

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 16, 2023
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman Pitman called the meeting to order

Present: Chairman Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman Fred McGarry, Selectwoman Cynthia McHugh and Selectman Will Huebner.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve Selectman Huebner joining the meeting via Zoom.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

2024 Budget Review:

Insurance – Chairman Pitman states they will be leaving the insurance as is and will adjust it later once Mr. Harrington has all the numbers in.

Fire/Rescue – Chief Fisher

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve the Fire/Rescue budget in the amount of \$375,516.00.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Mr. Harrington lets Vice Chairman McGarry know he needs to look at a different line for this budgets total amount and Vice Chairman McGarry amends his motion with the corrected budget amount of \$369,264.00. Selectwoman McHugh seconds the amended amount.

Chief Fisher verifies with the Board that there were no changes to the waterhole and ambulance budgets at the previous meeting. He then explains the Fire/Rescue budget to the Board. He asks if they would like to move the physicals from the health budget to the fire/rescue budget as it's specifically for fire/rescue. Mr. Harrington recommends that if the Board to go back and revisit the health budget and reduce the budget by removing the physical amount if they decide to move the physicals to fire/rescue budget. Lastly, they go over how the fuel for fire/rescue and agree that the diesel fuel line needs to be increased and the gasoline line can be reduced.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry amends his motion to change the gasoline line to decrease it by \$1,500.00 and increasing the diesel line by \$1,500.00 making the diesel line \$4,899.00.

Second: Selectman Huebner

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Selectman Huebner asks questions about a few of the lines and Chief Fisher answers them.

Selectwoman McHugh asks about the Safer Grant coverage and Chief Fisher answers he questions.

Vice Chairman McGarry asks where the septic tank money for the fire house will come from and Mr. Harrington explains where those funds could from but verifies that they would not come from the fire/rescue budget.

Selectman Huebner asks additional questions on possibly lower the budget on other lines and Chief Fisher answers the questions and recommends leaving the lines as they are.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Chief Fisher gives the Board a n update on the bids for the fire truck. He reminds the Board of the bids: Bulldog base bid \$800,433.00 and then an allowance of \$35,000.00 for equipment and Allegiance apparatus gave an option of upfront pay or pay upon delivery. The pay when delivered is \$1,149,669.00. Upfront pay would provide an \$80,000.00 discount bring the cost to \$1,069,669.00. His recommendation would be the Bulldog Fire Apparatus truck. They go over the grant funds and what the town is responsible for and where the funds will come from. They also go over how long it will take and the total cost.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to award the contract to Bulldog Fire and Emergency Apparatus in the amount of \$800,433.00.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion: Selectwoman McHugh

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Mr. Harrington asks that the Board amends the motion to show \$85,000.00 coming out of the capital reserve fund.

Vice Chairman McGarry states he'll amend his motion to include that \$85,000.00 will be coming out of the capital reserve fund.

Lastly, Chief Fisher brings up the public hearing about the ambulance that occurred about a year ago and is curious where the Board is at on it. He would still like to see an ambulance purchased. Chairman Pitman asks Chief Fisher to put together some info and stats to discuss at a future meeting and Chief Fisher agrees.

Veasey Park – Travis McCoy was not able to join so Chairman Pitman suggests they look over the figures and they can adjust them later is needed. Selectman Huebner reminds the Board they had agreed to postpone Veasey Park until they could speak to Mr. McCoy.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to revise line 121 to \$2,000.00, line 292 to \$500.00, the contract line to \$1,000.00, repairs and maintenance to \$2,500.00 and miscellaneous to \$300.00. The new total for the budget would be \$31,887.00.

Second:

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner explains why he feels the budget can be reduced.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 2, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Fails

They discuss whether or not to table Veasey Park and in the end they agree to table it until the next meeting.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to table the Veasey Park Budget until next week.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Selectman Huebner would like to give the MBC what they have completed thus far on the budget. Mr. Harrington recommends against this as more changes will occur so it is too confusing to have changed happening on the Board's side and then on MBC's side at the time. They agree to finish up the budget work at the next meeting to provide it to the MBC.

Regular Business

Review of Outstanding Minutes 10/10/2023:

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to approve the minutes from 10/10/2023 as written.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Accounts Payable – \$864,589.64 - \$800,000.00 going to the school

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$864,589.64 with \$800,000.00 going to the school.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Payroll Manifest – \$125,121.35 gross - \$84,864.64 net

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve payroll in the amount of \$125,121.35 gross and \$84,864.64 net.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Signatures/Correspondence:

- Signatures
-Oath of Office. Erroll Rhodes. Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. Member. Ending April 30, 2026.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to appoint Erroll Rhodes as a member of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Correspondence
-Letter from the state about saw logs, hardwood roundwood, softwood pulp and mixedwood chips sold on the Bear Brook State Park in Deerfield and this will be kept on file.

-Letter from April Purinton is read for the minutes by Vice Chairman McGarry.

"To the Deerfield Board of Selectmen, I've served as a library trustee for the past five and half years, although I am reaching out as a private citizen who has lived in town for close to forty years. I do not speak on behalf of the library, its staff or its trustees.

Last month, you asked taxpayers to share feedback about the urgent budget issue in our town, as we face many years of failed budgets and the incredible challenge of running a town on a default budget that is nearly ten years old. What I heard at that meeting was overwhelming support for passing a budget, and frustration at the loss of a sense of community purpose that has resulted in the fractious budget situation we now find ourselves in. Nearly everyone who spoke at that meeting voiced their support for the library and the core importance of the sense of community that glues us together.

Earlier this fall, you asked the library trustees to draft an MOU that would help clarify roles and responsibilities in maintaining the library building. When a draft was provided to you, it appears that this board took umbrage with the inclusion of the RSA surrounding library governance. Your response was to vote against the MOU in its entirety rather than to engage in a collaborative process of moving forward together. Instead of choosing the fully legitimate path of creating an MOU, a path encouraged by the NH Library Trustees Association, Natch Greyes of the NHMA, and modeled by dozens of libraries around the state, your Board passed a motion to essentially cut ties with the library. This means that the entire library budget must be rewritten in a desperate attempt to replace thousands of dollars in tax funding that have helped maintain the library through the town budget for the better part of a decade. The part that is especially alarming to me is that the select board is well aware of the likelihood of another default budget.

With the library motion passed at your last meeting, landing in yet another default budget in March will now mean that our library's access to taxpayer funds for building repair and maintenance, as well as the many shared contracts for services that are critical to keeping costs low, has effectively been cut off. Taxpayers who took the time to attend your listening session specifically asked that you protect our library and its funding, but we are now in a position where our library is at risk.

I urge you to reconsider your decision on how to move forward with the library. You have a group of dedicated and hard-working trustees who want to work with you for the collective good of the community. Please, given the state of our world, take a moment to consider what community means to you, and how we can build it up together.

Sincerely, April Purinton"

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Harrington states he has no items tonight.

Unfinished Business

Selectwoman McHugh asks about the policies for spending and what the amount is when a department head needs to come forward for BOS approval. Mr. Harrington explains the policy to the best of his knowledge.

New Business/Other Business

Non-Public Session

Citizen's Comments

- Harriet Cady. States what she remembers the spending policy was in the past. She goes on to explain how she feels it should be.

Adjournment

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to adjourn at 6:35.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Next Meeting: October 23, 2023 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*