could improve our technology to have better audio and video. They are putting a quote together for a new video system. This will be a fully integrated system so we won't have to run two different streams.

Scott also discussed some potential technology updates and that we may need to stage the upgrades, so we would need to be sure what we buy now will be able to grow with the updates.

Broadband expansion will happen, question is how it trickles down to us locally.

Next up, Scott has been asked by **Eversource for an emergency point of contact** so when we have storms or other situations they have someone to reach out to. The emergency manager is usually the person they reach out to, but Scott indicates that the 3 department heads don't want to be the POC. Scott feels he would be willing to be the secondary, but not sure he should be a primary contact. Scott reviewed what is expected the contact would be responsible for.

John feels this falls under the Emergency Management Director.

If there were a deputy EM, they could be the primary or secondary contact as well.

Scott brought up the appreciation event and what is needed. Table, chairs, how many have RSVP'd, (about 20), open to volunteers as well as employees. Food to be purchased and grills by Shawn and Jason, Scott to provide the credit card. Women in office will bring sides and desserts. Set up for 40 ish people with tables and chairs.

Jason asked if more news on the **ABC tenant**. Meredith went by to see if any activity and it was dark. No one has received any communication from them.

**iWorq training**, Scott, Jen, Rick and Susan attended. Susan and Rick have punch list items to follow-up on. We can create things for them to enter into the system. iWorq is happy to provide further free training as needed, also can do major updates and add plug ins at further cost. There are other modules with functions outside permits and code management, but we'll look at that later.

Scott mentioned we were told there were unlimited seats, so we could potentially add conservation, zoning, etc. Can we set up permits like an automatic alert to these other boards. Susan could send to herself and then have an automatic distribution list. Special exceptions and variances would be nice modules to have to track these requests.

Shawn noted that it would be nice to take advantage of all the features and help out the volunteers on the boards.

Shawn brought up the **tree clearing on Boynton hill road** by the DPW, but there was no communication to the town.

Scott mentioned we could utilize FB and the Web Site to let people know that they will occur. Also the video upgrade could support a community bulletin board or could have the chyron / scroll at the bottom of the screen to alert people.

Shawn mentioned not the daily schedule, but more like a month heads up that a project is coming up. Scott asked how the people who brought it up to Shawn wanted it to be communicated to them. There was no preference mentioned.

It was discussed where on the web site we could put it, Scott feels the home page could be rearranged.

**Old town garage**, cleanup is looking good. Scott would like to use auction house. John noted it shared septic with property next door.

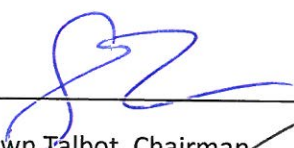
Waiting on parts for Grader repairs. Dump repairs are still open. Pickup was able to order we are on a list.

Selectman Veeseer made a **Motion** to adjourn, Selectman Somero seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Mallett, Land Admin

Minutes approved by:

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

  
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Shawn Talbot, Chairman  
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John Veeseer  
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Jason Somero