



**TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE
NORTH HAMPTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

JANUARY 24, 2022 7:00 PM

NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL

DRAFT MNUTES

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jim Maggiore, Vice Chairman James Sununu
VIA PHONE: Selectman Jonathan Pinette

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator Michael Tully, Fire Chief Jason Lajoie, Fergus Cullen of Bright Spot Solar

AGENDA

Chairman Jim Maggiore welcomed everyone to the January 24, 2022 North Hampton Select Board Meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Maggiore said Mr. Jonathan Pinette is joining us by phone this evening and all votes will be by roll call vote.

Motion: To allow Mr. Pinette to participate in the meeting electronically.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Chairman Maggiore

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 2-0.

Chairman Maggiore said they were coming from Non-Public and all 3 sessions need to be sealed.

Motion: To seal the minutes of Non-Public Sessions I, II, and III of January 24, 2022.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Chairman Maggiore

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

Disclaimer –These minutes are prepared by the Recording Secretary within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by majority vote of the Select Board.

A recording of the meeting can be found at: http://www.townhallstreams.com/towns/north_hampton_nh, and a DVD recording is available at the North Hampton Town Administrative Offices, 233 Atlantic Avenue, North Hampton, New Hampshire 03862.

First Public Comment Session

For comments please call 603-758-1447; email jmaggiore@northhampton-nh.gov

No public comment.

Consent Calendar

- 7.1 Payroll Manifest of January 13, 2022 in the amount of \$283,738.91
- 7.2 Payroll Manifest of January 20, 2022 in the amount of \$72,623.13
- 7.3 Accounts Payable Manifest of January 20, 2022 in the amount of \$1,256,917.40
- 7.4 Abatement Recommendations
- 7.5 Veterans Tax Credits
- 7.6 Cemetery Deed
- 7.7 Supplemental Tax Bill

Motion: To approve the Consent Calendar items as presented.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Jonathan Pinette

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

Correspondence

Chairman Maggiore said a piece of correspondence came in on Friday and will be taken up under New Business 13.2 Discussion of Bond Rates and Cost Impacts for Buildings.

Committee Updates

Chairman Maggiore said the *Heritage Commission* did not meet last week and is meeting this week; *Water Commission* has not met.

Vice-Chair Sununu said *Rails to Trails Committee* has not met; but with Rockingham Planning Commission got a grant from National Park Service working on signage and trail design, and putting working groups together. Construction schedule for expected completion date probably up to 2024.

Vice-Chair Sununu said the *Budget Committee* met on the 18th for Public Hearing on Bond and Budgets for Town and School; reviewed all Warrant Articles; construction of new Public Safety Complex and renovation of old library for Town Offices both received a unanimous vote to recommend.

Public Hearing Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b

To consider the Unanticipated Revenue in the Amount of \$6,269.05 Awarded to the Town from the Leary Firefighters Foundation to Purchase an Argus MI-TIC Thermal Imaging Camera and Accessories for the North Hampton Fire Department.

Fire Chief Jason Lajoie said this a grant obtained through Deputy Mark Cook for another Thermal Imaging Camera for our secondary Engine and hopefully for other articles on the Ballot in March for replacing

Engine 2 which is 26 years old. This camera is used to rescue individuals trapped in a burning building by locating them through the smoke.

Chairman Maggiore opened the Public Hearing at 7:12 pm.

Town Administrator Tully said Deputy Cook has brought in over \$100,000 in grant money and there is another \$50,000 grant we will be bringing forward.

As there was no public comment, Chairman Maggiore closed the Public Hearing at 7:14 pm.

Motion: To accept the unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$6,269.05 awarded to the Town from Leary Firefighters Foundation to purchase an Argus Mi-TIC Thermal Imaging Camera and accessories for the North Hampton Fire Department.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Selectman Pinette

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye
Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

Report of the Town Administrator

A copy of the Report of the Town Administrator will be attached to these minutes.

Report from January 11 – 21, 2022: Finance 45% of Budget remaining with 23 weeks left in fiscal year; Police submitted grant application for Police Cruiser, if before March vote will amend Warrant at Deliberative; Select Board and Budget Committee approved Warrant for Police Union & Highway Department contract. Phone System line replaced by Comcast did not solve problem; will replace every line from the pole, into the building, and through router; has to be done now as deficiencies inside building are getting worse and grant only good for a certain length of time. DOT is scheduled to come to February 28, 2022 Select Board meeting.

Items Left on the Table – None

NEW BUSINESS

13.1 Discussion of Solar Power for Town Buildings

Town Administrator Tully introduced Mr. Fergus Cullen who will provide a first-line education of Solar Power and how it might benefit North Hampton. With plans for new buildings this is a good time to look at how we might power those buildings.

Mr. Fergus Cullen of Bright Spot Solar said this will be a general conversation to talk about how solar works with municipalities. He said he recently returned back to solar, and in the interim the technology has improved, panels are more productive, trackers have improved, and costs have come down. He said trackers are pole-mounted arrays that pivot and turn to follow the sun; there are roof-mounted systems and ground-mounted systems; next technological breakthrough will probably be in storage.

Mr. Cullen said when you have a solar panel, the first place the energy goes is to whatever is being used behind the meter at that location at that time; any power not needed then flows out to the grid; when the sun goes down, you are drawing power from the grid as you do now. With Net Metering you only get

charged for the difference between what you produce and what you use; energy would flow in both directions. The ideal size of a system needed is one that will replace all or nearly all power you use, but not much more, otherwise you are paying for infrastructure without benefits. He said as a rough estimate of how much power North Hampton would need, there are 20 separate meters using approximately 300,000 kW or 300 megawatts of power over a year, with probably separate meters for outdoor lights. A watt is a unit of energy; a 100-watt bulb uses 100 watts of energy to run for one hour.

Mr. Cullen said types of systems include roof mounts, ground mounts, and potential trackers. With roof mounts you are limited by the size of the roof, the extent to which it is oriented to the south, and the roof angle as well as how much shading may be involved. A roof-mounted system can be done on a flat roof with an array at a 15-degree angle (ideal is 30-35 degrees) but there are wind shear issues and heavy snow in winter. Flat roof mounting uses some kind of racking system, a ballast system, and panels mounted on the roof at a less than ideal angle.

Mr. Cullen said a ground mount could be a rack array, with at least a 30-35 degree angle, ideally positioned at a southerly orientation. He said trackers are superior as they pivot, rotate, and turn to follow the sun, and are always pointing south and always at the right angle. Our panels are double-sided and get extra energy from ground reflections; trackers are over 50% more productive than typical roof or ground mounts. Trackers are 12 ft off the ground and can use otherwise unusable spaces.

Mr. Cullen pointed out that solar is not a solution to a power outage as you are still tied to the grid; if your power goes out so will your solar system, and generators are still needed; battery power can be added later. Another piece of major equipment needed is an Inverter as the power generated at the panel is direct current (DC) and has to be converted to alternating current (AC). He said Solar can stand on its own financially, but tax incentives are what is driving the explosive growth in the industry: a residential or commercial customer can get a 26% Federal Tax Credit against taxes you are paying; in addition in a commercial setting you can depreciate the equipment approximately 100% of the cost in a year, an advantage the Town of North Hampton does not get to enjoy as they are not a tax-paying entity.

Mr. Cullen said most municipalities/school districts partner with an organization that can use the tax benefits and form a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). PPA contracts lock you in for 20 years at a certain rate (about 11 cents/kWh), which benefits the Town with lower energy prices in perpetuity and avoids future rate increases and you can assume the technology will only improve in future.

Questions: Vice-Chair Sununu asked who owns the panels under a PPA, and whether there are any upfront cost to the Town. Mr. Cullen said the panels are owned by the third party and there are zero upfront costs to the Town, and said upkeep and maintenance are written into the contract. Also, many PPAs have a 6-year buy-out option if the Town wants to purchase the equipment. Vice-Chair Sununu asked what the total footprint would be for 12 arrays. Mr. Cullen said the 48-panel trackers (largest) are about 42 ft long and have a turn radius of about 50 ft. Set far enough apart to not cast a shadow on each other, he estimated about 8 trackers for a municipal complex.

Vice-Chair Sununu asked if Bright Spot Solar would be the owner or if there is another party involved. Mr. Cullen said you can assume there will be investors who will ultimately own it, through Bright Spot or an LLC set up specifically to own this. When you produce more power than consuming the utility will pay you a wholesale rate and sell at a retail rate. Chairman Maggiore asked how far away from the building could a system be placed from the service area and still derive benefits.

Mr. Cullen said he would do Group Net Monitoring with a municipality and put trackers at the Transfer Station, depending on where you have 3-phase power; may have to upgrade some electrical infrastructure of transformer. Town Administrator Tully asked if the roof of the Library could be utilized with the new complex together in 1 system with trackers. Mr. Cullen said Group Net Monitoring can allow you to benefit regardless of where the power is, as it is tied to your meters.

Vice-Chair Sununu asked the typical product cycle, from start of conversation to negotiating a contract and planning installation, until something is up and running. Mr. Cullen said for a 3-5 tracker system the shortest would be 4 months and the longest 6-8 months; more can be added without any trouble. Town Administrator Tully asked about next steps. Mr. Cullen suggested getting a better sense of the roof capacity, and checking on municipally-owned parcels of land in the community.

Chairman Maggiore said the Board will continue to consider this as an option for the Town.

13.2 Discussion of Bond Rates and Cost Impacts for Buildings

Chairman Maggiore said he went through some costs for bonding the Safety Center, and said he wanted to make sure the community has the information to understand this in its full scope and the impact on residents. He said the Select Board received a letter from Mr. Joseph Fitzgerald January 21st challenging the Board on the intent, said the facts in here are not necessarily accurate, and read the letter in full.

In the letter Mr. Fitzgerald said regarding the new Safety Complex, taxpayers will see a \$0.40 increase per 1,000 adding \$4,000 for a million-dollar home, and said the Select Board never talks about money; inflation is at 10% and recession is coming soon; gas will be \$4.00/gal and heating oil is doubling. The Warrant Article was included as part of the letter and the last paragraph asked why the Warrant Articles were not numbered.

Town Administrator Tully said the numbering and timing of Warrant Articles is the same as last year; they are not yet numbered as they have to go through the process and are numbered afterward. He said there are also Planning and Zoning Warrant Articles coming forward, and they will all be approved by DRA.

Vice-Chair Sununu said the letter is full of inaccuracies and nonsense, and said the Select Board talks about money all the time as it is one of their primary jobs to oversee Town spending, setting the tax rate, and getting grant money to offset the financial burden on taxpayers. He said the Bond Bank is a \$0.39 tax increase, assuming a 3% interest rate on the Bond proposed; a million-dollar home pays \$16,570 and a \$0.40 increase would be \$400 not \$4,000, and is scaring people into thinking they will be paying a 25% increase on taxes.

Vice-Chair Sununu said we are addressing a need that has been in this Town for 20 years; have a 60-year-old Fire House and a 30-year-old Police Station with not enough space. He said he hoped people would not read a letter like this and think it is accurate, and said it is insulting to the Select Board, Town Administrator, and Department Heads and what we do here. Chairman Maggiore added that the Town has spend over \$1 Mil on building maintenance without significant improvements, which is not a good investment of money.

Vice-Chair Sununu said Mr. Fitzgerald points out rightly that inflation is highest in 40 years, but it is 7% and not 10%; increasing inflation makes it even more imperative to do now. He said if you agree the buildings are not sufficient for what the Town needs as proper facilities for our equipment, personnel,

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and response times to people who need fire, police, or medical services, I implore you to vote yes for this.
Town Administrator Tully added that an important job of the Select Board is to plan for our community.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS

14.1 Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2022

Motion: To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2022 as presented.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Selectman Pinette

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

14.2 Approval of the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2021

Motion: To approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2022 as presented.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Selectman Pinette

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

14.3 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2022

Motion: To approve the Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2022 as presented.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Selectman Pinette

Roll Call Vote: Jim Maggiore-aye, James Sununu-aye, Jonathan Pinette-aye

Motion approved by a vote of 3-0.

Any Other Item that may legally come before the Board

Second Public Comment Session

For comments please call 603-758-1447; or email jmaggiore@northhampton-nh.gov

No public comment.

Next Regular Meeting: February 14, 2022; Deliberative February 5, 2022 at 8:30 am.

Adjournment

Chairman Maggiore adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary