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

4 **MAY 8, 2023 7:00 PM**

5 **NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

6 ***DRAFT MINUTES***

7 SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chairman James Sununu, Selectman James Maggiore

8 EXCUSED: Chairman Jonathan Pinette

9 ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator Michael Tully
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11 Acting Chairman Maggiore welcomed everyone to the Select Board Regular Meeting of May 8, 2023 and
12 called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance; Jonathan Pinette cannot be
13 here tonight.

14
15 **First Public Comment Session**

16 No Public Comments.
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18 **Consent Calendar**

19 3.1 Payroll Manifest of April 27, 2023 in the amount of \$72,063.15

20 3.2 Payroll Manifest of May 4, 2023 in the amount of \$220,572.49

21 3.3 Accounts Payable Manifest of April 27, 2023 in the amount \$1,064,807.42

22 3.4 Abatement Application

23 3.5 Elderly Exemption Applications

24 3.6 Veterans Credit Application
25

26 **Motion:** Approve Consent Calendar as presented.

27 **Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

28 **Seconded:** Acting Chair Maggiore

29 **Vote:** Motion approved 2-0
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32 ***Disclaimer –These minutes are prepared by the Recording Secretary within five (5) business days as required by***
33 ***NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by majority vote of the Select Board.***
34

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

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Correspondence – None

Committee Updates

Acting Chair Maggiore said *Heritage Commission* has been busy with Preservation Easement 106 to be done in case of possible property impacts to Historic Structures, update to Master Plan to be presented May 19, 2023; *Water Commission* has not met.

Vice-Chair Sununu said *Rails to Trails Committee* has not met but will have an update under New Business; *Budget Committee* is meeting next Monday May 15 with presentation on current state of economy and appointing a new member to fill vacancy.

Report of the Town Administrator

Period: April 25– May 5, 2023: Finance at 17% of Budget with 9 weeks remaining in fiscal year; Police Chief Kurz working on expanding search capabilities for qualified candidates; search process closed May 1st with 32 resumes received; Fire Department filled vacant FF/Paramedic position with Jarrod Wheeler, now at full staff; biggest challenge during build has been parking; new North Hampton Parks & Recreation Coordinator Kristina Chiumiento; Memorial Day barbecue on schedule; Old Home Day, 2nd Saturday in August with 5K race; new Summer Camp Director Molly Lawrence, Assistant Director Josie Maggiore; may have to add adult softball team.

Items Left on the Table

NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire – Electric Aggregation Program

Town Administrator Tully said Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire was not present but if they get back in touch, we can reschedule them. He said he and Mr. Sununu spoke with representatives from Hampton about an aggregation program where the Town could pool resources together and purchase a bigger group of electricity allowing lower rates; joining is automatic unless you opt out; would have to have a Warrant Article in the fall.

8.2 Freedom Energy Logistics – Electric Aggregation Program

Bart Fromuth of Freedom Energy Logistics said with Eversource charging \$0.20/kWh, the Town can basically negotiate and enter an electrical contract pooling users together to get favorable rates and contract terms. He said his company partners with Colonial Power Group of MA, and VP of Power Group Stuart Ormsbee is here this evening.

Mr. Fromuth said they began working on this project in 2019, and there was also some disagreement between what the law stated and the information Eversource was willing to provide. New Hampshire PUC promulgated rules and provided clarity for the marketplace after 2 years and we are now seeing the first aggregations across the State ready to launch this summer.

Stuart Ormsbee of Colonial Power Group said they work with cities and towns of various sizes and were just awarded a contract with Springfield, MA. He said the market approach is to provide turnkey services to the community requiring contracts with the supplier bearing all the market risk, offering multiple products at the same time; get lowest rates possible on an opt-out basis; if interested Select Board should

86 set up an Energy Committee with steps laid out in the Statute, requiring 2 Public Hearings for input;
87 committee would work with Mr. Fromuth and myself to create a plan already vetted with Utility
88 Commission in New Hampshire.

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90 Mr. Ormsbee said they would then come back to the Board for final plan approval, and if the Board wishes
91 to move forward they would put a Warrant Article on the upcoming Town Meeting and have voters adopt
92 the plan; if successful at Town Meeting gets filed with Utilities Commission for their approval (statutorily
93 within 60 days); once approved Town can go out for pricing. He said he has been doing this in MA for 12
94 years and said North Hampton could probably get a plan in the range of \$0.11 - \$0.12/kWh.

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96 Mr. Fromuth said Eversource is likely to come down in the next rate cycle; he said Exeter is in the Coalition
97 and our business model is very different; the Coalition has a regional buying group and puts a reserve fee
98 on top of that for 3 months. He said our fee stays consistent throughout your relationship with us at 1/10
99 of a cent/kWh and with local control. He asked if the Town was looking for a maximal savings rate or
100 would like to go full renewables; vote could go with 40% renewable inclusion as baseline default; everyone
101 in coalition gets the same rate.

102
103 Town Administrator Tully asked about solar and net metering. Mr. Ormsbee said currently nobody wants
104 to put current net metering customers at a disadvantage and those customers are probably better off
105 staying with their utility company right now; work yet to be done working collaboratively with Eversource
106 to provide better data.

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108 Acting Chair Maggiore asked if School would need a separate plan as they would have a separate Warrant
109 Article; Mr. Fromuth said they may be better staying on their own, but in theory they could join. Vice-
110 Chair Sununu explained that the Town is laying the groundwork for a Warrant Article to be on the ballot
111 in March after looking at pricing. Mr. Ormsbee said the Town may wonder if they would be better off
112 joining the Coalition or some larger buying group to get better prices, but that is not really the case. He
113 said the Town of North Hampton is large enough to get attractive offers.

114
115 Acting Chair Maggiore asked about next steps; Town Administrator Tully said the Board should have a
116 discussion and decide if they see the benefit here, and if so put together an Energy Committee. Vice-Chair
117 Sununu said it is certainly worth moving forward on. Mr. Ormsbee said people could visit their Website at
118 colonialpowergroup.com for further information. Mr. Fromuth said he could also provide a slide package
119 which could be posted on the Town Website; he added that his firm would handle all customer service.
120 Town Administrator Tully asked that the Board permit him to move forward on this and bring back a plan
121 to the Select Board; approved by consensus.

122
123 **8.3 Discussion of Town Employee Retention**
124 Town Administrator Tully said the Board is well aware of what is happening in the Police Department with
125 employees being poached by other communities willing to offer larger sign-on bonuses or pay raises. With
126 difficulties finding qualified candidates and public service difficult to fill right now, he sees this as a risk
127 going forward. He said Gilford is putting \$1.5 Mil into salary and benefits. Vice-Chair Sununu said for scope
128 that is more than 10% of their annual budget and said he does not want to see difficulty hiring Police
129 Officers shifting into other areas.

130
131 Vice-Chair Sununu said it is happening broadly through the labor market with low unemployment rates
132 and strain for labor becoming acute in certain areas like the hospitality industry; no workers and lack of
133 affordable housing forcing people to leave the State, particularly in municipal government and public

134 safety with workers opting to do other things; needs to be addressed across the board and will need to
135 be taken into account as we do budgeting. He said the Fire Contract is up this year and they may want to
136 make adjustments to the Police Contract. He said demographics are not on our side and the labor market
137 is likely to be strained for the foreseeable future.

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139 The Select Board gave consensus for Town Administrator Tully to move ahead with this.

140

141 **8.4 Discussion of Rail Trail**

142 Vice-Chair Sununu said construction on the Rail Trail has begun and work is being done in 2,500-ft
143 increments with each one taking 21 working days, sections to be opened as completed; the Seacoast
144 Greenway Committee had a recent meeting. Town Administrator Tully said they talked about seventeen
145 2,500-ft sections; ties are being removed as well as trash and debris; working on drainage at Coakley with
146 a possible October finish.

147

148 Town Administrator Tully said they just got the 501-C:3 established with hopefully all towns joining to
149 work together to reduce costs.

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151 **MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS**

152 **9.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of April 24, 2023**

153 **Motion:** To approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2023 as presented.

154 **Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

155 **Seconded:** Acting Chair Maggiore

156 **Vote:** Motion approved 2-0

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158 **9.2 Approval of Minutes of Non-Public Meeting of April 24, 2023**

159 **Motion:** To approve minutes of the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2023 as presented.

160 **Motioned:** Vice-Chair Sununu

161 **Seconded:** Acting Chair Maggiore

162 **Vote:** Motion approved 2-0

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

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166 **Second Public Comment Session**

167 No Public Comments.

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169 **Next Regular Meeting:** May 8, 2023

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171 **ADJOURNMENT**

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Acting Chair Maggiore adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.

173

174 Respectfully submitted,

175 Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary