



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

**February 12, 2024 7:00 PM**

**NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

***DRAFT MINUTES***

**SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Jonathan Pinette, Vice-Chairman James Sununu, Selectman James Maggiore

**ALSO PRESENT:** Town Administrator Michael Tully, Police Chief Robert LaBarge, Fire Chief Jason Lajoie, Recreation Director Joe Manzi

Chairman Pinette welcomed everyone to the Select Board Regular Meeting of February 12, 2024 and called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion:** To seal the meeting minutes from the first Non-Public Session of February 12, 2024.

**Motioned:** Selectman Maggiore

**Seconded:** Vice-Chair Sununu

**Vote:** Motion approved 3-0

Chairman Pinette turned the meeting over to Police Chief Robert LaBarge.

**Police Chief Robert LaBarge** said he took this job in August of last year and it has been a challenge due to loss of personnel, but one person who has remained constant is Lieutenant James Russell, who is retiring soon. He said he has shown his commitment and dedication to the Town of North Hampton as a mentor, guide and role model, has a background in investigation, and knows the criminal code inside out; his retirement will be a great loss to the Town and the Department. Chief LaBarge said something more formal will be planned but he wanted to recognize Lieutenant Russell and thank him for his years of service.

***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](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.***

The Board expressed their appreciation for his dedication to protect and serve the Town of North Hampton and said he would be greatly missed, especially with his many years of experience.

Chairman Pinette recessed the meeting, and the meeting was reconvened at 7:18 pm.

**First Public Comment Session**

*Phone: 603-758-1447*

No Public Comments.

**Consent Calendar**

- 6.1 Payroll Manifest of January 25, 2024 in the amount of \$81,145.41
- 6.2 Accounts Payable Manifest of February 1, 2024 in the amount of \$77,494.64
- 6.3 Payroll Manifest of February 1, 2024 in the amount of \$81,638.47
- 6.4 Payroll Manifest of February 8, 2024 in the amount of \$231,420.45
- 6.5 Veteran Tax Credit
- 6.6 Elderly Exemptions
- 6.7 Abatement Recommendation

**Motion:** To move items 6.1 through 6.7 on the Consent Calendar as presented.

**Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

**Seconded:** Selectman Maggiore

**Vote:** Motion approved 3-0

**Correspondence:**

*Correspondence from Pam Lewis:* Chairman Pinette read the letter dated January 27 in full regarding the short notice to taxpayers where property taxes doubled or tripled the amount budgeted for and asked that in future more notice be provided to taxpayers considering the delicate nature of the situation.

**Committee Updates**

Selectman Maggiore said the *Heritage Commission* has not met since the last Board meeting; *Water Commission* has also not met.

Vice-Chair Sununu said *Rails to Trails Committee* has not met; *Budget Committee* was present at Deliberative Session for Town and School with no changes to their recommendations.

**Report of the Town Administrator**

Report January 20–February 9, 2024: Finance: 40% of Budget remaining with 21 days left in FY; Police, Fire, New Hampshire Homeland Security and FEMA participated in Seabrook Power Plant drill; DPW and Highway assisted with move into new Safety Facility; Fire responded to 2 cardiac arrest calls in a 10-hr period, both successfully revived, Fire Chief stressed importance of having professionally trained staff to perform advanced procedures; Town Office building elevator inspected, installing communications equipment; REC: Summer Camp registration open February 1 with registration by March 1, open positions posted; see website for program listings.

**Items Left on the Table** – None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**11.1 Winterfest Update**

Recreation Department Director Joe Manzi said Winterfest is scheduled for February 24, with expanded basketball program having more divisions; Police and Fire Chili Cookoff at Centennial Hall, event at Library, Winter Carnival at REC in afternoon with games and events, concluding at Dearborn Park with bonfire; sponsored by Seacoast Indian Motorcycle.

**11.2 Discussion of Recreation Events at Centennial Hall**

Director Manzi said he is looking for guidance for permission or further protocols to allow the department to hold BYOB events at Centennial Hall. He said he spoke with the New Hampshire Liquor Commission on a few occasions and they had no rules or policies regarding that except people can bring for themselves but not serve to others. He said he also spoke with Primex who said events could be held but anything that happens could open the town to litigation. He said he has no specific event in mind and just wants the flexibility to allow BYOB at certain events; a licensed bartender onsite is cost prohibitive.

Chairman Pinette asked if ordinances would still be obeyed by assuring abutters noise would be ending by 9:00 pm, and asked about liability. Town Administrator Tully said alcohol is not allowed on town property, but this is still an event run by the town. Vice-Chair Sununu said he assumes Centennial Hall also has liability insurance. Centennial Hall Board of Directors President Marcie Milne McCann said they have lost a significant amount of income by turning away weddings and bridal showers as they have to have a licensed bartender present. She said Centennial Hall is privately owned and nonprofit, BYOB is not addressed in any of these, and town insurance does not cover us because we are not a town-owned building and cannot afford the liability insurance.

Vice-Chair Sununu said his concern is that if anything were to happen at such an event, without liability insurance they would come after the Town; also giving permission for this opens the town to potential liability. Ms. McCann said she is reluctant to quash the relationship with Director Manzi, especially with the ballroom opening soon; she said Centennial Hall does not make any money; they can accommodate 100 people on the first floor and about 185 in the ballroom.

After further discussion, Town Administrator Tully suggested this be researched more and the Town come back if they have a new scenario. Ms. McCann said every time there is an event with alcohol the Liquor Commission tours the space, and they have to apply and send a certificate.

**11.3 Update of Winter Storm Damage Assessment**

Fire Chief Jason Lajoie said following storms and flooding of January 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, where coastal communities received damage, an assessment needs to be done to gather costs to repair damaged areas. North Hampton fared well compared to Hampton and Rye, and costs are specific to repair the sidewalk along Route 1A just south of Bass Beach. Costs include equipment needed, labor costs and personnel costs for response as well as anticipated repair cost of \$30,000. Figures will be reported to State Department of Homeland Security for them to go to FEMA for financial aid reimbursement for Seacoast communities.

Selectman Maggiore said in response Senator Altschiller filed a bill outside normal filing period to create an appropriation to the Department of Safety Bureau Emergency Management for FY ending June 31, 2024, for the purpose of funding grants to Hampton, North Hampton, Rye, Newcastle, Portsmouth and Seabrook for infrastructure repairs in areas damaged in January storms.

**11.4 Appointment to the TAC Committee**

Selectman Maggiore said a letter was received by the Planning Board in January requesting the appointment of a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) representative to North Hampton, as current representative is no longer able to serve, and recommended Robert 'Shep' Kroner be appointed.

**Motion:** To recommend Shep Kroner to be appointed as the Town of North Hampton representative to the RPC TAC committee for a 2-year period expiring December 21, 2025.

**Motioned:** Selectman Maggiore

**Seconded:** Vice-Chair Sununu

**Vote:** Motion approved 3-0

**11.5 Legislative Update**

Selectman Maggiore provided highlights of Bills that would have an impact on North Hampton:

HB 1002: Would allow any community in the State to be able to charge residents or organizations \$25/hour for large record requests in response to Right to Know; proposed on floor and sent back to Judiciary Committee to reconsider.

Bills affecting *New Hampshire Retirement System*: HB 436 would pay down unfunded accrued liability by about \$50 Million with a one-time payment, immediate tax relief; HB 1279 would reinstate a small percentage of local employer's retirement contributions for Group 1 Teachers and Group 2 Police & Fire in an ongoing basis; in 1967 State agreed to pay 35% contributions which has since dropped to zero.

Combined HB 1708 and HB 1896: to fund the position at the Archives that already exists at \$150,000; would allow communities to funnel their records for retention and storage and serve as source for people to go to for a right to know request; HB 1466: passed unanimously, authorized disaster relief for municipalities that suffer damage in natural disasters; HB 1674: to establish gold and silver as legal tender in the State of New Hampshire. Bills going through municipal and county that seek to refine membership on certain committees where you cannot have a conflict.

HB 1576: Was killed; would place requirements on any municipal corporation providing electric distribution, gas, water, or sewer connection; HB 1550: would allow municipalities to enact seasonal speed limits of 20 mph for 4 months in any 12-month period; HB 1640: would be very damaging allowing any individual to sue a government entity for monetary damages under any State or Federal constitutional provision; claims against government should not be subject to common law doctrines of immunity. No scheduled hearings yet for bill about Desalination Plant.

**MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS**

**12.1 Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, 2024**

**Motion:** To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2024, as presented.

**Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

**Seconded:** Selectman Maggiore

**Vote:** Motion approved 3-0

**12.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Non-Public Meeting of January 22, 2024**

**Motion:** To approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of January 22, 2024, as presented.

**Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

**Seconded:** Selectman Maggiore

**Vote:** Motion approved 3-0

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180 **Any Other Item that may legally come before the Board**

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182 **Second Public Comment Session**

183 *Phone: 603-758-1447*

184 Chairman Pinette opened Second Public Comment at 7:58 pm; no comments.

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186 **Next Regular Meeting:** February 26, 2024

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188 **ADJOURNMENT**

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190 Chairman Pinette adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.

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192 Respectfully submitted,

193 Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary