

**Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
January 18, 2024**

Present: James Bailey – Chairman, Richard Pelletier – Selectman, and Laura Buono, Town Administrator. Iris Campbell – Selectwoman, arrived late.

In Attendance: Riche' Colcombe, Peter Mellen, Ernie Butler, Levi Smead, Dylan Pearse-Theroux, Abby Rand, Barbara Lincoln

Meeting opened at 6:00 pm  
Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**1. OPEN SESSION**

*Water Commissioner Peter Mellen:* Mr. Mellen provided a copy of the study for the System Development Charge. The Water Commissioners met with the Economic Development Commission yesterday who provided a vote of support. Mr. Mellen said the next step for the Commissioners is to hold a public hearing which will be some time in February. Mr. Mellen is before the Board looking for the same vote of support. Chairman Bailey asked Mr. Mellen to provide an explanation. Mr. Mellen said it's about a fee for new connections to the system and expansion of existing connections based on gallons per day. Mr. Mellen said this will replace the 3-tier system that is currently in place. Chairman Bailey said he and Selectman Pelletier attended the meeting with the EDC meeting and agrees with what is being proposed by the Commissioners. Ms. Buono said the topic will be placed on the January 24 Selectmen's agenda.

**2. RICHE' COLCOMBE: CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

Ms. Colcombe said she has completed some research and still feels the Board does not have the authority to implement fees for the Certificate of Compliance (inspection of rented housing), only for building permits and certificates of occupancy. She feels this item should be brought before the voters in a warrant article. Ms. Colcombe is not in favor of a fee and feels the inspections fall under the umbrella of the Fire Chief and the Building Inspector's position, she is sure the cost of the fee will be passed on to the tenants. Chairman Bailey said the fee is not the tenant's responsibility, it's the landlords, and it's not up to the Board to determine what landlord's do with a bi-annual fee. The need for the inspections has been justified from the tenant feedback the town offices have received.

Ms. Buono said as far as the certificate of compliance fitting into the fee structure for building permits, she believes it's a matter of what it's called, but the certificate of compliance is in line with all the other permits the town has, the word "permit" may need to be added, Ms. Buono will obtain clarification. Ms. Buono said the concern about the fee's was discussed with the Building Inspector and Fire Chief, Ms. Buono also spoke with one of the larger landlords in town who is tied to annual HUD inspections and another landlord who pays for his own inspections for insurance rate purposes, those reports would be considered towards a certificate of compliance. Also, the fee was discussed (\$75.00 per unit) and the thought of tiering the cost would make more sense. The cost for 1-5 units per building will be \$75, and then \$15 per unit after that. The certificate of compliance for rental units was first adopted in 2020, then covid hit and the program was tabled, but now it's time to get back to the inspections.

Ms. Colcombe feels the careless landlords will not file for the certificate of compliance, how will this be managed, such landlords should be handled in a different manner. Ms. Colcombe also said she spoke with the landlord of Bear Hill and William Street and said he was hesitant to talk to the Board in case of repercussions. Ms. Buono and Chairman Bailey didn't feel it was fair for Ms. Colcombe to say that. Chairman Bailey said the Board feels these charges are needed, the building inspector and fire chief talked and reduced the fee's and will take into consideration outside inspections. It will also be verified if the fee can be implemented without a town vote.

Selectman Pelletier asked how the town knows of all the rental units or do we know that. Ms. Buono said apartments and duplexes are indicated on the property cards. Another way is when properties are sold with apartments because the realtors are looking for certificates of occupancy for those apartments. Home rentals and Airbnb's are not known, the town needs to look at what other communities do to track these particular rentals. Also, the upcoming transfer station sticker program will help track rentals and Airbnb's.

Selectman Pelletier said the inspection process sounds more like a service the town is providing and shouldn't be charged. If a tenant calls about an issue, he feels the landlord should not be charged. Ms. Buono explained if a tenant calls about issues in the apartment, when the health officer or building inspector goes over and looks at the issues, that call will not prompt a \$75 fee, but if it is learned the landlord did not apply for a certificate of compliance the landlord will be provided with the paperwork to do so. Selectman Pelletier agrees the apartment inspections are needed; he is not so sure about the fee. Chairman Bailey feels this is no different than charging fees for a building permit, the revenue from the building permits does off-set some of the costs for that department.

Ms. Colcombe doesn't disagree about offsetting the costs. But she does have concerns about Hillsborough providing services to other towns without increasing the cost such as Antrim when Hillsborough's costs keep rising. Ms. Buono explained once again that the police chief is still reviewing costs, including for Antrim. Ms. Colcombe said every town that utilizes Hillsborough's services should receive an increase this year. Ms. Buono said the police chief is not hesitant to go up on charges, she said Ms. Colcombe attended one meeting in Antrim where they said they haven't received an increase, that doesn't mean they will not receive one, the budget is being created now. The same with the Transfer Station, other communities are waiting on the town's proposed 2024 budget. Colcombe added that she did attend more than one meeting in Antrim and it was stated the cost for Hillsborough support would remain flat this year, maybe there will be a change.

Abby Rand said the town is talking about inspecting apartments annually. Chairman Bailey said bi-annually. Ms. Rand said she owns property in Boston and that has never happened there, only fire escapes are inspected, this surprises her.

### **3. MANIFEST**

Chairman Bailey made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign Payroll Check numbers 19060– 19080 a/k/a Vouchers 52A, 1 and 2 in the amount of \$209,651.91 (includes 249 direct deposit stubs) and Accounts Payable Check numbers 030838 – 030936 a/k/a Voucher 40 in the amount of \$1,243,764.93. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, motion carried.

\*\* A/P Checks include payment to HDSD in the amount of \$951,101.30

#### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Bailey made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for January 18, 2024. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion carried.

- Veterans' Tax Credits – Map 20 Lot 36
- Elderly Exemption (denial) – Map 14 Lot 631
- Land Use Change Taxes – Map 3 Lot 9-1; Map 8 Lot 106-11; Map 5 Lot 82; Map 6 Lot 44-3; Map 4 Lot 53; Map 6 Lot 8; Map 7 Lot 3-5; Map 11F Lot 50-5; Map 8 Lot 106-15
- Welfare Lien – Map 14 Lot 269

#### **5. MINUTES**

Chairman Bailey made a motion to accept the meeting minutes dated December 27, 2023. Selectwoman Campbell seconded the motion, the motion passed. Selectman Pelletier abstained.

#### **6. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

Road Agent, Ernie Butler met with the Board to talk about some issues:

- Mr. Butler recommends hiring an engineer for Beard Brook Development. Ms. Buono said Scott Courser can look at that project; he is familiar with it. The Board agreed. Mr. Butler asked if Beard Brook Development would be responsible for that cost.
- An Emissions Grant was awarded for two vehicles, a ten-wheeler and 6-wheeler all-wheel drive. The total cost is over \$600,000, the town would pay 20% (est. \$130,000). The two vehicles being replaced must be destroyed per the grant. A warrant article will be presented at the Town Meeting.
- Mr. Butler talked about the work completed on Jones Road because of washouts.
  - Abby Rand said the level of the road is higher. Mr. Butler said the level of the road is higher because of the washouts so the water will run off. Ms. Rand would like to see the level brought down and bring the grass back.
  - Barbara Lincoln also lives on Jones Road and said her primary issue is the sand that comes down from Jones Road and lands on her property. She also has had to take several trees out because of the sand. She provided comments from her husband who is an engineer about a culvert near their property. Ms. Buono noted that these problems that are basically from mother nature may take a few years to resolve.
  - Riche' Colcombe lives on Jones Road said her issue over time is extra road material on her property and the culvert on her property also fills up with road material. She would like to see the culvert worked properly and would like to meet with Mr. Butler at her property to further explain her concerns. Chairman Bailey explained with the rains from last year and the recent past, wash outs are happening more frequently. Mr. Butler is keeping up as best he can and is trying to fix what mother nature dishes out.
- Mr. Butler asked the Board to consider purchasing a new grader, the current grader has 10,000 hours. The trade amount is about \$170,000, the question is, is this the year to purchase a grader which will need to be financed for about \$65,000 per year and added to the budget for the term of the loan. The Board is going to think about this purchase for 2024.

## **7. BID OPENING FOR TAX LIEN PROPERTIES**

The Board opened the bids for tax lien properties. After a discussion on how Map 7 and Lot 149 was noticed the Board made the following motion:

Chairman Bailey made a motion to award Map 7 Lot 149 on Hall Road (6.3 acres) to Levy Smead for \$20,000.00. Selectwoman Campbell seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Chairman Bailey made a motion to award Map 1 Lot 71 to R., Lawrence for \$22,500.00 on Severance Road. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

The remaining bids will be placed on a spreadsheet for review at the next Board meeting.

## **8. UNION CONTRACT**

Ms. Buono presented the numbers for the two union contracts for the Board to review and ratify. The contracts are for 3 years and will be brought forward to Town Meeting for a vote.

Chairman Bailey made a motion to ratify Hillsborough Town Employees Union Contract for 3 years. First year at \$55,282, 2025 for \$29,361 and 2026 for \$25,095. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Chairman Bailey made a motion to ratify the Police Benevolent Association Local #51. The contract for 2024 at \$86,900, 2025 for \$77,061 and 2026 for \$44,608. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

## **9. 2 BRIDGE STREET**

The developer learned that he qualifies under the Invest NH program for the demo grant which is a municipal program. The request from the developer is the town applies for the application which the developer will create. If approved the money will come through the town and the developer would submit receipts to the town for reimbursement.

Chairman Bailey made a motion to apply for the demo grant for 2 Bridge St. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion carries.

Chairman Bailey made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign and execute any and all documentation to implement activity on behalf of the Town of Hillsborough business in the governor's office of emergency relief and recovery programs. Selectwoman Campbell seconded the motion, the motion carried.

## **10. SANDER**

Ms. Buono said the Town of Greenfield would like to purchase the pickup truck sander which Hillsborough hasn't used in a few years for \$500. She said they are aware it does function well in certain situations. The Board was in favor of selling it and Selectman Pelletier made a motion to sell the sander to Greenfield for \$500. Chairman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

## **11. PROSECUTOR SERVICE AGREEMENT**

Ms. Buono said that the police chief previously spoke with the Board about the Town of Bennington and Deering wishing to contract to utilize Hillsborough's prosecutor. A service agreement in the amount of \$17,300 each for 2024 was presented to the Board for these services and Ms. Buono said a motion is needed along with the Chairman's signature if the Board agrees. Selectman Pelletier made a motion to accept the service agreements as presented and to authorize the Chairman to sign. Selectwoman Campbell seconded the motion, the motion passed.

## **12. PARKS BOARD**

Selectwoman Campbell asked the Board to consider disbanding the Parks Board because it now falls under the umbrella of Youth Services. This will be further discussed at the next meeting as well as memberships on the Economic Development Commission.

## **13. WATER & SEWER COMMISSION**

Selectman Pelletier said it was agreed to send water & sewer money to help with their Whittemore Project since it is both a Water/Sewer project and a road project. Ms. Buono said the Board agreed to use the ARPA funds the Town had received toward the project which amounts to a little over \$600,000, of which water & sewer has already been given \$30,000. The Board asked Ms. Buono to clarify that paving is included in the updated cost of the project which is now just over \$2M

## **14. BARDEN HILL**

Chairman Bailey said a resident had approached the Board about a light at the top of Barden Hill, he talked with both the fire chief and police chief, and both felt the light is not necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm

A true record  
Mary Whalen  
Recording Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by:  
Hillsborough Selectboard

\_\_\_\_\_  
James C. Bailey, III, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Iris Campbell, Selectwoman

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Richard Pelletier, Selectman