

TOWN OF KENSINGTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Kensington Town Hall
95 Amesbury Road
Kensington, NH 03833
MONDAY
MARCH 25, 2024
Minutes - DRAFT
6:30 PM

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In Attendance: Joe Pace (Chairperson), Bob Solomon (Member), Bob Gustafson (Member), and Kathy Felch (Town Administrator).

Public Comment - None

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:32 for the following:

- In accordance with RSA 41:9-a to amend the fees for town Right to Know Fees to delete any fees charged per hour for requests.
- Amendment of the Right to Know Policy for the town.

J. Pace commented that this hearing is to ensure that the town's policy is in accordance with state law.

MOTION: B. Solomon motioned to amend the town's right to know policy as presented. B. Gustafson seconded. All in favor.

AGENDA:

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

- Police Department –Chief Scott Cain –
 - Chief Cain detailed an increase in right to know fees for the police department. He explained that the increase is to cover supplies used by the department to fulfil right-to-know requests, such as toner, paper, etc.
 - J. Pace stated that the Board would hold a public hearing to discuss the fee changes at the next meeting.
 - Chief Cain explained to the board that Unitil is refusing to pay for police details from an emergency response involving downed, live wires. Unitil claims that they do not consider the details work details. J. Pace suggested sending a letter to Unitil with the town's policy to try to work out the disagreement.

- Fire Department – Chief Jon True – UPDATE ON FIRE CHIEF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.
 - The town has received 3 applications for the fire chief position. The applications have been sent to the committee for review.
- Emergency Management - Chief Jon True –
 - The Seabrook Station graded exercise is scheduled for April 3, 2024.
- Road Manager – Matthew Armstrong-
 - Two stop signs have been replaced at Drinkwater and Wild Pasture Road.
 - A stop sign was repaired on North Rd.
 - Gravel shoulder repairs have been completed on Moulton Ridge Rd.
- Tax Collector- Carlene Wiggin-
 - C. Wiggin presented the annual tax lien for the board to sign.

MOTION: B. Gustafson motioned for the board to instruct the tax collector to pay outstanding 2023 taxes and file all appropriate paperwork with the registry. B. Solomon seconded. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **WEST SCHOOL ROAD- BUILDING AND DRIVEWAY PERMIT**

J. Pace detailed a request for a resident to use the Class VI road for access. He stated that if the Board is amendable to the request, the town would assume no obligation for maintenance. K. Felch explained that the frontage for the lot is on a Class V road.

- **PRELIMINARY APPROVAL OF THE LARGE GROUNDWATER WITHDRAWAL FROM EXETER- LETTER FROM DES-POSTED ON TOWN WEBSITE.**

J. Pace explained that the state has responded to the concerns of the town as expressed at public hearings on this issue and has added stipulations to the proposal. (*Addendum 1*).

The board discussed the letter and is going to respond to DES with the ongoing concerns of the town.

- **MAINTENANCE BIDS RECEIVED.**

The board reviewed lawn maintenance bids and will discuss the two lowest bids on 4/1/2024:

1. York River Landscaping, York, ME: \$17,320
4. Down To Earth Landscapes: \$\$17,580

Five bids were discussed in total from Terrific Landscaping, York River Landscaping, ASAP Landscaping, Dream Yards LLC, and Down to Earth Landscaping.

- **TOWN BUDGET DISCUSSION – DEFAULT VOTED IN- DISCUSSION**

The board discussed the failed budget vote at the 2024 town meeting. J. Pace explained that the town must explore two options: plan for operating in a default budget, or to hold a special town meeting to address the town budget under RSA 32:5. If the latter option is chosen, the Selectboard will hold a public hearing in the near future to discuss the budget and can set a date for a special town meeting to vote on the budget.

The board discussed the impact of operating under a default budget, and what the cost might be in choosing that option. J. Pace highlighted the impact of public concern about the public safety budget had on the failed budget vote and discussed with the board the steps to be taken, as well as ramifications, of holding a new deliberative session and a special town meeting to try and approve a new budget.

J. Pace discussed his concern with the progress and work over the past 5 years to create a stable, professional, and modern police department.

B. Solomon expressed concern over the public's concerns about taxes. J. Pace mentioned the town votes against the co-op to highlight the public's concern with overall taxation.

J. Pace asked Chief Cain about the ramifications, such as police staffing cuts, of operating in a default budget. Chief Cain responded that the police department would be more reactive than proactive if a budget doesn't pass.

The board discussed the possibility of holding a new budget hearing at the end of April and proposed setting a definite course of action by April 15, 2024.

The Board will hold a workshop discussion at the April 1, 2024 meeting.

- **ROAD RACE-CHARLES RIVER WHEELERS- 5-19-24**

The board discussed issues with concurrent events at Sawyer Park, as well as difficulties with the organization last year. The board did not approve the permit application.

- **OPEN AIR PERMIT- 127 AMESBURY ROAD**

MOTION: B. Gustafson motioned to sign the permit for an open-air permit for a wedding on September 21, 2024 at 127 Amesbury Rd. B Solomon seconded. All in favor.

- **OPEN AIR PERMIT – CROWS FEET FARM**

K. Felch had not received additional required information for the event and will reach back out to the applicant.

- Any other business brought before the Board
 - Reappointments

MOTION: B. Solomon motioned to appoint the following:

1. Matthew Armstrong, Road Manager, ex. April 2025
2. Marty Silvia, Planning Board, ex. April, 2027
3. Joan Skewes, Zoning Board of Adjustment, ex. April, 2027
4. Therese Wallaga, Zoning Board of Adjustment Alternate. Ex. April 2027
5. Joan Skewes, Conservation Commission, ex. April 2027
6. Lili spinosa, Kensington Rec and Social Committee, ex. April 2027
7. Donna Carter, Kensington Rec and Social Committee, ex. April 2027
8. Meghan Gross, Heritage Commission, ex. April 2027
9. Joni Praded, Heritage Commission, ex. April 2027
10. Frank Whitmore, Heritage Commission Alternate, ex. April 2027
11. Alan Tuthill, Heritage Commission, ex. April 2027

B. Gustafson seconded the motion. All in favor.

- Approval of Board Minutes

MOTION: B. Gustafson motioned to approve the minutes for February 12 and February 26, 2024. B. Solomon seconded. All in favor.

- Next meeting: April 1, 2024.

- Adjournment

MOTION: B. Gustafson motioned to adjourn the meeting. B. Solomon seconded. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Owen Corcoran
Land Use Administrative Assistant