

Town of Danbury
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
March 16, 2022, 6:00 PM

Members present: Jessica Hatch, Chair, Tracy Shepard, Ruby Hill

Karen Padgett, Administrative Assistant

Also present: Deborah Aylward, Barbara Antonides

Jessica Hatch opened the meeting at 6:05pm and welcomed new board member Ruby Hill.

The first order of business was the organizational structure of the Board. Ruby nominated Jessica to continue as Chair, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0. Jessica motioned for Ruby to be the ex-officio member of the Planning Board, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0. Ruby motioned for Jessica to be on the Budget Committee, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0. Jessica motioned for Tracy to be on the Safety Committee, seconded by Ruby, motioned passed 3-0.

Karen suggested that Selectboard members consider creating a new email address just for town business – for example, jhatchselectman@gmail.com, yahoo.com, etc. Otherwise, the personal email becomes subject to RSA 91-a requests.

Checks/Applications/Signatures)

- **Payroll & accounts payable** were signed.
- Jessica motioned to approve the **minutes of 3/2/2022** as amended to include the date of the Kearsarge Shopper ad under Selectmen’s items, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 2-0 with Ruby Hill abstaining from the vote as she was not there. Ruby motioned to approve the **minutes of the 3/9/2022** Emergency Meeting as amended to correct the typographical error “known”, seconded by Jessica. Motion passed 3-0.
- Jessica motioned to approve the **renewal contract for the timber tax appraiser**, Matt Apgar, for one year, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed unanimously.
- Jessica motioned to sign the **Forest Fire Deputy Warden appointments** for Jeremy Martin and Merton Austin. Motion seconded by Ruby and passe 3-0.
- Jessica motioned to sign **the Deputy Forest Fire Warden Appointment Form** submitted by Forest Fire Warden, Jacob Moran. Motion was seconded by Tracy and passed 3-0.
- **FD purchase orders**
 1. Becker Training Associates – 4 EMR class \$2840.00
 2. State of NH Town Tool Program – PPE \$744.56(to be reimbursed by grant from State)
Ruby motioned to approve the above purchase orders, seconded by Jessica. Motion passed 3-0.
 3. Gungewam Outfitters – Forestry Grant purchases, chainsaws, helmets, etc. \$1299.94 (To be reimbursed by grant from State). Fire Warden Moran submitted quotes from 3 vendors. Ruby motioned to approve the purchase order, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 2-0 with Jessica abstaining from the vote.
- **Veterans credit application/Garneau/406-045/** Jessica motioned to approve the veterans’ credit, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0.
- **Disabled Exemption Application** for the property owner of 409-075. Jessica motioned to approve the exemption, seconded by Ruby. Motion passed 3-0.
- Ruby motioned to table the vote on the elderly exemption for the owners of 412-014 until further documentation is received.
- **Abatement 2022-02** - abatement for tax deferral \$2,735.40 approved on 3/2/2022. Jessica motioned to approve the abatement, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0.

Building Permits

- **04-2022B McKenna 59 High St 201-011**/Replace windows, interior kitchen, and bath renovations/Jessica motioned to approve, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0.
- **05-2021B Green 44 Courtland Dr 201-105**/Rooftop solar array 14.8kW PV, 37 400w panels/Jessica motioned to approve, seconded by Tracy. Motion passed 3-0.

Deborah Aylward submitted an email request to be on the agenda regarding a variety of issues.

Chairman Hatch addressed questions and comments submitted by email from Deborah Aylward, as the organizer of the Concerned Danbury Citizens, with the email forwarded to the Board members for their review prior to the meeting.

Jessica asked Tracy and Ruby if they had a chance to review the email, and they had.

- Ms. Aylward requested the establishment of a Public Safety Committee about matters relating to the Police Department and the hiring of a Police Chief.
Chairman Hatch, speaking for herself, stated that she is not in favor of that. She also said that at a March 9 emergency meeting, the Board appointed David Suckling to the position of Police Chief until April 30, so that the Town is not without a Police Chief. She also informed the public that a petition for a recount has been received and that the date/time of the recount will be posted in advance.
- Ms. Aylward asked in the email, “*Are new board members provided with all applicable federal statutes and regulations; state statutes, local legislation, policy and procedures, and case law governing members' conduct/decision-making -- in order to protect citizens' constitutional rights, and in the taxpayers' best interests, and to avoid overstepping authority?*”
Chairman Hatch responded that the New Hampshire Municipal Association offers training for newly elected officials. Selectwoman Hill stated that she is already signed up for one of the sessions. All policies and procedures law books are readily available for the Selectmen to access.
- Ms. Aylward again requested “that all 'ordinances, regulations, rules, policy and procedure' currently in effect be timely posted to the town website under the ‘Ordinances’ navigation tab for citizens’ information, benefit, and convenience.”
Chairman Hatch responded that the request is still being considered.
- Ms. Aylward is still awaiting a response to the Stoddard building permit violation matter. Chairman Hatch stated that she has not completed the research on that and has not brought it forth to the other Board members. She may have a response in a couple of weeks.
- She requested “PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT that **Article 16** was misrepresented on the 2022 Town Warrant Ballot, as the question **was not** proposed '**By Petition**’.”

This response from legal counsel was read and a copy given to Ms. Aylward:

The actions of the deliberative session were correctly recorded, and the complaining citizen has no basis to demand a public acknowledgement that the warrant article was not a petitioned warrant article. A petitioned warrant article only places the question before the voters. RSA 39:3. Once on the warrant the article can be and was amended. The petitioner sought to have the town meeting vote on the question, and it was so voted upon, and it would not have been addressed by the meeting except for the petitioner's petition.

- A request for enforceable policies to prohibit public officials from answering town business related questions on social media sites (Friends of Danbury and Friends of Danbury Uncensored). Also, that the Town should have official social media accounts.
In response, Jessica said she has tried to redirect people to contact the department and not post complaints on Facebook. She said that “keyboard warriors” feel they can say whatever they want and don’t come to the Board directly. Ruby added that what she sees are posts on Road Agent and Police and noted that they get

redirected to contact the appropriate office. Jessica also added that the Town of Danbury has an official Facebook page. Ms. Aylward was not aware of that.

Finally, Ms. Aylward welcomed Ruby Hill to the Board and requested that she speak louder, to which the Selectwoman replied that she cannot speak any louder.

Old Business

- Board members signed the following letters which were discussed at the 3/2 meeting:
 - Leno – car in the right of way
 - Elder – living in a camper on property without a septic, commercial use of property in a residential area
 - Giberson – trash accumulating on property creating a health hazard
 - Dickinson – permit to live in camper while building home expires in April
- The Town has received 5 applications for the part time Police Chief position. Depending on the results of the recount, Jessica will contact the applicants to see if they are still interested and set up meetings.

New Business

- The request for sand bids will be going out.
- An abatement application was received from the owner 217 Dean Road. Karen submitted this to Cindy Perkins, CNP to review. The deadline has now passed for abatement applications, with a total of two received.

Selectmen

- Jessica asked that employee evaluations be given to department heads for completion.
- Tracy has concerns that the lighting outside of the building is poor and will look into options to improve visibility at night.
- Ruby brought up neon lights at a house on the S curves on NH 104, and she believes neon lights are prohibited per the Land Use and Zoning Ordinance.

FYI

- Voluntary merger of lots – Stanley & Samantha Phelps- Ragged Mountain Rd
- RSA 91-a request from Baptista
- Carl Huntoon report of excavated material – was due 4/30/2021
- Merrimack County budget hearing/meeting agenda
- Citizen email regarding PD merger

At 7:24 Jessica motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ruby. Motion passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Padgett, Administrative Assistant