

TOWN OF SEABROOK

SELECTMEN'S

NOVEMBER 13, 2023

Theresa A. Kyle
Harold F. Eaton
Srinivasa "Ravi" Ravikumar
William M. Manzi, III

Mrs. Kyle opened the meeting at 9:30AM.

Mrs. Kyle thanked the local businesses taking care of our Veteran's.

MONTHLY MEETING - FIRE CHIEF

Fire Chief Bill Edwards was present for his monthly report (see attached). Chief Edwards said ambulance calls for service are up 5% and engine calls are up 25% over last year at this time. He said they still have one employee out on injury and those shifts are being covered utilizing overtime.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve the escort of
Second: Ravi Santa through town.
Unanimous

There was discussion on the Stryker equipment requested by the Chief. They discussed the useful life of the equipment and when the last purchases were made (see attached).

The package is for 10 years and at the end of the 10 years if they want to continue, they will have an updated cost for the next 10 years. The chief feels this is a smart way to prepare for the future in regard to budgeting. This company is the only company that offers this type of plan and it's about 3 years old.

Ravi said it is good to prepare and have good equipment. He said they do need to look at the cost for the equipment to see if they are getting the best bang for the buck. He said they also need to look at the cost for the service, so they need an analysis to be sure it is the right way to go for the taxpayers. Mr. Eaton said he asked for an independent study of the fire department but said no motion was put forth so he would like to do that now.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To have an independent
study at the fire
department in order to
proceed forward in the
future.

Ravi said whenever they get into a study like they need to be extremely clear as to what question they are trying to answer and also the methodology used as to how the study comes up with the conclusions. As long as the methodology and the study are sound it would be a good study.

Second: Ravi Pending clear direction as to what they are looking for.

The study would give a pinpoint on budgeting for the future such as added personnel, safety, overtime and if it could be cut back and where a majority of the calls are going in town. Mr. Eaton said it is imperative to have this information to move forward. He said there is so much division with this one department that it is imperative to have this study to show the facts so they can move forward. Mrs. Kyle said a study is good, but they are looking at a department that is completely understaffed.

Ravi feels there is a process for funding the capital items in the department.

Chief Edwards said if there is a concern there should be a study on the entire town not just his department as they just make up a piece of the pie. Having the information is a step forward but you need to have a plan to change or correct the issues found in the study.

Mrs. Kyle feels there is a crisis in this department where they are understaffed, and they need to address that now. Ravi disagrees they are in a crisis but if the data shows they are then yes, they need to do something about it.

Ravi disagrees with a study for the entire town. He feels he has the information for the other departments but not for fire and he is not convinced without data analysis. Mr. Eaton agrees they should have a study for the other departments, so they get rid of opinions and base their decisions on the data.

Chief Edwards stated he feels like his department is being put under a microscope and is not sure why other departments have asked for additional overtime money and they get a unanimous decision. Chief Edwards said he has provided the information to Selectman Ravi three times and brought the information into the meeting to show what has been provided but it is not in the format Selectman Ravi prefers. Ravi commented if he had the proper data where he can show that he is convinced the fire department's needs are valid. Mr. Eaton feels the study is

needed as there are too many different opinions. Ravi commented that he needs objective information in order to support the request.

Mrs. Kyle said she doesn't need a study to determine common sense with a department that is understaffed and using outdated equipment. She feels a study is good but what do they do today for this department. Chief Edwards said the budget added \$435K because they cut it last year by \$200K so they are making up for the loss. No other departments have had to provide this type of information in order to get the increases requested.

Chief Edwards asked the board if the study shows the needs are there will they vote unanimously on his requests. Mr. Eaton said he would. Chief Edwards said if the study shows they are not understaffed he would not ask for anything. Ravi said the study will need to have a clear methodology in order for him to go along with the results of the study as many different types of studies can be done.

Abstain: Theresa A. Kyle

The board will meet to set the definition of the study with the chief present, and it will be a public meeting.

Mrs. Kyle said the town manager was asked to cut the budget 10% and now we are doing another study where we have a revaluation of the town at a cost of \$76K.

Mr. Manzi said they would need to define the scope of the study and then it would be put out to bid. This will be on the agenda for November 20.

Mrs. Kyle thanked the 2 firewomen who came to the women's club meeting and answered questions.

PREVIOUS MINUTES - OCTOBER 9 PUBLIC AND OCTOBER 16 PUBLIC

Mrs. Kyle suggested holding October 9 for further review.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To adopt the minutes of
Second: Ravi October 16 public.
Unanimous

ABATEMENTS

Christopher Dodge - 335 Brooks Road Ext. - \$1371.64
Bernice Shea - 24 Blueberry Lane - \$21.68
Patenaude Family Trust Agreement - 77 Silver Street -\$130,351.97
Charles Ballentine - 211 Lower Collins Street - \$269.45

MOTION: Ravi To approve and sign all
Second: Harold F. Eaton abatements.
Unanimous

MS-1 FORM

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To hold until next
Second: Ravi meeting.
Unanimous

GRANT AWARD - OPIOID ABATEMENT

Chief Brett Walker explained the grant and said there is no match required. The intent is to fund opioid types of programs.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To approve the grant.
Second: Ravi
Unanimous

There was discussion on the data that was obtained through the state. The chief expects this money will last for years to address the issues here in Seabrook. The board would like updates as to how the money is spent and what is being done. Mr. Manzi said he would also be requesting the plan be sent to him on how the money would be spent and those plans would be shared with the board. Chief Walker indicated they are the only department that received this grant.

NH DES REQUEST USAGE OF TOWN PIER

MOTION: Ravi To approve the request
Second: Theresa A. Kyle for usage of town pier.
Unanimous

WATER SERVICE APPLICATIONS

Phil Franciosa - 92 Atlantic Avenue
Stuart Pappas - 4 Fowler Brook Road
Lori & Daniel Calderwood - 58 Dows Lane
Chuck White/Gray Construction - 83 Pembroke Street
MC Homes LLC - 3A & 3B Almena Way
21 Chevy Chase Road, LLC. - 570 Lafayette Road
Brad Kutcher - 34 Centennial Street Units 1 & 2

MOTION: Ravi To approve and sign all
Second: Harold F. Eaton water applications.
Unanimous

SEWER SERVICE APPLICATIONS

Phil Franciosa - 92 Atlantic Avenue
 Chad & Amy Moffat - 4 Fowler Brook Road
 Lori & Daniel Calderwood - 58 Dows Lane
 Chuck White/Gray Construction - 83 Pembroke Street
 MC Homes LLC - 3A & 3B Almena Way
 21 Chevy Chase Road, LLC. - 570 Lafayette Road
 Brad Kutcher - 34 Centennial Street Units 1 & 2

MOTION: Ravi To approve and sign all
 Second: Harold F. Eaton sewer applications.
 Unanimous

John Starkey spoke and said there are also corresponding street excavations. There is a process to be followed after November 1. He will not approve of them digging in the street depending on weather.

HYDRANT FLOW TEST - 570 LAFAYETTE ROAD

Curtis Slayton said the hydrant is on private property and there will be one employee monitoring the test.

MOTION: Harold F. Eaton To approve and sign the
 Second: Ravi hydrant flow test.
 Unanimous

LETTER FOR TRAFFIC ISSUES ROUTE 1A AND ANDOVER STREET

Mr. Manzi said this is relative to an area that had a complaint about a number of accidents creating a public safety hazard.

Len Ichtou - 4 Andover Street - said they had the 7th accident involving a telephone pole, fence, fire hydrant and house. This has been ongoing for several years and he is looking for some type of resolution.

MOTION: Ravi To approve, sign & send
 Second: Harold F. Eaton letter to the state.
 Unanimous

QUITCLAIM DEEDS - HILLSIDE CEMETERY

Richard Gaiero - Section 25 Plots H & I
 Janet Sherrod - Section 32 Plots 7 & 8

MOTION: Ravi To approve and sign both
 Second: Harold F. Eaton quitclaim deeds.
 Unanimous

DONATION - LION'S CLUB TO RECREATION

MOTION: Ravi To approve the donation.
Second: Theresa A. Kyle
Unanimous

REVISED PROCUREMENT POLICY

Mr. Manzi spoke to the changes of the policy. John Starkey had asked if the threshold could be changed from \$2500 to \$5000. Mr. Starkey said there was a comment made by Selectman Ravi that purchases have been made with credit cards and then returned for cash/credit. Mr. Starkey said he does not have a credit card, nor does he want one. He is requesting the change and would like to be able to make purchases without scrutiny. Mr. Starkey said it should be looked into as to who has credit cards and what the threshold is for those individuals. Ravi said to clear the air it was a discussion they were having he was not pointing fingers or saying anyone was returning items for cash/credit. He said they are just looking at all possible savings.

Shaylia Wood spoke about the policy and how it is saving the town money based on bids coming to the town such as the mosquito control which will save the town \$10K over a 3-year period.

Mr. Eaton asked Mr. Starkey if the department runs inefficiently with the threshold he has been given. Mr. Starkey said he believes it does when it comes to construction as he doesn't know what they could find when they are working on a project. He said the cost of doing business has also increased. Mr. Starkey said he is insulted that he cannot make a purchase over \$2500, and a custodian has a credit card limit of \$5000.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To increase the threshold to \$5K for purchase orders.

Mr. Manzi stated they were amenable to raise the threshold, but he is not looking to phase out the competitive bid process. There was discussion on emergency situations and how the department head can make the purchase without going through this process.

Mr. Starkey said a lot of facets in the DPW require the quote process and if the vendor doesn't get the job, they are not going to keep coming out to look at a job if they don't get the work.

Mrs. Kyle feels this requires further discussion before the increase the threshold and withdraws her previous motion.

Board took a break at 11:22AM. Board reconvened at 11:35AM.

WATER & SEWER RATES

Curtis Slayton was present for this discussion (see attached). Ravi spoke about the water and sewer rates collected would pay for the operation and capital needs of the department. There will be 5 tiers of pricing and the less water you use the less you pay. The money collected currently for water pretty much pays for the operational costs, however, it doesn't for the sewer department. Those additional expenses are funded by taxes. In order to make the department's true enterprise funds the rates need to be increased to cover the operational costs for both water and sewer as well as the capital expenses.

There was discussion on how the rates would be set annually much like the tax rate and will be based on the expenses within each department. The budgeting process and capital expenses will remain under the same process. Residents would have control by how much water they use for their own tax bills. Ravi stated the money he is spending on his water and sewer bills would now be a reduction on his tax bill.

Mr. Eaton said the capital cost for the upcoming 10 years for the sewer pump stations that are approaching 30 years old, they are looking at about \$18.2M. They are looking to cover this cost through the water and sewer rates rather than tax dollars. The rate would be to share the cost among users based on utilization of water and sewer. Mr. Slayton said the rate change is going to impact the higher users more than the lower end. The larger demand for water puts more use on the system which is why the rate increases as you use more water.

Mary Messina - 219 Bristol Street - asked what happens if the rates collected don't cover the expenses in the departments. Mr. Manzi said in this case it would come from the general tax base. Ravi commented they would set the rates for the following year based on historical data and in extraordinary measure where they don't cover the expenses it would then come from the tax base. When there are additional funds collected those would be retained earnings for either water or sewer or both. Mary Messina commented that it is hard in the beginning as it is new, but they will get better and more efficient. It just takes time.

MOTION: Ravi

To make the water and sewer true enterprise accounts by increasing the rates as recommended by water superintendent

which was based upon a study.

Ravi explained a true enterprise account is to cover operational costs of the department and to maintain the valuable assets of those departments.

Second: Harold F. Eaton
Unanimous

Linda Ruben - asked if this would improve the quality of the water as it is not drinkable. Mr. Slayton explained we built the water treatment plant to treat the water and the town is in full compliance. Ravi said the true enterprise is to keep everything at the current level, but they could discuss this in the future.

Vikki Mitchell - commented she drinks the water and has no issue with it.

Mr. Manzi said there would need to be an adjustment in revenues for the water and sewer departments.

Ravi read the memo from Mr. Manzi into the record (see attached). He explained that the board approves the projected revenue numbers during the budget cycle.

MOTION: Ravi To approve the new
Second: Theresa A. Kyle projected revenue
Unanimous numbers for both water
and sewer.

WARRANT ARTICLE - ANTI CANNABIS

Mr. Manzi explained since we are not a "home rule" town this could not be put forth. Once the law is approved by the state to legalize retail sale the town would be able to have an "opt-in" to apply the law. Mr. Eaton asked if the legislation approved this in May of 2024 can Seabrook hold the applications until the next town meeting. Mr. Manzi said as he understands it, it would not be effective until Seabrook has an opportunity to vote on it at the next town election.

WARRANT ARTICLE - F.O.S.C.

Jill Gordon was present and explained the article they are requesting be placed on the town warrant. The nature trail would be located at the end of Lower Collins Street. Jill Gordon said future maintenance, or any improvements, would be undertaken by F.O.S.C. and if for some reason they didn't exist

anymore it would go back to what it is today. Mr. Manzi will amend the article to include the language that F.O.S.C. would maintain the trail.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To approve the article.
Second: Ravi
Unanimous

DISCUSSION ANDOVER STREET WALKWAY

Ravi said this is on the agenda as earlier in the year the 2 adjacent properties were being developed. Part of this development required the north property owner bring back the dune to the way it was at their cost as they had encroached on town property. Henry Boyd made the plan to move the walkway to the center at no cost. In order to get a permit to do this work it is going to cost \$400 for the application and \$4000 for the new seedlings. Mr. Eaton indicated they were going to look to UNH to see if they had anything to help with the seedling cost. Mrs. Kyle said she also thought they were going to see if the property owners would pay the cost. Ravi thought during the discussions the town would pay those costs. Mrs. Kyle said she doesn't recall that the town would spend this money to correct an issue caused by the property owner.

Mrs. Kyle said it has been an ongoing issue with this walkway for the past 4-5 years including construction trucks being on the dune and destroying this area. She thought they were going to put the onus on the property owners. Mrs. Kyle said there are going to be 5 more houses built and doesn't want to see any construction trucks on town property for this reason.

Ravi said in a previous meeting where Henry Boyd was present, Mr. Boyd indicated he was going to speak with the construction company about the processes which he believes he did. The north side work has been completed by the property owner as they indicated, and it looks beautiful. If the trees were removed the owners would have to pay to repair the south side but that did not happen. Mr. Eaton recalls that they were going to explore the dune grass option that may be available from UNH.

Bill Howley - commented that with the grant for a study from UNH they could inquire about the donation of dune grass.

Doris Sweet - asked if the trex will border the new work done on the north side. There was discussion on where the walkway is currently and where it would move too. Doris Sweet claimed there would still be a gap on the north side and asked if the town would be paying for that as well. Ravi said the majority

of dune grass was planted and the dune grass will propagate with new grass.

Carole Howley - asked if these trees were native. If the property owner was approached and allowed to remove the trees that were not native maybe they would pick up the cost to plant the dune grass on the south side. Mr. Eaton commented about the roots needing to be removed with removal of the trees and that would leave a void in the ground. He would only be in favor if they were to agree to remove the root system. Ravi would agree with that if they were to take them out correctly at the property owner's expense.

MOTION:	Ravi	To approve application
Second:	Harold F. Eaton	fee of \$400 in order to
Opposed:	Theresa A. Kyle	do the work.

Len Ichtou - said the Andover walkway is in the greatest need of repair. The solution was to put up a sign to use at your own risk. Half measures were taken to improve that area and in his opinion it didn't help. As a taxpayer he would like to see the \$4K allocated for the appearance of the street. Mr. Eaton said before they do that, he would like to explore the dune grass with UNH. Mrs. Kyle said she agrees they need to be repaired but it costs money, and they cannot get the voters to approve. Ravi said they did put funds aside of \$40K to repair some of the walkways.

DOGS ON THE BEACH REGULATION

Ravi said the concern is that there were dogs on the beach running around with no leash. In order to monitor this situation, it would be an added cost to the taxpayers. There was a suggestion to increase the fine. There is a state law that dogs must be on a leash and the board is urging people to read and follow the law. Chief Walker said the violation caps out at \$1K.

Earl Spruce - asked about the volume of complaints. Chief Walker feels the board gets more complaints about this than the police department.

Charles Hanlon - said he walks his dogs on the beach and sometimes without a leash. He has never had any complaints about his dog and asked why if there is a concern don't, they approach the dog owner first before going to the next step.

Len Ichtou - said there is an article that states Seabrook is a hidden gem for running your dog. He has written to the editor and advised them to stop writing the inaccurate information as there is a leash law and hours permitted.

HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES WARRANT ARTICLES

Mr. Manzi said the board has indicated they wanted to meet with the human service agencies, but he doesn't feel they will have time. He said there is only one new applicant. Mr. Eaton suggested having just the new agency come in at a future meeting.

Mrs. Kyle asked why the school doesn't come before them to present their budget. Mr. Manzi said they are a separate entity, and they don't need to come before the board.

Mr. Eaton said he would like to look at the fire department budget line 142 the injury overtime. He said the town manager requested \$250K and the department head requested \$350K but with the amount expended from this line he would like to reconsider the approved amount to the town manager's recommendation of \$250K.

<u>MOTION:</u>	Harold F. Eaton	To approve the town
Second:	Ravi	manager's recommendation
Opposed:	Theresa A. Kyle	of \$250K for line 142 in
		budget 230.

This change will also change the FICA and NHRS lines. Those numbers will be provided to the board at the next meeting.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

<u>MOTION:</u>	Harold F. Eaton	To go into non-public
Second:	Ravi	session at 1:29PM under
Unanimous		RSA 91-A:3,II (c) tax
		deeding.

Roll call:

Mrs. Kyle - yes
Mr. Eaton - yes
Ravi - yes

Board reconvened to public session at 3:36PM.

<u>MOTION:</u>	Theresa A. Kyle	To adjourn the meeting
Second:	Harold F. Eaton	at 3:36PM.
Unanimous		

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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NOVEMBER 13, 2023

Minutes taken by Kelly J. O'Connor.

Approved and endorsed:

Srinivasan Ravikumar,
Clerk

Date: _____