

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Oct, 5 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Shawn Talbot, Chair; 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

Seasonal Camping:

Can a 5th wheel camper be used for the season, and stored for the winter on a non-buildable lot. Chair Talbot will bring it to the Planning Board. Selectman Hamill explained the non-buildable status was declared by the Planning Board years ago. Jim noted that if you leave the trailer all year, if it is registered it's not town taxed. If no plates, it can be assessed as part of town tax.

Employee Handbook:

Selectman Hamill asked if volunteers, and elected officials should be added to the employee handbook. General consensus was that it's for employees only. Volunteers and elected officials should have separate handbooks because of the legal distinction between employees and volunteers & elected officials. This will be tabled to a future meeting for decision.

OLD NEW BUSINESS

Abatement Case PSNH v. Town of New Ipswich:

Jim spoke with lawyers, and he and Board of Selectmen named in lawsuit. He needs to put together materials along with other towns. The cost burden is shared with the group of towns. He noted this has occurred before and Town won all but one case. No further action required at the moment, this update was for information only.

Primex Values:

New Ipswich is part of a consortium with other municipalities, Primex gives dividends and this essentially reduces the premiums based on the group fund. Jim noted we changed health coverage for lower premiums but we may have lost dividend by changing. This should be considered when deciding on what insurance to choose for employees. Chair Talbot suggests an evening for health discussion and Jim will work with Primex to get them in some evening to explain further what they offer. Also, Jim will arrange to get Health Trust and current provider on the November 30th BOS meeting.

Building 2:

Selectman Hamill questioned the square footage of building two and thinks all the buildings should be confirmed. Selectman Somero offered to walk it to get a better feel for what it actually is. Jim will also check with insurance to see if they will confirm.

Allowable communications between meetings:

The Board wants to be sure all discussions are transparent, and communications between meetings was discussed. Information can be passed to others, but no discussion should be had on those topics until the next meeting. Selectman Hamill offered up a way to have open discussion between the Tuesday meetings that is available and transparent to the public. The Board will continue to conduct business as usual with discussions only occurring in the regular meetings. (note: email related to this conversation is attached to these minutes)

NHMA Legislature Bulletin:

Jim received a bulletin regarding the freedom to vote act. The requirements for New Ipswich or other small towns are almost impossible to implement. It requires early voting in all Federal elections including primaries for at least 15 consecutive days leading up to the Election Day and at least 10 hours a day for that period. This will tax our Moderator, Town Clerk and others. This is on the way to the senate and has passed in the house. Jim recommends the Board write a letter on Town Letterhead explaining their position and the difficulties it will impose on the Town. Including the many mailings that will need to be done and the lack of manpower to do that.

ARPA Proposal from the Town Moderator:

A proposal came in from Bob Romeril, the Town Moderator with a list of items he proposes. Jim made a comment about grants, there was recently a flood in Cheshire County and FEMA opened the entire state for a period of time for emergency management grants. Have to show you would save at least as much or more in dollars as the grant. He asks if we have something that might fit this. Also the state of NH was declared a disaster area for COVID in 2020. Jim will look into these with the Board of Selectmen approval and grants/emergency monies to see what is involved. He will also work with the EMD, Police and Fire on grant potential.

Credit Card:

One card is being used for purchases, this causes a lot of leg work for the Accounting Clerk to reconcile and correctly charge back to the appropriate departments. Jim looked into some options and found one company set up for municipalities and might make this process go smoother. Other suggestions were to have each department have their own card to make the reconciliation cleaner. Chair Talbot noted that perhaps departments have cards with limits so that if they don't reconcile in a timely manner they can't charge further.

Perambulation:

Selectman Somero asked what the process is or if there is paperwork required for this process. Jim thinks the Town Clerk has the paper trail and that you file paperwork with our town clerk along with the other town(s). Roger will check in with Jim on this process. It was also noted that Bob Boynton may have the 4 corners of town latitude and longitude coordinates.

Action Item Punch List:

Selectman Hamill suggested going through the list at some point to be sure items are being done. Chair Talbot asked that we do this at a future meeting, and suggested October 19th meeting. Selectman Somero made a MOTION to board up the building as noted, Selectman Hamill **SECONDED** the motion, all were in favor.

Temple Road complaint:

A resident complained kids were getting into a building on Temple Road and that is poses a potential danger. The DPW will be asked to plywood or other suitable materials for on the first floor at minimum.

Meeting for Budget and Maps:

Chair Talbot requested a meeting with the Conservation Commission, Assessor and Planning Board at the same budget meeting, and also to discuss maps. This will be on the October 19th meeting.

Resuming ZOOM:

For the budget season Chair Talbot suggests resuming the use of Zoom to allow more people to observe and provide transparency to the process.


A MOTION to go into Non Public Meeting was made by Chair Talbot, **SECONDED** by Selectman Somero, All were in favor

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


Respectfully submitted, Susan Mallett, Land Admin

Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Shawn Talbot, Chairman:



Jason Somero:



Bert Hamill:



Keep w/minutes

JC

From: Jim Coffey <jcoffey@townofnewipswich.org>
Subject: Fw: Emails with Other Selectmen
Date: October 3, 2021 at 9:58 PM
To: JimNI jimcoffey@myfairpoint.net

From: Jim Coffey <jcoffey@townofnewipswich.org>
Sent: Sunday, October 3, 2021 2:58 PM
To: Administrator <administrator@townofnewipswich.org>
Subject: Fw: Emails with Other Selectmen

From: Bernard Hamill <bhamill@townofnewipswich.org>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 8:01 AM
To: Jim Coffey <jcoffey@townofnewipswich.org>
Subject: Emails with Other Selectmen

Dear Jim,

I know that we are treading a fine line between having a "meeting" via email versus sharing information and answering questions.

I am unsure where that line is. Shawn is correct that we can not have a meeting on-line, but we should be able to do something. Otherwise, we are going into these meetings without adequate information and we waste time either fumbling around or asking you to research prior to making a decision. There needs to be a happy medium.

Also, there is a question of "Free Speech". I don't believe that the RSA's can overrule the First Amendment. I really dislike doing the right thing by violating the intent of the laws.

Sincerely,
Bert

Administrator

From: Shawn Talbot
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 7:38 PM
To: Bernard Hamill; Jason Somero; Administrator
Cc: LandAdmin
Subject: Re: Cost of a building and vehicle

Good evening All,

I am going to respectfully ask that this email conversation cease & we hold further comments on this subject for our meeting on Tuesday.

Jim, please have this thread printed for the meeting as it should be entered in to the minutes & issues described within can be discussed further in a public forum.

Shawn Talbot
Town Of New Ipswich
Select Board Chairman
Cell (603)715-0151
stalbot@townofnewipswich.org

From: Bernard Hamill <bhamill@townofnewipswich.org>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 7:29:45 PM
To: Jason Somero <jsomero@townofnewipswich.org>; Administrator <administrator@townofnewipswich.org>; Shawn Talbot <stalbot@townofnewipswich.org>
Cc: LandAdmin <LandAdmin@townofnewipswich.org>
Subject: Re: Cost of a building and vehicle

Dear All,

I checked the minutes from the 8 Oct. 2019 BOS meeting where the bldg insurance numbers from Primex were quoted. Although the numbers quoted did not appear in the minutes, the proportional amount attributed to Bldg 2 was around \$10-12k. Jim explained earlier today that the budget line item number of \$42k is misleading as it includes the general liability insurance for employees and visitors as well as the town in general. Apparently, there is no breakout for the buildings separately. And as noted, the \$1135 quoted for Bldg 2 insurance still seems low based on what a typical homeowner pays. It begs the question as to whether or not municipal buildings are less subject to disasters than private homes and offices?

However, the referenced meeting minutes do discuss some other square footage discrepancies in other town buildings such as the old town hall which has a footprint of 60'x40' with a small loft area towards the front of the building. However, any effort to correct the discrepancies was lost in the midst of more pressing matters. A recheck of the actual SF for Bldg 2 indicates that the first floor is around 12k SF with an odd 1 story bump out on the left hand side not included in the listed SF. The upper floor is still 4k SF +/-.

One other thing that Jim mentioned was that although we are insured through Primex, we are also in some manner self insured. I think that this deserves further explanation. Afterall, Peterborough was using Primex when hacked and was forced to cover most of the loss out of General Funds. What could New Ipswich

be liable for if something not covered . . . such as embezzlement or gross negligence occurred? Maybe once budget season is over, a general reading of the insurance policy would be a good idea.

Sincerely,
Bert

From: Jason Somero <jsomero@townofnewipswich.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 5:57 PM

To: Bernard Hamill <bhamill@townofnewipswich.org>; Administrator <administrator@townofnewipswich.org>; Shawn Talbot <stalbot@townofnewipswich.org>

Cc: LandAdmin <LandAdmin@townofnewipswich.org>

Subject: Re: Cost of a building and vehicle

Interesting they list building 2 at 28500 sqft. If correct it comes to around 4 cents per foot per month for lease

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From: Bernard Hamill <bhamill@townofnewipswich.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 3:33:13 PM

To: Administrator <administrator@townofnewipswich.org>; Shawn Talbot <stalbot@townofnewipswich.org>; Jason Somero <jsomero@townofnewipswich.org>

Cc: LandAdmin <LandAdmin@townofnewipswich.org>

Subject: Re: Cost of a building and vehicle

Dear Jim,

I appreciate your chasing down the insurance numbers, but somehow the insurance for Bldg 2 seems very very low. Almost looks like someone slipped a digit. My home insurance costs considerably more. That number needs to be verified particularly since the total value of all our bldgs is around \$8.4 million and the total insurance bill is around \$42k looking at the approved budget for 2021 under prop/liability in the insurance section of the town report.

I will apologize however since I remembered a much larger number. And according to Scott who last spoke with Primex, the cost were going up, not down.

I have attached the Primex Bldg Value listing that I received in 2019.

Sincerely,
Bert

From: Administrator <administrator@townofnewipswich.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 8:50 AM

To: Shawn Talbot <stalbot@townofnewipswich.org>; Jason Somero <jsomero@townofnewipswich.org>; Bernard Hamill <bhamill@townofnewipswich.org>

Cc: LandAdmin <LandAdmin@townofnewipswich.org>

Subject: FW: Cost of a building and vehicle