

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**  
**Sept 13, 2021**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Shawn Talbot Chairman; Jason Somero and Bert Hamill Selectmen  
Jim Coffey, Town Administrator, Susan Mallett

**Open Meeting in the Town Office with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:00**

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION 1:**

**Motion at 5:07 pm** to go into non 91-A:3 II(a&b) by Selectman Talbot, seconded by Selectman Hamill, all in favor.

**Motion** to come out of non-public was made by Selectman Talbot and seconded by Selectman Somero, all were in favor.

**Return from non-public session at 5:45 pm:** Minutes are not sealed. Decision to make Michael Abel the new Chief of Police. Swearing in will be on Tuesday 9/21/21 at 5:00 in the Town Office.

**Todd Road:** Justin Dean would like to upgrade a portion of Todd Rd. Such upgrades would include putting in a culvert in and some gravel down, along with removing some large rocks. He has a driveway permit and will be building a home next year and would like the road to be more drivable. The rock wall will remain in place.

**Motion** to grant the approval to proceed with the improvements as discussed was made by Bert Hamill and **Seconded** by Jason Somero. All were in favor.

**Parks & Rec and Library:** Shawna and Michelle gave a presentation of the Needs of the community and how Parks & Rec and the Library might be able to assist. Some points they noted are as follows:

- We need a dedicated teen space
- We need senior & adult programming
- Would like to bring in River Center and Food Banks
- Would also like to work with the Welfare Officer to understand needs

In the mornings they would like to have coffee hour, parent / child group, home school co-op, craft groups, game groups, library programs

In the evenings, teen advisory once monthly to plan recreation events, teen night 1 or 2 times a month, and parents night out. Michelle will be meeting with the Financial Advisors & Board, and Shawna & Michelle will come back to the BOS after the 28<sup>th</sup>. Michelle has her presentation to the Library Board to review contracts, and other documents.

**Administrators updates:**

**Warrant Article / Budget Season:** Jim Coffey will start to build the warrant and flesh it out during the budget hearings. BOS will kick off budget season off on Oct 12<sup>th</sup> with all departments submitting by that date and goal of having it finalized in November so that we can get tax rate set as well. Jim Coffey will send out a note to department heads to have their budgets ready. Jim Coffey also noted he would like to start building the warrant and flesh it out during budget hearings. There is no one on the Finance

Advisory Committee at the moment, and it was determined it isn't required, we do welcome the residents to come in and give their opinions as well.

The Board of Assessors will be signing MS-1 soon. It was also noted that we've had an overall 2% increase in the value of the town, and the tax base is better than a year ago.

As part of the next weeks warrant discussion Shawn would like to discuss what the threshold for the fund balance is.

**ARPA Grant Public hearing:**

Jim Coffey opened the hearing at 7:00 pm by reading the RSA and amounts of the funding. First part is acceptance of the monies, and the second part is to begin dialog of best ways to use the monies. The end of October we would need to complete the first reporting of how the money is spent. First payment is \$282,295.63 and has been sent to the Treasurer.

Chair Talbot asked the audience if they had any objections to accepting the money. Selectman Hamill noted a resident had concerns. Selectman Talbot noted he also had concerns on what the "strings" might be. This concern was shared by all Selectmen, they will continue to research whether there are strings. We can accept the funds and be cognizant of this when spending money, and if strings, return the money. Mr. Coffey shared a document with the Federal mandates from OSHA, and noted it doesn't apply to companies under 100 or to municipalities. This could change and they could place mandates on smaller companies and municipalities. We can sit on the money until 2026, so that gives us time to determine the details and allowed uses. An audience member asked if this could be used to offset the school budget due to the increasing homeschooling. Selectman Hamill spoke with the DPW director and he noted culvert repairs are needed. Fire Chief Lund had a list of items which included gear dryer to allow the firefighters could always have clean gear, radios to replace the ones that are no longer compliant with FCC regulations, she also noted that 2026 is a long time to wait for these items while the strings are being worked out. The cell tower CIP funding for police & fire upgrade and moving that gear to the tower site was discussed. Selectman Hamill felt it would be \$70K to do that. Mr. Coffey asked if everyone could send him a note at [Administrator@TownOfNewIpswich.org](mailto:Administrator@TownOfNewIpswich.org) and all suggestions will be reviewed. An attendee asked if the Town has reached out to businesses in town to see if and how they are affected by the public health emergency. It was noted that anyone with an interest in the Town they can sign up for the notices as well. Lou Alvarez mentioned the possibility of using for Broadband in town as well. Chair Talbot closed the public input and asked if any further feedback.

Selectman Hamill MOTIONED to accept the grant money with the caveats mentioned that if we find issues we will consider returning it, Selectman Somero SECONDED the motion. All were in agreement.

**OLD NEW BUSINESS:**

Chair Talbot asked Lou Alvarez how is he reaching out to department heads regarding CIP and if he has contacted everyone. Lou noted he is reaching out to the largest first.

**Administrators report:**

Mr Coffey noted he was contacted by the Conservation Commission about OHRVs going through wetlands, he will send out a note to the owner of the property and let him know that is illegal and will include a brochure.

He also found a report from the State of NH, they are comparing their assessed values to our local valuations.

Discussed the commissions of the various boards. BOS appointments to the Conservation Commission in October 2019. He shared with the BOS Chair to include in the chart.

Every town must have a municipal records management committee, including Clerk, Tax Assessor, Administrator, Board of Assessors, and Treasurer. They would review documents and other items and how long to keep them. Jim noted he would like to create files by building to include items relating to each building that would include items like renovations, warranties. He went on to discuss that we should not keep stuff we don't need, and store items we need to keep but don't use regularly. He would like to reconstitute the committee. Selectman Talbot asked if Jim would like to head the committee, Jim would not want to lead, but would participate. Mr. Coffey recommends digitizing records to make better use of our space.

Jim Shared Pavement Preservation Plan and Road Service Management System (RSMS) from SWRPC. It looks at all the paved roads and helps you price and plan maintenance of those roads. He asked if the BOS would authorize him to sign off on this. Chair Talbot noted the prior Administrator had authority granted to approve. Selectman Hamill noted others should be involved, including DPW director and Road Committee for their awareness. Selectman Hamill made a MOTION to grant Administrator authorization to start the process with SWRPC. Selectman Somero SECONDED. All in agreement. This item will be added to the To Do List by Mr. Hamill.

Tax Maps were the next topic. Mr. Coffey noted there are various levels of tax map software. He would like to start with the lower end. Selectman Hamill feels more people need to be involved including outside players who might be using it as well. Much discussion regarding various options and what they provide us, and what we need to have. Chair Talbot would like the Conservation Commission to make the suggestions and the BOS will support them. Mr. Coffey feels the \$6K can be found to get the bare minimum. Mr. Coffey and Selectman Hamill to give an update on the funding and software needs in a future meeting.

Selectman Hamill asked that the proposal for lights be removed from the BOS page. Susan will take care of that update. Selectman Hamill to add this to the To Do list.

**Discussion on Agendas and the process / timeline:** Susan to send the draft of the agenda to Shawn by noon on Thursday, Shawn to return to Susan by 4:00 for final agenda creation and posting to web and bulletin boards. Jim Coffey noted he gets items between Thursday and Tuesday, but we will get the bigger items on the agenda.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION 2:**

**Motion at 5:07 pm** to go into non 91-A:3 II(d) by Selectman Talbot, seconded by Selectman Somero, all in favor.

**Motion** to come out of non-public was made by Selectman Talbot and seconded by Selectman Somero, all were in favor.

**Return from non-public session at 9:45 pm:** Minutes are sealed. Follow-up meeting on Nov. 16, 2021


Closed out the meeting with document review and signing.

**A Motion** to adjourn was made by Selectman Hamill, Selectman Somero seconded. All were in favor.


**Respectfully submitted, Susan Mallett, Land Admin**

**Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Shawn Talbot, Chairman:

  
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Jason Somero:

  
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Bert Hamill:

  
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