**TOWN OF EAST KINGSTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2024

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| Town Offices24 Depot RoadEast Kingston, New Hampshire6:30PM | Robert Caron, ChairJoseph Cacciatore, Vice Chair Robert Nigrello |

Board Members present: Joseph Cacciatore – Vice Chair, Robert Caron – Chair and Robert Nigrello.

Others Present: Town Administrator Grace Ruelle, Police Chief Clayton Jervis, and Avitar Representative Chad Roberge.

Chairman Caron called the meeting to order at 6:30pm with the roll call.

**MEETING WITH ASSESSOR FOR REVALUATION STARTUP**

Board members met with Chad Roberge to discuss the plan moving forward with respect to the 2024 revaluation for the town. Mr. Roberge informed the board that market values are still higher than they were in 2015, thus they can expect to see a huge increase in property values. The tax rate should come down to adjust to the increase. He recommended the 55+ communities be notified as they will likely incur significant increases as those homes are equal to, or on par, with the rest of the community. Those homes are in high demand right alongside the conventional home. He also noted that due to the housing demand in NH, geographical differences between properties (wetlands, slope, etc.) no longer negatively impact the market value of a property. Avitar notices will go out on August 27th at which point the Selectmen’s Office can expect calls from residents.

Mr. Nigrello opined they should get notices out to the 55+ communities informing them of the anticipated increase in the values of those properties. Mr. Roberge suggested sending these notices out in June/July. The process to appeal the revaluation will consist of holding hearings followed by individual meetings if needed. Property owners can also handle appointments by telephone as they have been doing this since 2020. He stated it is important to note that revals are not based on the economy, but on the housing market. He also recommended the board consider making adjustments on the exemptions as appropriate as those exemptions are designed to help those in need.

Vice Chairman Cacciatore stated that Rockingham County is the fasted growing county in the state; NH cannot meet the housing demands.

Discussion then turned to the cost increases for the revaluation itself. Mr. Roberge stated that the $43k estimate was given to the town in 2019 (actual cost $55k) and costs have increased due to personnel requirements and shortages, vehicles and fuel. The increase has nothing to do with the number of appointments executed.

Fielding questions, Mr. Roberge stated there is no mechanism for which 55+ communities can get a reduced school portion of the tax burden. There are some exceptions based on specific commercial zones; but none that would apply to residential properties.

Board members thanked Mr. Roberge for his time. He left the meeting at 6:50pm.

**APPROVAL AND SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

***#1. Meeting Minutes***

The Board reviewed the February 20, 2024 public and nonpublic sessions I and II meeting minutes.

**MOTION: Mr. Nigrello motioned to approve the February 20, 2024 public and nonpublic sessions I and II meeting minutes (three sets); seconded Vice by Chair Cacciatore. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

***#2. Accounts Payable Check Registers***

Chairman Caron presented, for board review and questions, accounts payable check registers dated February 11, 2024 in the amount of $10,072.11.

**MOTION: Mr. Nigrello motioned to approve and sign the accounts payable check registers dated February 11, 2024 in the amount of $10,072.11; seconded by Vice Chair Cacciatore. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

Chairman Caron presented, for board review and questions, accounts payable check registers dated March 1, 2024 in the amount of $59,365.60.

**MOTION: Vice Chair Cacciatore motioned to approve and sign the accounts payable check registers dated March 1, 2024 in the amount of $59,365.60; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

Chairman Caron presented, for board review and questions, accounts payable check registers dated March 4, 2024 in the amount of $7,811.82.

**MOTION: Mr. Nigrello motioned to approve and sign the accounts payable check registers dated March 4, 2024 in the amount of $7,811.82; seconded by Vice Chair Cacciatore. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

***#3. Payroll Registers***

Chairman Caron presented, for board review and questions, the payroll check register dated March 1, 2024 in the amount of $35,505.49.

**MOTION: Vice Chair Cacciatore motioned to approve and sign the payroll register dated March 1, 2024 in the amount of $35,505.49; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

***#4. Employee Change Forms – Fire Department***

Chairman Caron presented, for board review and questions, two employee change forms from the fire department for staff members completing certification: Evan Fowler and Britney Conti.

**MOTION: Mr. Nigrello motioned to approve the new certification pay increase for Evan Fowler; seconded by Vice Chair Cacciatore. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

**MOTION: Vice Chair Cacciatore motioned to approve the new certification pay increase for Britney Conti; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

**CORRESPONDENCE ITEMS**

***#1. Letter from Virginia Daly – Culvert on Joslin Road***

Board members acknowledged a letter from Virginia Daly in which she informed the town she had contracted a landscaper to clean up the ditch line along the front of her property and would like the town to clean up the ditch line that leads up to her property from Giles Road to address the water build up at the end of her driveway. Board members noted that the Road Agent has already begun this work; however, it is his position that the culvert under Mrs. Daly’s driveway is the issue.

Board members agreed to send her a letter agreeing to the ditch line clean up, but that it is their understanding the issue is her private culvert, and should the ditch clean up not bring the results she is hoping for, she would be responsible for her culvert cleaning/repair. They also suggested she contact a septic company who may be able to clear the culvert.

***#2. Perambulation with Kingston***

Board members were in receipt of a letter from the Town of Kingston to conduct a perambulation of the Kingston/East Kingston municipal boundary lines (required by state statute). The boundary inspection is typically conducted by members of the Selectboard and any other officials that might want to attend. Dennis Quintal has participated in past East Kingston perambulations. Depending on the boundary, it could take one half to a full day to conduct. Board members provide five dates for consideration of the Town of Kingston to conduct the inspection. An invitation to Mr. Quintal will also be extended.

***#3. Appointments – Planning Board***

Board members reviewed the re-appointment of Catherine Belcher as an alternate member of the Planning Board.

**MOTION: Mr. Nigrello motioned to appoint Catherine Belcher as an Alternate Member on the Planning Board for a term of three years expiring in March 31, 2027; seconded by Vice Chair Cacciatore. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

***#1. Stop Signs and Radar Speed Signs – Police Department Quotes***

Police Chief Clayton Jervis reported that after researching both the Route 107/108 and Route 108/107-A intersections, he believes the Route 108/107-A intersection takes priority over the other when considering the placement of flashing stop signs. Over a five-year period, the 108/107-A intersection has had 13 motor vehicle accidents with airbag deployment and transport to the hospital. He noted the cause was not due to motorists not stopping at the intersection, but to motorists not yielding to the cross traffic who has the right of way.

Discussion ensued on moving the stop sign closer to the stop line so that stopped motorists could see the “cross traffic does not stop” sign which is attached to the stop sign. Chief Jervis reiterated that most of the accidents are failure to yield situations and due to the rate of speed going through the intersection, accidents are more serious whereas the speed in and around the 107/108 intersection is less than 30 mph. The Route 107/108 intersection experiences a number of close calls but has only had five accidents in five years. He then noted the cost for two flashing stop signs of $4,400 which must be the state-mandated signs also installed and maintained by the state at town cost.

Board members discussed funding options and noted the possibility of utilizing money from the snowplowing budget. The board then tabled this matter to an April meeting to which they would have a better idea of the snowplowing budget’s balance after this current snowfall season.

Chief Jervis then reported on the cost for purchasing two radar speed signs ($3,186 each) which would be funded through the highway and police budgets as discussed at the last meeting. He then spoke to yearly maintenance costs which would allow then to track and collect traffic data (speed, traffic count, remote access) – the first year is free and then it would run $400-$500 per year thereafter. He stated the data would allow them to target enforcement efforts. Another option, which he does not recommend, is a mobile unit whereby they can move the radar sign from location to location; however, the specs for those locations would be hard to meet given the road designs throughout town.

Discussion ensued on installation and it was noted they may need to purchase poles to mount the signs.

**MOTION: Chairman Caron motioned to purchase two radar speed signs for $6,372 plus associated installation costs; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

***#2. Timber Tax Warrant***

Board members reviewed a tax timber warrant for property identified as MBL# 05-01-05 whereby the property owner obtained an intent to cut permit to harvest timber back in 2022 but did not complete the required reporting once the project was completed. The Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) inquired of the filing and has, along with the town, failed to connect with the landowner or the logger despite several attempts. The DRA will now penalize the landowner by doubling the yield tax. The board is charged with determining whether the project is deemed average or good based on location and accessibility to the timber and then applying a tax lien on the property.

Discussion ensued on the qualifiers for determining average or good (tonnage of wood, cords or chips, quality, size of cut, location and accessibility, road condition) and noted that the timber tax would go into the town’s general fund. It was also noted that no road bond was secured as part of the intent to cut permit.

**MOTION: Chairman Caron motioned to approve the yield tax levy in the amount of $17,202 based on the determination the location is good; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0.**

With no other business before the board,

**MOTION: Vice Chair Cacciatore motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Nigrello. The motion passed 3-0-0 and the meeting ended at 7:25pm.**

Minutes prepared by Catherine Belcher.

Approved on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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| Joseph Cacciatore |  | Robert A. Caron |  | Robert L. Nigrello |