

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
June 28, 2022
MINUTES

Present: Shawn Talbot (Chair), Jason Somero, Lou Alvarez and Debbie Deaton (Town Administrator)

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

5:05 Police Chief-Mike Abel

- Chief Abel stated the Board voted in December of 2021 to encumber \$37,000 for updates to the tower on Old Rindge Road. The amount that was actually encumbered was \$27,000. Debbie will look into this.

- Chief Abel asked what the Board would like to do regarding Tim Carpenter's email (it is now forwarded to Mike). It was decided to ask Cadnet to archive the emails as it is not feasible to go through each email for record retention.

- In order to be transparent to the public, Chief Abel is in the process of doing an evidence audit. There are thousands of items, some that have been there for up to 50 years. Two officers need to be present to do the audit to maintain security and integrity. There will be discrepancies due to the fact that some are so old and records were kept on paper (which are hopefully in storage). They have completed the firearm inventory and there are 26 firearms with no case association so they need some further investigation. If there are still firearms with no association, they will go to court to receive dispose or destroy permission. Once that is received, they can "sell" the guns to a gun shop and use the funds to purchase ammunition or new firearms.

They are also in the process of inventorying the drug evidence. The problem with that is they used to use crematoriums but the crematoriums don't want to do that. There are other options but they're very expensive. Again, this has to be processed through the courts also.

Chief will give the Board updates.

- Hillfest will be held on July 16, 2022 at Lord's Valley. There will be approximately 4,000 attendees this year. There will be a change in traffic patterns. North road will be one way throughout the concert. Shuttle buses will be running from Mascenic. The change in traffic patterns will be in effect from approximately 1:00pm until the concert ends. Chief Abel has met with the parties involved. The sign company will have the signs and flaggers out early to direct traffic. Chief will speak with Peter Goewey regarding the traffic change. SVAS and the Fire Department will be present at the event also. Chief Abel will get with Sue to post the traffic change on the website & Facebook.

- Chief Abel asked for a meeting on July 12th to discuss pay rates and a couple of other issues.

- Chief Abel brought a radio from the PD which hasn't been in operation for years and asked permission to dispose of it and two additional radios. They can't be repaired any longer. The Board agreed he could dispose of them.

- The new officer should be starting the middle of July pending results of the psychological exam. This will mean the PD will be fully staffed. The Board congratulated Chief Abel.

5:35 Finance Advisory Committee:

Debbie informed the Board we have 4 volunteers at this time. Joseph Woodworth introduced himself stating he is a long time resident of New Ipswich, has an MBA in finance, is fiscally conservative and president of the Pratt Pond Association. Shawn stated the meeting next week will include what the Board is looking for in a Finance Advisory Committee. He would like the Committee to have more say in the budget process. Debbie will email all candidates requesting they attend the meeting on July 5th.

5:45 Health Insurance:

Jason asked Chief Abel his opinion on the health insurance options. Chief explained he has had to spend a lot money out of pocket with the current insurance and the general consensus seems to be in favor, so he thinks the new insurance would be worth a try. Shawn stated the SchoolCare premiums seem more stable year to year. He

also mentioned there is a possibility the Town contribution may be reduced. The Board will discuss it during budget season. Debbie presented a spreadsheet comparing the rates between HealthTrust and SchoolCare. She informed the Board the rates for SchoolCare are locked in until June 30, 2023. HealthTrust rates for 2023 will change in October. The last increase for HealthTrust was 6.1%. Debbie stated the decision has to be made tonight because we have to give a 60 day notice to HealthTrust if we want to terminate their services so the email must be sent tomorrow. Jason is concerned if we switch to the better insurance now, additional employees will want to join which will increase the cost to the Town.

Sue mentioned SchoolCare pays you to stay healthy. Debbie agreed stating each insured person is eligible to "earn" up to \$800 per year by doing healthy things.

The amount budgeted for Health Insurance for 2022 was \$167,422. The amount we will actually use is approximately \$98,984. After much more discussion, Shawn made a motion to change the health and dental insurance from HealthTrust to SchoolCare with a caveat of the potential change in the employee contribution starting in 2023 to help defray the increase in premium. Jason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Debbie will email HealthTrust on Wednesday to terminate their services and email SchoolCare to ask what the next steps are.

Old/New Business:

- Jason requested a non-public to discuss lease options with Jeff Muhonen on July 5th at 7:00pm.
- Lou mentioned he would like to discuss the possibility of using ARPA funds versus Capital Reserve for the purchase of the new CAT loader.

6:45 Non-public RSA 91-A:3, II (b) Interview-Interim Building Inspector

Shawn made a motion to go into non-public session at 6:30. It was seconded by Lou and passed unanimously. At 7:15, Shawn made a motion to return to public session. It was seconded by Jason and passed unanimously. Shawn made a motion to seal the minutes. Jason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Deaton
Town Administrator

Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Shawn Talbot, Chairman: _____

Jason Somero:  _____

Lou Alvarez:  _____