

TOWN OF SEABROOK

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

MAY 22, 2023

Present: Srinivasan "Ravi" Ravikumar 9:00AM
Theresa A. Kyle
Harold F. Eaton
William M. Manzi, III

Ravi opened the meeting at 9:00AM.

Ravi stated the rules relative to the meeting and the public comments/questions. Ravi made general comments on votes taken on the issues at hand. He said they are going to bring transparency and accountability back to the town government.

Mrs. Kyle said there was a senior luncheon she attended. She commented there were about 10-eighth grade girls who served the elderly, and it was wonderful they were delightful and interacted with all of them. She thanked Cassandra Carter for the excellent work.

Ravi thanked the DPW Manager for cleaning the beach and also commented on the letter that came commending his department.

Ravi commented on a medical emergency that happened with a neighbor and how our fire department was able to assist. After talking with the individual and hearing how the employees handled the situation, he wanted to give a shout-out to the department.

Mrs. Kyle commented there was a dumpster fire and thanks to the fire and police departments for their quick response in putting this out, this could have turned into a larger issue.

NEXT STEPS ON ASSESSMENT ISSUES

Ravi said they should look at the timeline and what decision needs to be made now and focus on that. Angela Silva said the representative from DRA was present and felt they needed to have an independent appraiser look at the commercial and industrial properties. She has reached out to the consultant, and he has responded he is busy until the fall and it could be costly. The DRA representative also recommended they do the entire town next year due to the time constraints. Angela Silva said if they move forward as they are there would be some inequities but as long as they are within the 15-20% of the ratio that is acceptable.

Mr. Eaton said he would rather not rush and do everything correctly going forward. Ravi agrees with that but doesn't want

to find out later they did something that wasn't accurate. Angela Silva said they may have some property owners who pay less and some who pay more but that is why they can file for an abatement if they don't feel they are being assessed at 82% of market value.

Ravi asked if they could look at cases for abatements based on a range of being outside of the ratio to market value. Mr. Manzi responded they couldn't set that as criteria for filing as anyone can file but they could deny the abatement based on that type of criteria.

Angela Silva stated that the last total reval was in 2021 for the entire town but she did some adjustments in 2022. Maria Brown said if the consultant can come out in September and do this work, we should so that all commercial and industrial will be equitable as our tax bills do not come out until December. Ravi said due to the timing of when the consultant can do the work doesn't fit with where the town falls in setting the tax rate so waiting until next year to do the work seems to be a better fit for the town.

Mr. Eaton said it is frustrating that the board has asked a simple question and cannot get a simple answer. However, the board is not giving up and they will continue in order to get an answer. Mrs. Kyle commented that Vision does primarily the residential and there is someone else who does the commercial and industrial properties. Angela Silva said if she can increase the commercial and industrial properties she does so. Ravi commented that the assessments are opinions they are not facts and opinions are up for question. Mr. Eaton stated he is not pointing the finger at Angela Silva, but the value of the structure should have the same assessed value no matter where that structure is located.

There was further discussion on the assessments and the budget process that the board voted on at a previous meeting. Ravi wants the meeting minutes from May 8 read as to the motion for the budget as there was disagreement between him and Mrs. Kyle. There was further discussion on this matter and Ravi asked the deputy town manager for those minutes. The deputy town manager indicated that she did not have them on that computer, they were on her desktop. Ravi asked that she get those minutes to reflect on the motion that was made. There was continued debate between him and Mrs. Kyle. Mr. Eaton commented they should just continue on. The deputy town manager then asked the town manager what she should do rather than get caught in the middle

of this debate. The town manager indicated it was of the purvue of the full board. At this time Ravi said he would go and get his copy of the minutes.

Angela Silva said she is a full-time assessor and other towns don't have that. She feels her land values are high and she makes them that high and she is here every day doing the work. Mr. Eaton said we do have high land values.

Ravi came back after retrieving his copy of the May 8 meeting and read from the minutes the discussion on the 10% budget cut and the motion that was made and the vote being unanimous. He stated he wanted to make sure the people of the town understood what was done with this motion. He unanimous means all members of the board voted in favor of this. Mrs. Kyle disagreed.

Maria Brown asked Angela Silva if she had looked at maybe a couple of properties to see if in fact, they are assessed low. Ms. Silva said she can't just look at a couple as there are other factors that need to be considered. Maria Brown said there was a court case not too long ago because they felt the \$810K was too much for a default budget compared to the regular budget. She said that if there is fat in the budget then it should be cut but no one is looking to cut employees but there are concerns about the cell phone cost and the car allowances. There was debate between Mrs. Kyle and Maria Brown on the court case that was filed.

MOTION: Ravi To do nothing with the
Second: Harold F. Eaton town assessment in 2023.
Abstain: Theresa A. Kyle

MOTION: Ravi To focus on lining up
the resources for 2024
with commercial and
industrial.

No second, motion failed.

Mr. Manzi said this will need clarification as to whether or not they are looking to do a full reval with an accent on the commercial to start. This should be put out to bid now but no later than the fall. Mr. Eaton said if they do a full reval it will bring the value up as Angela Silva recommends 95-100% whereas right now they are at 82%. Ms. Silva commented if they go to 100% it would restart the 5-year clock on another reval.

MOTION: Ravi To go to a full town
Second: Harold F. Eaton wide reval in 2024.

Unanimous

Mr. Eaton said this isn't pointing fingers at anything that has been done in the past, it is just putting the town in a better position moving forward.

Mr. Manzi said they did reach an agreement with Next Era and had an increase of \$4 million. There was no abatement to Next Era with this agreement.

2 ELDERLY EXEMPTIONS & 1 DISABILITY EXEMPTION

April 17 is the cutoff date for filing of exemptions.

MOTION: Ravi To approve and sign all
Second: Theresa A. Kyle exemptions.
Unanimous

BEACH MANAGEMENT PLAN

The report is from 2004 and John Starkey was present and gave a brief overview of what the report was about. He said it has been a model they look at but cannot adhere to everything that is in it. The board was impressed with the way the snow fences were handled this year and so were the residents.

Mr. Eaton asked what area of the beach the DPW handle. Mr. Starkey said from New Hampshire Street to Ashland Street. Sun Valley is not maintained by Seabrook as it is part of Hampton.

Mrs. Kyle asked about the letters and exhibits that should have been included in the management plan. She doesn't feel the plan covers what the town needs now. Mrs. Kyle commented that S.H.E.A. is doing a study and they should wait to see what they report before updating the plan. Ravi commented that everything in the plan is already being done with the exception of a few things.

Joe Guiffre spoke in reference to the plan and said he had a lot to do with it. He said the plan was never approved until 2013. At that time, they came up with a plover management plan along with Fish & Game. Joe Guiffre said that the DPW's hands are tied when it comes to the beach and plovers. He feels this plan is of value. Joe Guiffre said the plan states how the walkways are to be maintained but have never been done. Ravi said they could take an item in the plan and come up with a cost to complete that item and put it on the ballot for approval by the voters. Mr. Manzi said that is one way and they could also look into grants that may be available.

Mrs. Kyle commented that they cannot just do this, they would need approval from at least 3 different agencies including one that is a federal agency. Ravi commented they would need to update this plan and allocate funding for the projects before they can actually move forward.

Mr. Starkey said the employees are quite upset that the Board is looking to cut the budget by 10% so where are they going to make those cuts. Mr. Eaton said isn't it a leader's job to cut costs and do the services more efficiently. All they are looking for is how they can accomplish this. Mrs. Kyle said when you make cuts you look to cut personnel or services and she doesn't blame the employees for being upset. Ravi commented that it is part of the process. Ravi said he doesn't think any money should be spent but the plan should be looked at to recognize what we may implement and those that are not.

Ralph Welch spoke about the clearing of the boardwalks and possibly just having a sand walk through. There was discussion on how to correct the walkways. Ravi feels the best solution is to have a group of individuals sit down and go through the plan to come up with the best solution for the town. These conversations should include the town manager and the DPW manager. Mrs. Kyle said it should be all the people of the town including the residents who live in town as they all own the beach.

Joe Guiffre spoke about digging out the walkways and the conversations he had with John Starkey. He said that is not the only issue. In order to widen the walkways, they would need to involve DES as some beach grass would need to be removed. They did put an article on the ballot for \$25K to do a few walkways but it didn't pass.

Ravi said to let the people in town have input on the plan and then they can go through the normal process for funding to do the projects.

TOWN LAND TREES ADJACENT TO ANDOVER STREET BEACH WALKWAY

Ravi said the Andover walkway is in need of the most repair. Houses on either side are being rebuilt and they have an opportunity to clean up this beach opening. The Board did a site visit of this boardwalk and some of the repairs will be done by those property owners. They had discussions about leaving the trees, but concerns have come up that they are not native species and residents would like them removed. Mrs. Kyle said Henry Boyd recommended they leave the trees due to becoming part of the ecosystem and natural habitat of housing birds.

Len Ichtou - 4 Andover Street said the trees didn't bother him until he started building a new home and realized he gained a view he had never had before. There is an obstruction of the view now caused by the trees. He has confirmed that the neighbors planted the trees for their own privacy. Len Ichtou said no other walkway has a grove of trees and no one deals with an obstruction of their view of the dune or water. Len Ichtou said this is a self-serving request and it would give their home a view for the next 100 years as they have no plan to sell. He indicated that Eben Lewis from DES gave him a statement that he has no concern with endangered species for removal of the trees.

Mrs. Kyle asked Len Ichtou if he would be willing to pay for the removal of the trees if they agreed. He agreed he would as he is paying for the removal of a tree on Tom Markey's property. There are three trees along the walkway that would need to be taken down on Andover.

Joe Guiffre commented the trees are doing no harm and he wouldn't sacrifice the trees for a temporary request. John Starkey said he sees no harm in having them professionally removed. Ravi feels that Len Ichtou should consult with Henry Boyd as he feels they need more information as to what the cost to Seabrook may be. Ravi said they could take this up at the next meeting once Len Ichtou connects with Henry Boyd.

Board took a 5-minute break at 11:17AM. Board reconvened at 11:26AM.

Maria Brown said the DPW employee who spoke about the town hall hours she feels shouldn't have as it is a decision of the town manager and shouldn't be discussed at every meeting. She believes we are moving forward, and people can speak up during meeting. Maria Brown said there is a class on how to be a good board member and she would recommend they look into this and other classes as they are useful tools.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE REPORTS

Mr. Manzi said he has given the reports to the board and a couple of the departments have been running over. The overall expenditure is at 30.49%, which is below the benchmark of 33%. The fire station is running a little high due to some elevator expenses. The town clerk had some personnel costs that increased the expenditure. Mr. Manzi indicated the board would receive this report monthly.

LEASE OF ADDITIONAL TRASH PACKER

John Starkey said the rubbish truck out for repairs has been quoted at \$65K to repair. The rear-end has deteriorated and served its purpose. Ralph Welch spoke about the other things that are gone in this truck.

Mr. Starkey spoke about the rubbish truck they had on a lease purchase using the revolving fund and where they are with it today. Mr. Manzi explained what a lease purchase is and how it works for the town. Mr. Starkey said the timing is bad as they are currently down to 1 truck but hopefully will be back to 2 within a few weeks.

Ravi asked other than the trash truck is there anything else that is going south in his department. Mr. Starkey said they have a 1999 tractor that pulls the beach rake and plow trucks that are ancient. Mr. Starkey spoke about renting a rubbish truck as Exeter, NH did. The reason behind the rental is there is no truck available for a lease purchase. Ralph Welch commented that the overtime to pick up the trash in small trucks would far outweigh the cost to rent a rubbish truck. Mr. Manzi said in the short-term going out to buy a truck would be ideal but renting one is a band aid but will get through the summer.

Mr. Manzi commented that the time to look at the fleet and have those discussions about what the needs are should be addressed with the C.I.P. which is almost ready for the board.

Ravi agrees that for the short time they need the rental but should be looking at the lease purchase simultaneously so they can get a truck ordered. Ralph Welch said it can take up to 48 months to get a truck built and ready for the town to take ownership. Mr. Starkey said if he could find a truck like he did in Michigan it would put them in an easier position.

Mr. Eaton said they should look at the life expectancy of the trucks for replacement. Ralph Welch feels they should be replaced every 4 years which would get their oldest truck to 12 years before replacement again. There was discussion on the repair of engines and whether Cummings engines would be a more appropriate purchase.

MOTION: Ravi
Second: Theresa A. Kyle
Unanimous

To approve the
recommendation of a
rental trash truck for
the summer.

There was discussion on the drivers of the trucks, and it was noted that the DPW had 15 employees out today.

Mr. Manzi asked the board to hold the next motion for a new truck until there is further discussion maybe at the next meeting.

Mr. Manzi spoke to the C.I.P. and putting the trucks in this plan every 4 years. He said those discussions should happen when they discuss the C.I.P. Mr. Eaton said they need to educate the voters how it is cost effective to replace those trucks rather than spend \$65K to repair a truck that is 17 years old.

QUITCLAIM DEEDS - HILLSIDE CEMETERY

Wayne & Theresa Thurlow - Section 28 Lots 61 & 62

Deborah Moran - Section 31 Lot 47

Nancy Gagne - Section 32 Lot 9 & 10

Frederick Moulton Jr. - Section 32 Lot 11 & 12

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To approve and sign all
Second: Ravi quitclaim deeds.
Unanimous

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Ravi said he attended the planning board meeting, and several items were discussed including Fiesta Shows and The Brook. The Brook has a modified approach to their plan, and he shared that with the board.

There was discussion on the cannabis resale and transporting it across state lines if residents of Seabrook were to make those purchases. Mrs. Kyle said they should be aware of the laws and if they know it's not legal why should we give them a way. The overall opinion was no sale of cannabis in the town. Both board members thanked Ravi for that strong vote of no. There will be further discussions at the ZBA meetings on how they can keep the resale of cannabis out of town.

The Brook proposed a modified plan to reduce the number of units by about a third. They also looked at ways to make it a good thing by putting the houses along the property lines of The Brook and some within the property lines. There were a lot of ideas presented and it was well done. Based on the input from the planning board and where they were at with the proposal, they will invest some additional money to come up with a proposed plan. The impact on the school system would be minimal. There would be no enhancements to the water and sewer

in order to handle the project, but the town would take in revenue. Mrs. Kyle said they are giving back to the community and surrounding communities.

Mrs. Kyle said she attended the fish & game meeting that was held at town hall. She attended the senior event that is held every year.

The Memorial Day parade is on May 28 at 9AM.

Ravi commented he would not be present for the June 5 meeting but will be back for the meeting on June 12. He said the board can meet on June 5 without him.

MOTION:	Ravi	To adjourn the meeting
Second:	Theresa A. Kyle	at 12:26PM.
Unanimous		

Meeting adjourned at 12:26PM.

Minutes taken by Kelly J. O'Connor.

Approved and endorsed:

Harold F. Eaton,
Clerk

Date: _____