

TOWN OF HILL

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

December 5, 2023

Selectmen Present: Shaun Bresnahan Chairman, Frank Razzaboni, Stephen Thomson & Lisa Seymour (Administrative Assistant)

Selectmen Absent: None

Public: Shelly Henry, Paul Guild, Ellen Guild, William O'Conner (call), Gregory Paradise, Joseph Guerriero, Joann Irving, Carl Rider, Sumner Doten, Janey Levesque, David Thomson, Donald Reese, Thomas Scribner and Jeffery Beach

Shaun Bresnahan brought the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Shaun Bresnahan asked Mrs. Levesque you received the letter regarding the lighting issue? Mrs. Levesque stated that they received a phone call from the State Trooper stating that she received a call from Carl Rider that our lights were shining into their bedroom. Shaun asked if she received the letter regarding the lightening issue because we have a zoning ordinance that states what lighting is acceptable in reviewing pictures that we seen by Chief Guerriero it exceeds the ordinance. Mrs. Levesque stated that the lights go off around 9:00 pm after the dogs are in for the night. However, some nights might be a little later because they are working on the house. Shaun stated that if you can come up with a lighting scheme that doesn't violate the zoning ordinance. Mrs. Levesque stated that it is constant harassment and it needs to end its ridicules Carl is a bully if it not the lights it will be something else. Stephen Thomson as far as the Selectboards is involved in anything going on up there is the violation of the zoning ordinance regarding the lights anything else is a civil issue and we cannot do anything about that. Stephen said the only reason the selectmen are involved is because of the lighting issue that violates the zoning ordinance. Stephen stated that you can have outside lighting but it needs to be within the zoning allowance.

Stephen read from the ordinance the Outdoor Lighting the purpose is to maintain the rural and historic character of the town, reduce unsafe or annoying lighting conditions and ensure efficient use of lighting. Applicability: All private outdoor lighting.

Exceptions: the following are permitted they do not create a safety hazard:

- a. Seasonal decorative lighting
- b. Temporary lighting for construction purposes
- c. Emergency lighting, as may be required by any public agency while engaged in the performance of their duties.
- d. Lighting for the United States and State flag. The light source shall have a beam spread no grater than necessary to illuminate the flag and shall be fully shielded.
- e. Municipal street lighting.

Standards:

- a. All lighting shall be aimed, located, deigned, fitted and maintained so as not to present a hazard to drivers or pedestrians by impairing their ability to safely traverse and so as not to create a nuisance by projecting or reflecting objectionable light onto a neighboring property.
- b. Directional fixtures such as floodlights and spotlights shall be so shielded, installed and aimed that they do not project their output into windows of neighboring residences or properties, adjacent uses, past the object being illuminated, skyward or onto a public roadway or pedestrian way.

Stephen stated that it's not seasonal lighting it's more than that and we all have seen pictures of that. Stephen asked if it is temporary if so, we need a timeframe as to when it will

be done. Mrs. Levesque stated that they will always have a light in the yard. Stephen said we can't tell you can't have a light in your yard it just can impeded onto your neighbor's yard. Pictures were shared showing the lighting in question. Carl stated he would like to bring up a couple of things that has been said. Mrs. Levesque said Carl you had your chance and now it's my turn. Frank asked if the lights stay on or are they motion lights Mrs. Levesque stated that they stay on until 9:00 pm. Stephen stated the pictures he is seeing the lights are way beyond their property and is not necessary. Shaun said it is the perspective from the boundary line. Stephen you can have lights in your yard but not projecting into your neighbors. The Chief has seen the lights and has offered to take Mrs. Levesque up to review the issue. Mrs. Levesque will change the direction of the lighting to conform with the ordinances. Shaun asked when can we expect that be remedied? Mrs. Levesque stated that they will work on this tomorrow. Stephen questioned the timeframe on the letter? Shaun said the letter gives them 30 days to respond to the letter and they have complied with the request. Shaun asked for a hard date to have this resolved and Mrs. Levesque agreed to December 11th it will completed. Carl the lighting issue is resolved. Carl agreed with the solution.

Stephen asked about the County payment Shaun said it must be paid by the 15th day of December after that when incur a 18% penalty daily. This covers our portion of the sheriff's department, county prison, nursing home and other county related departments.

The question was asked about the posting of the meeting. Lisa checked and the posting is for a non-public until 6:30 so we cannot move forward with business until then.

Lisa Stated the agenda for this evening is fairly light because we need to work on the budget for next week meeting.

Shaun asked if Lisa has reached out to Rick Evans in regards to the logging operation for Ben Hall because he is under reporting. Lisa said not yet and Shaun said he will reach out to Rick. Caroline Hines property Ben has been logging all last week without an Intent to Cut. Rick Evans is currently working on another issue here in town regarding under reporting of timber cut.

HIGHWAY DEPT:

Gregg reported things are going well it was a long night. Shaun asked how is the equipment holding up. Gregg stated all good at this time. During evening we had twelve trees down we able to take care all except the one the powerline was on. Shaun Bresnahan said we gave Gregg permission to purchase sand and we had 180 yards delivered today at the highway shed but we have nothing at the Clough location. Stephen asked about the sand we authorized \$3,500 for sand we received \$2,655 of sand at Route 3A garage. Gregg said he still has \$845 left on the last approval this will cover two loads. Remaining balance will go the Clough Road garage. Gregg stated that they will need another 10 loads of sand on the mountain which will be about \$2,600.

Shaun Bresnahan made a motion to have Gregg order another 10 loads of sand from SKR. Frank Razzaboni seconded the motion. All in favor.

Stephen asked how long do think that will last? At looking at the multi forecast we are looking alright but that could change. Gregg also mentioned it depends on the snow this last storm was heavy and we had to use more sand because it packed like ice on the hills. Shaun asked do you have enough salt to mix the 10 loads of said? Gregg said yes, we do. Gregg said that he has about 18 yards left. The question was asked is there a backlog getting salt from Morton's? Gregg has not called as yet because he wants to use what we have left. Stephen asked the delivery schedule because we have already approved the salt delivery. Gregg needs to call when he needs it. Shaun said we need to Gregg know what our expectations are in the past the road agent had some latitude in just ordering the salt without coming and asking for it. Gregg said that they will be delivering 32 tons each delivery. Gregg did say the 180 yards of sand delivered is all mixed and ready to go. Stephen was pleased to hear that. Stephen said we have unfinished paperwork that needs to be addressed.

Shaun stated I have the final draft here on my desk. Stephen has one more question regarding overtime? In looking at the personnel policy all overtime must be approved and we need to stay on top of that. Stephen asked Gregg if they have overtime already? Lisa pointed out that if there is a holiday in the pay period, they have work to make the difference before the overtime rate happens. Stephen is just putting it out there so we can stay on top of it. Gregg asked if we have overtime during a storm or an event is supposed to cut hours on another day. Shaun said if we get back-to-back storms, we can't neglect the maintenance on the equipment because of an overtime issue. Stephen said we need to finalize decisions on this. Shaun stated that we will have to just manage the line however the roads need to be plowed and equipment repaired. Stephen said all he wants is the board to work together on these decisions because we are a board. Gregg said he totally agrees we need to work as a team and without a team you don't have anything.

Shaun said we need to finish up where we left of with the budget so Gregg will be ready for his meeting with the budget committee. We started with the Safety equipment we have budgeted \$1,500 which is an increase of \$500.00 because we need to purchase chaps.

Salt Frank stated that last year we budgeted \$40,000 for salt. Shaun pointed out that our 4-year average is 450 tons at \$87.05 = \$39,173. Gregg is going sparely on the salt usage and is using salt/sand mix to keep the cost down. Salt would be used in a worst-case scenario such as hard packed roads that can't clear on its self. This year we have purchased 235 tons and we are working on the reminder. Stephen Thomson asked that is what we have used so far? Shaun stated that is what was purchased in Jan, Feb and March of 2023. Shaun explained that we have not purchased any salt during the fall because Gregg wants to use what is sitting in the shed all summer to mix with the sand. Gregg stated we can only hold so much salt and Shaun said the salt shed will hold two delivers. Stephen asked what do you think you will use this year? Gregg said not being here last year I couldn't tell you but I know they used why too much last year. Shaun did the calculation and the board determined that \$23,000 for salt would be a good number for 2024 budget and that the \$15,000 for sand should cover for 2024. They looked at the sand and Gregg stated that this line has opportunity for savings. Gregg has the connection to rent equipment to generate our own sand. Stephen asked don't we have 3 pits Town of Hill have? Shaun stated that we have one behind the dump that has really nice sand and Gregg stated that they did some tests pits at the Clough Road location and the is sand there as well. He also said that with the crushing we will have other products that we can use. Snow plow parts look good \$6,500. Stephen questioned the supplies? Shaun stated it is for hand cleaner, wipes, and general supplies for the department. The board stayed at \$4,000 the same as last year. Tony is currently working on the inventory to see what we have supplies. Telephone will increase to \$2,450 to cover the cellphone and internet. Tools decreased to \$500.00. Stephen asked if there was a toolbox at the garage? Gregg stated that we have one and it is equipped with what we need. The department needs road signs when they are working in the road. The new signs will be purchase from the 2023 budget and the line for 2024 can stay at \$400.00 because we will need to replace cones.

Shaun Bresnahan made a motion to purchase Road work signs for \$694.20 from Chappell using 2023 budget funds. Frank Razzaboni seconded the motion. All in favor.

Wages: wages are all group and Stephen would like this changed. Frank inquired about the benefits and where are they located? Lisa stated that the health insurance has its own line and the payroll taxes have not been allocated yet just waiting for the last pay period of the year to complete the allocations. If we decide to show the wages broke down, we would need to have a line for Gregg, Dale and Tony. Stephen Thomson would like this to be broken out like this. Shaun stated that regular hours based on 2080 hours per year per man would be \$169,563 The wages for OT would be \$14,673.00 based on 120 hours at their hourly rates. Total wages based on these calculations would be \$184,236. Lisa will review the overtime for the next meeting. Stephen Thomson would like to make a suggested on the wage line because the average taxpayer going want this broke up because these numbers can lose people. Thomas Scriber asked if some is plowing at 2:00 am is the rate different then plowing during the day? Shaun stated it is whether it is regular hours or overtime hours. Nobody is being paid to be on call for a storm. They had a storm where they went out at 3:00 am and finished at 1:00 pm Gregg said instead of sitting around till 3:30 pm let's go home to

minimize overtime. Tom Scribner said that they are essential workers and should be compensated for the hours. Shaun replied that did receive overtime for that day. Gregg explained that when it snows in the evening, they will plow to make sure the roads are passable and then go home and start again in the morning so the roads are ready for the morning travel. Water will stay at \$950.00 and Training will remain the same \$400.00.

Street lighting: Shaun asked Lisa if this stays about the same every month? Lisa stated yes. This line will remain the same as last year. Joann provided a list of street lights that need to be replace and Lisa will contact the NH Co-Op to replace them.

Reconstruction of Highways the \$49,000 is the number we receive from the State. The actual numbers that you see there are actually spent. Most of the expense in these accounts were for Murray Hill. In addition to the \$49,000 we received a one-time payment of \$14,316.07 for road improvements.

JoAnn asked about the sidewalk in front of the post office by the handicap sign. She said that the pavement is jagged and fears that someone will fall. Gregg said that they will fix this in the morning.

Shaun Bresnahan will let Bob Dupuis that he will no longer be shoveling the Town Office building.

Gregg will call Irving to start weekly deliveries for the winter months. At the highway garage the overhead doors need repairing especially the lower panels. Gregg mentioned that a 2' x 12' panel would cost \$600.00 installed and we need to replace 3 of them.

Gregg would like to have like to have 1-1/2 gravel and stone in stock in case of washouts ne would like to get three loads of each for a total cost of \$3,000. Shaun Bresnahan approved the purchase of bank run gravel and stone for a total of \$3,000. Stephen Thomson seconded the motion. All in favor.

The Board reviewed the Transfer Station budget with Gregg. Shaun stated that on the waste removal it seems like we are being billed by two companies. Lisa pulled the contract with Waste Management because they were going to take care the hauling and the disposal fees. Based on the current contract

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

No Report at this time

POLICE DEPT:

No report at this time

TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR:

Shelly reported that she doesn't have a whole lot. She wanted to let the board know she had a computer issue with the MAAP and was not able to take registrations. Shelly called Certified and come to find out it stems from an issue with the new office located downstairs. Whatever Certified did to get that up caused the issue. The water department was using the same IP address. Shelly did ask Certified to reach out to the Water Commissioner to let them know of the issue. Shelly asked fort he drop dead date for encumbering funds? Lisa said it can be done up to the 15th of the month. Shelly would like to have an audit done on the water department books before it is transferred to the water commissioner. Shelly reached out to out auditors to see how much this would costs because she wants to make sure it is clean before it is transferred.

Shelly mentioned the holiday party that we have every year will be December 21st which is a luncheon pot luck starting at 12:30 and ending at 2:30.

PUBLIC SESSION:

William O'Conner Building Permit issue. Stephen Thomson has information to discuss the RSA and the next step in this in Stephen opinion we have never seen the deed to the property which is to Stephen's understanding. The first thing is does he have deeded access to the property because the

access is not from Hill it's from Alexandria. We need to verify if he has deeded access to the property. Shaun asked if we can get a hold of the deed? Lisa mentioned she thought we already have the deed. It was located in the folder. If not, Lisa will reach out to Mr. O'Connor because we don't have access to Grafton County registry. Now if there is a deeded access to the property per the RSA the next step is to contact the other municipality in writing that the access to that road doesn't violate their zoning ordinance. Alexandria has minimum lot size requirements and they have minimum road frontage. If there is a building permit issued that the other municipality doesn't have a problem with the access of that. Stephen said it still has no frontage in Hill so this would need to the planning board for a right-a-way extension to get the road frontage which would be a modified subdivision. If this passes, he would have the frontage and then he would need to obtain a driveway permit and then he could get a building permit. RSA 674.41 explains the road frontage for the property. According to Stephen if we all agree the next step would be to contact the other town.

The next step is to draft a letter to Alexandria per the RSA stating the issue and wait for their response. Frank asked Stephen if he was going to draft the letter? He said after he has had a chance to review the deed, he will draft the letter.

Frank Razzaboni stated that this is such a unique case his building permit expired but we relied on the old building permit. Stephen Thomson said there is two reason's one it was issued on the wrong lot and the second reason is the permit is three years old.

Tom Scriber has a question regarding the right-a-way? Are you trying to establish a right-a-way on private property? Shaun pointed out that there is a landowner in Hill and the only access is through Alexandria and it actual has no road frontage in the Town of Hill and our zoning requires that in order to build in Hill you must have 200' of road frontage on a public road to build.

Jeffery Beach came to discuss a building permit for Map R1 Lot 8. Lisa mentioned that she has not had a chance to review the paperwork to make sure everything was there. Mr. Beach said that he had a sketch of the building, approved septic design, the planning board decision to allow the required road frontage from Map R1 Lot 07-01. Stephen asked for the MCRD recording number. Shaun said before this can be approved, we have to make sure this has been recorded at MCRD. Shaun stated that the best that we can do is conditional approve it and when it has been registered, we can issue the permit. Stephen asked what are we signing of on? The Agreement and Release which states that the Town of Hill neither assumes responsibility for maintenance, including snow plowing, nor liability for any damages resulting from the use of said Driveway. This agreement releases the Town from any maintenance to said road. The Board of Selectmen signed the agreement. Stephen Thomson made a motion to conditional approve the building permit pending the Agreement and Release has been registered at the MCRD. Frank Razzaboni second the motion. All in favor.

Paul Guild was looking for an update on 20 Shop Road? Shaun notified the attorney that you wanted to proceed. Our attorney referred us to another attorney in the practice that is very knowledgably in these situations. Shaun suggested that all of the board members have a call with this attorney and they all agreed. Shaun will call and set up a time and Lisa will post the meeting.

Bruce Blazon was looking for an update on the zoning violation on 25 Snow Road? The violation was for so many days and Chief Guerrero was going to pull the lights. Lisa forwarded that latest email from the attorney that needs to be reviewed before any decisions going forward. Bruce again asked what is the enforcement. Stephen Thomson stated that we sent the letter they needed to come down and didn't so therefore the lights need to come down. Shaun asked the Chief what his schedule was over the next couple of days? He will be here on Thursday and Saturday. They came to an agreement to meet on Thursday December 7th at 10:00 am to remove the lights. Lisa asked if the meeting needed to be posted because all three selectmen will be together? The Board was in agreement that it didn't need to be posted. Bruce asked further questions regarding the property at 25 Snow Road which would need to address in a non-public meeting. The selectmen received an email this afternoon and haven't had a chance to review it.

Selectmen Business

Building Permit: Reviewed earlier in the meeting.

The board recessed for a 5-minute break.

Driveway Permits:

Anthony Roberts 86 Currier Road Map R12 Lot 27 has a new driveway permit because the other one is over a year old and not valid. Shaun said we will need to have Gregg look at it to see if it needs a culvert.

Intent to Cut:

Caroline and Michael Hines 269 Rt 3A Map R10 Lot 4 Logger Ben Hall – On hold and Rick Evans needs to be involved because cutting before approval and the volumes are under. Shaun will reach out Rick Evans he is the NH DRA timber appraiser. We have time to review and sign at the next meeting.

Mary M. Thompson Trust, Mary & Peter Thompson 1000 Murray Hill Road Map R3 Lot 34 Logger Anita Nikles Blakeman Woodland Care Forest Management access road is on Brown Road – Approved

Other:

Town Warrant has been signed.

Budget numbers we are presenting the next week. Primex covers the unemployment which is \$500.00, workers comp increased to \$11,314.00 and property and liability is \$25,593.00. Stephen Thomson has numerous questions regarding the insurance first when does this take effect? This takes effect January 1, 2024. First why did this go up Shaun stated that we now have a police chief. Workers Compensation this is based on payroll and the number of claims. Lisa said we had seven claims and prior year we had none. Stephen was concerned with the high payroll. The water commissioners are not employees so they are not paid through town. Stephen said officials should not be eligible for worker's comp. Lisa will pull a report and confirm the wages included. The highway, fire department, police department, transfer station and the office personnel are definitely covered. Stephen stated that if you are a subcontractor, you're not eligible which would include him and the other selectmen. Shaun stated that if the water department is going the 1099 route you are correct you would not be covered under the policy. Stephen asked the question how can selectmen be covered under the insurance because the wages are predetermined so according to state law the selectmen are not covered under the workers comp because we are elected. Shaun under the IRS we are employees even though we are elected. Stephen stated this is interpretation and needs to be reviewed. Shaun said we need to talk with Primex workers comp representative for clarification. Stephen asked if we don't renew this is it going to lapse and these were available October 15, 2023? Lisa said they became available but was not on the website until recently. The reason I asked this question is because we were looking into a new carrier and now, we have no time. Shaun said if you knew about this in October do you think you would have time? David Thomson said it would be nice to talk with them like we did Rod to see the reactions to the questions asked. Stephen stated that he is a stickier for process. David Thomson question how long we have been with Primex? Shaun stated that we would need to look into that however we are in a pool of insurance with Primex. Stephen asked what is the highway winter maintenance workers comp? This is a riskier time of year. Stephen asked again if he fell on the stairs as a water commissioner would he be covered. Shaun pointed out is the meter reader gets hurt and the wages are covered by the Town yes, they would be covered because they are an employee. In water department if you have a meter reader or secretary and wages are paid, they would be covered under workers comp because they are employees.

Rod Wood contracts were presented the first one is for \$15,000 which have Rod here one day every other month and covers everything that the contract for including the 1st year cyclical done by Brent his assistant. The one for \$10,800 plus additional cost per tax card and additional pick-ups. Stephen asked Lisa how many days she would need Rod? Lisa stated with the remaining land-use changes that remain at least 6 to 7 days just for this and the property changes when land is sold or changes in tax credits.

Stephen Thomson made a motion to accept the one-year contract for \$15,000 which will have Rod here every other month. Frank Razzaboni seconded the motion. All in favor

The selectmen signed the contract and Lisa Seymour witnessed the signatures. Rod will provide a certificate of liability of insurance and will send it to the DRA for final approval.

The mapping contract with Avitar will need to be reviewed. The amount of the yearly contract is \$2,208 we will just add, if need be, it can be removed.

Shaun said one of the questions the budget committee is going ask is what about raises? Stephen asked what departments will get raises or is it across the board? Stephen looks at the raises as if your department is making revenue then raises would be considered. Stephen stated that this is a business money comes in money goes out. Stephen doesn't think it should be status quo 3% it should be by performance based. Frank stated that 3% is below the cost of living so you're not really giving raises because the employees are making less every year instead of increasing. David Thomson asked what would \$900 in raises look in the tax base? He also wanted to know when the town is going to sell the properties that it owns right now the market is high and can it be logged to bring revenue? This would need to be a warrant article because you need to ask the town because they actually own it. What is an acceptable tax rate for this town \$35.00, \$45.00 where does this stop, we keep spending but not making any revenue back? Shaun stated you can't ask what is an acceptable tax rate because next year the tax rate will probably go down a quite a bit because the revaluation.

Frank asked the question how does the highway department make the town money? Stephen said that they save us money. Frank asked Stephen what department's make revenues? Shaun answered that the tax payers are the ones creating the revenue to pay the raises and pay the bills. Shaun said this the curse of Hill we have no businesses and no camping resorts that could produce revenue. Stephen said the wealth of Hill is pitiful Shaun explained that Hill is all residual property so you can't compare it like Hebron that has several boy's and girl's camps. Stephen stated we could have that if we owned the old village area. Shaun stated we can't own it. Stephen said we can't own it because its government property Shaun stated that they flood it so how could you have a camp down there.

Frank said we need to back the raise issue you have employees that have the cost of living increases every year Stephen said he has this too but he doesn't get a raise. Stephen doesn't agree with raises. Stephen believes it should be performance based you work for what you get paid for. Joann asked if the raises are based on merit? Shaun and Frank stated yes they are. Stephen asked where are the job descriptions for the employees that work here. Stephen state that Lisa does many jobs because she the administrative assistant this her title she is Accounting, Payroll, HR and several other reporting functions to the board of selectmen and to the state. Shaun agreed we all need to work on the job descriptions. Frank stated that we need to set a workshop after budget season to work just on job descriptions. The selectmen do the descriptions for the supervisors and then the supervisors do them for their employees. Joann asked if the selectmen looked at other towns for samples.

David Thomson asked if there is still time to have a warrant article to harvest the timber on town property and then sell it? Shaun replied yes there is time to add a warrant article to address this. Stephen asked what is the deadline for warrant articles? Shaun stated that anything with money appropriated needs to be presented to the budget committee.

Waste Management needs to be reviewed and will be tabled this because there are some issues with the contract.

Right to know policy we submitted our draft to Michael Courtney. So, what are we going to approve Mr. Estes was no happy with it? Remedies needs to be added. Stephen is confused this was a supposed to be a draft to go to the other party. Stephen Thomson asked what are we going to do with this? Shaun said he is fine the way it set. Frank asked with or without the remedies? Shaun said without the remedies. Frank Razzaboni made a motion to accept the right to know policy as written with on remedies and no consequences. Stephen wanted to modify the remedies and consequences per the law. Frank believes it stated in the body of the policy. Stephen said why are we doing this because it is not satisfying the complaint. Stephen said I thought we were entering an agreement to remedy this and this policy is not doing it. Stephen said look we are a board of three make a vote. Frank stated we have motion. Shaun asked if he would be chastised for seconded it. Stephen said he would not chastise anybody. Shaun seconded the motion. The chairmen of the board asked for a vote All in favor say I two yes one no. Motion passed

Shaun presented a PO from Maine Oxy for cutting tips, grinding wheel and a tank \$422.89. Shaun asked if all were in agreement in approving the PO. Frank seconded the motion. All in favor

Shaun being the time we will hold the job description for the road agent for now.

Stephen Thomson made a motion to enter into Nonpublic Session at 10:00 pm seconded by Frank Razzaboni. Motion passed (RSA 91-A:3, II (a))

Stephen Thomson made a motion to leave nonpublic Session and return to public session at 10:09 pm seconded by Frank Razzaboni. Motion passed. Shaun Bresnahan made to seal the minutes, seconded by Stephen Thomson

Frank Razzaboni shared his personnel feelings in regards of the abuse that Lisa Seymour takes in regards to harassing emails. Frank stated that he is surprised that she comes to work every day.

With no further business to conduct, Frank Razzaboni made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Shaun Bresnahan seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously motion at 10:18 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Seymour

Shaun Bresnahan, Chair

Frank Razzaboni

Stephen Thomson
