



*Town of Plaistow ♦ Board of Selectmen*  
*145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865*

**PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES**

**DATE:** April 20, 2020

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:32 p.m.

**SELECTMEN:**

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman  
Selectman, Julian Kiszka  
Selectman, Jay DeRoche

Selectman, Greg Taillon, Vice Chairman  
Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr.  
Mark Pearson, Town Manager

*G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of March 16, 2020. Seconded by J. Blinn.*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Motion carries*

*G. Taillon motions to approve the minutes of April 14, 2020. Seconded by J. DeRoche.*

*Vote: 3-0-2 (abstain J. Kiszka & J. Blinn)*

*Motion carries*

Chair Hart addresses the citizens of Plaistow stating everyone in the meeting has the same concerns as all of you. We are concerned about being able to take care of our families and paying our bills. Last Tuesday an Emergency Operations meeting was held. Plaistow is one of the top towns in the State of New Hampshire that is proactively prepared to address issues that may come up as a result of the COVID-19 virus. Our police and fire departments are equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) and are performing their jobs. Our emergency operations are well established, staffed, equipped and ready to mobilize at a moment's notice. They are confident in their ability to handle any challenges that may arise. F. Hart thanks the men and women of this town who put themselves at risk for others. She also thanks our citizens especially the "Masks for Heroes" group who have sewn hundreds of masks for many of us. We will get through this.

G. Taillon thanks the Town's leadership including the Police and Fire Chiefs as well as Dennise Horrocks, our Health Officer. He thanks the employees who continue to provide services to the town while complying with social distancing guidelines.

J. Kiszka thanks the many organizations who have stepped up to help. One is the program providing lunches for children who normally get free lunch at school.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

F. Hart reads the Governor's Emergency Order #12 explaining public comment during this State of Emergency. If anyone would like to call in this evening please call 603-560-8337.

Jim Peck, 206 Oak Ridge Road submitted a few questions through email regarding the Pollard Park Paving Project.

F. Hart asks Town Manager, Mark Pearson to respond to the questions.

M. Pearson reads the email which asks about passing lanes, the exterior sidewalk on Park Ave, who won the bid to excavate and at what price? Who won the bid to pave and at what price and when will the project be completed?

M. Pearson states he does not have any information on passing lanes in sidewalks. He defers to Mr. Peck. The current sidewalks are narrow and broken up. Roots are growing up in some places. The snowblowers the town has are wider than the walks and the sidewalks are not good for wheelchairs or any other devices. This project has been on the radar for a while. The excavation portion of the project was won by J. Parker & Daughters Construction, Inc. for \$14,600. The paving will be done by Continental Paving for \$23,925. They have a sidewalk paver. A binder and seal coat will be done. The final sidewalks will be a minimum of 5 feet wide. The sidewalk on the exterior of Park Ave will only be done if there is any extra paving material. The first part of the project is done. Dan Garlington, Highway Supervisor will put conduit piping in place in some areas for future use. We do not want to have to dig up the sidewalks for any future electrical or sprinkler needs. Continental paving will finish the project when their schedule allows.

## **RADIO EQUIPMENT**

Recently it was brought to Mark's attention that there are some problems with the microwave dishes/antennas and reception in town. M. Pearson provides some background information. There is an antenna at the Public Safety Complex. There is one at Hogg/High Hill in Atkinson. We have a contract with SBA and the cost is split between Plaistow and Atkinson. In Haverhill there is another location with 2 antennas with microwave dishes. Those microwave dishes are not working. Two-Way Communications failed to tell us about the equipment failure in Haverhill. A meeting with Two-Way Communications was held (prior to social distancing orders) to find options. They provided two proposals. The first one was to get unlicensed microwave antennas at a cost of about \$30,000, however this channel can be used by anyone. The second option is to get licensed antennas at a cost of about \$60,000. The licensed option has better capacity, better band width and works better with Bay Station (our console). It is protected and others cannot use it. Discussion were held with the Fire Chief, Police Chief and two police captains. Captain Wagner suggested hiring a consultant. A consultant would act as third-party peer review. Then we would not have to rely on Two-Way Communications telling us what we need. When the Safety Complex was being built, we hired a consultant to help with the radio equipment. We hired Peter DeNutte. Captain Wagner reached out to him to see if he would be interested in helping Plaistow again. He fees are \$100 per hour. P DeNutte stated he could do a comprehensive report and make a recommendation. He will look at the whole picture. He believes it should not take more than 50 hours. M. Pearson thinks this is a wise decision. It would be worth spending up to \$5000 before committing to \$30,000 or \$60,000. M. Pearson will come back to the Board with the report and a recommendation on the equipment from P. DeNutte if the Board wants to move forward.

F. Hart asks what the timeframe is and are we in critical need.

M. Pearson replies everything is working. We were able to get a temporary fix on the microwaves. We will need a plan in place moving forward and part of the plan may be to keep an extra microwave in Town.

F. Hart asks if the licensing needs to be renewed yearly and if so at what cost.

M. Pearson replies, it is an FCC license without a yearly renewal. There may be a small fee. He does not have that information yet.

G. Taillon asks what the purpose of the microwave is.

M. Pearson replies, the Bay Station can only reach so far. There are some dead areas in town. The microwaves allow for full coverage.

G. Taillon asks, how did we not know we had problems.

M. Pearson replies, unless a call comes in, we do not know.

Microwaves create some redundancy and creates more capacity for communication.

G. Taillon asks if we can do some type of testing to monitor the microwaves to make sure they are working.

M. Pearson replies that will part of the work P. DeNutte does.

***G. Taillon motions to direct the Town Manager to spend up to \$5000 for a microwave needs assessment for the Town. Seconded by J. Kiszka.***

***Discussion: J. DeRoche asks where the money will come from.***

***M. Pearson states it will come from the operating budget.***

***J. DeRoche asks why not use the contingency fund.***

***M. Pearson states between the police, fire, and emergency department budgets we can come up with the \$5000.***

***F. Hart recommends leaving it up to M. Pearson and G. Colby to decide.***

***J. Blinn states with COVID-19 we are losing revenue. Are we making any cuts? What will happen if people are late paying taxes.***

***F. Hart agrees it is on everyone's mind and will be discussed later in the meeting.***

***M. Pearson states right now we do not know how much revenue will be lost, what are expenses will be and what we will get for reimbursement. These are three (3) big unknowns. It is too soon to tell. The town is keeping on top of all the funding from State and Federal levels. A survey was just completed for New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) to estimate the impact of COVID-19 on the Towns finances.***

***J. DeRoche asks how old the microwaves are.***

***M. Pearson does not know however they are probably very old since you cannot get them anymore.***

***Vote: 5-0-0***

***Motion carries***

## **BOS REORGANIZATION**

The Board agrees to the following liaisons for committees, commissions, and boards:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>BOS Rep.</u></b>	<b><u>Alternate Rep.</u></b>	<b><u>Second Rep. if needed</u></b>
Bud Com	J. Kiszka	J. DeRoche	
CIP	F. Hart	J. Kiszka	G. Taillon
Con Com	J. Blinn	J. Kiszka	
Highway Safety	J. Kiszka	G. Taillon	

Energy	J. Kiszka	J. DeRoche	
Planning	F. Hart	G. Taillon	
Recreation	J. DeRoche	J. Blinn	
Cable	G. Taillon	J. Kiszka	
Elder Affairs	J. Blinn	J. Kiszka	
Historical Society	F. Hart	J. Kiszka	
REDC	J. Kiszka	J. DeRoche	
Town Report	F. Hart	G. Taillon	J. DeRoche
TRAC	F. Hart	J. DeRoche	
Old Home Day	J. Blinn	J. Kiszka	
HAZMAT	J. Kiszka	J. Blinn	
Timberlane (school) CIP	John Sherman		

### **MUNICIPAL SIDEWALK AGREEMENT – THIRD AMENDMENT**

Deferred.

### **REVIEW POLICY ON PUBLIC COMMENT**

F. Hart states last year the Board reviewed and updated the Board of Selectmen Guidelines & Procedures. Public comment is included in the document. She opens the floor for discussion.

J. Kiszka took a class on public meetings and public comment was discussed. He recently sent an email to the legal department at New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) for clarification. He would like to point out that public comment is not required however once you allow it you trigger the first amendment, freedom of speech. He would like to see consistency with all meetings, not just Board of Selectmen meetings. Public comment at a public hearing is different than public comment at a board meeting. At a public hearing, public comment must be the same subject matter as the hearing. In a Board of Selectmen's meeting public comment is not limited to one specific subject. Our current policy allows the Chair to recognize a citizen to speak, place limits on the timing of the public comment, along with the length of time and content of input. It also states if a person wants to speak about an item not on the agenda, they should make an appointment to meet with the Town Manager and ask to be put on a future agenda. It is subject to the approval of the Chair.

J. Kiszka believes this process gives too much power to the Chair and is not clear enough.

G. Taillon states you do not want to undo what is written in RSA's. The Chair should be able to limit subject matter and speaking time. He believes if the Chair acts inappropriately the rest of the Board would remove the chair.

There is consensus amongst the Board to visit this again. We will wait and see what response J. Kiszka gets from New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA).

J. DeRoche states we should see if other towns have a policy they will share.

### **EXTENSION FOR ELDERLY EXEMPTIONS**

F. Hart states Marybeth Walker suggested extending the deadline for filing for exemptions from April 15 to May 15 in light of COIVD-19.

G. Taillon suggest extending the date to May 30.

F. Hart states this date might be too late as tax bills should be mailed on June 1.

*G. Taillon motions to extend the deadline for applying for Elderly, Disabled and Blind property tax exemptions as well as all Town adopted Veteran's property tax credits from April 15 to May 20, 2020. Seconded by J. Kiszka.*

*Vote: 5-0-0*

*Motion carries*

### **DISCUSS INTEREST/PENALTIES FOR PROPERTY TAXES**

F. Hart states tax bills will go out on June 1. It is important to know the difference between a tax deed and a tax lien. It is also important to know the difference between an exemption and an abatement. She would like the Board to read the information G. Taillon sent out to be better prepared to make a decision at the May 18 meeting. Governor Sununu's Executive Order # 12 allows for somethings to be waived or actions Select Boards may take. It is recommended everyone become familiar with this order.

### **CONSTRUCTION OVERSIGHT P.A.R.C.**

M. Pearson states there will be a lot of work done at P.A.R.C. (Plaistow Area Recreation Complex) Improvements will be made to drainage, a new softball field with additional drainage will be put in, trails will be constructed with a path leading to the trails, and a turnaround between the pavilion and the concession stand will be made. All of these have been talked about. It is basically three (3) projects rolled into one. What was never talked about was construction oversight. We do not have a staff person to do this. We do have a set of plans however we want to make sure everything is built correctly. The proper pitch and drainage of the softball field is necessary to avoid future problems. M. Pearson contacted Jim Hanley, P.E. Civil Design Consultants, Inc and asked for a proposal for construction oversight. The proposal consists of three phases. Phase I for construction control would cost \$1,200. Phase II for Bidding Services would cost \$3,600 and Phase III for construction administration would cost \$5,200. The total comes to \$10,000. He believes it is wise to hire Civil Design Consultants, Inc and SEC & Associates, Inc. for construction oversight. Discussion occurs regarding funding. We do not know all the costs until we have bids on all the projects. Funding for the softball field and drainage related to the new field will come from impact fees. We received a grant for the Mt. Misery trails. The rest of the funding will come from the Recreation Capital Reserve Fund. There is concern about spending \$10,000 on construction oversight. M. Pearson states we will save some money on materials. When excavation is done for the salt shed any gravel, loom and other material will be reused for P.A.R.C. We should also have loom available when drainage improvements are completed at P.A.R.C.

G. Taillon agrees with the need of construction oversight yet is concerned with the cost.

J. DeRoche asks if the Town could do some of the work such as the bidding services.

J. Blinn asks why we would need two (2) firms. Can we go with one?

M. Pearson states they work together and are basically like one firm. They are very reputable, and we have used them before.

M. Pearson recommends inviting Jim Hanley, P.E. to attend the next meeting (remotely) and answer the Boards questions. The Board agrees.

### **ELECTRICITY AGGREGATION WITH ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION (RPC)**

F. Hart states we have Taylor Energy as our electric supplier and they automatically renew our contract. She is not comfortable with this. Our contract will run out May 22 she would like to join in

with Rocking Planning Commission (RPC). She has an inquiry out to Tim Moore to see if we can jump right in with RPC. When she has more information, she will bring it to the Board.

### **TOWN MANAGERS REPORT**

- Attended Several Meetings.
- Public Safety Complex Road and Cemetery Expansion Projects – RFP.
- P.A.R.C.
- Pollard Road Culvert Project – RFP.
- Salt Shed RFP – Results  
F. Hart opens the bids. There is only one bid for excavation. It is from J. Parker & Daughters Construction, Inc. for \$6,200.  
There are two (2) bids for the Salt Shed. One is from P & G Concrete Foundations Inc. for \$208,000. The other bid is from Irishspan Steel Buildings for \$300,542. It appears one is significantly lower however the Board will take their time to review the bids and compare apples to apples. The decision will be made at the next meeting.

***J. Kiszka motions to move forward with the excavation with J. Parker & Daughters Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$6,200. Seconded by G. Taillon.***

***Vote: 5-0-0***

***Motion carries***

M. Pearson states the warrant article to start the permitting and engineering for the Landfill Cap was approved at Town Meeting for \$150,000. Both M. Pearson and G. Colby believed the money spent in 2019 should be part of the \$150,000. They directed Sanborn Head to give us a proposal for \$123,000. The proposal was received, and M. Pearson did not like it. It was very one-sided, and everything favored them. M. Pearson worked with Attorney Kalman and they came up with a counter proposal which has been sent to Eric Steinhauser of Sanborn Head. M. Pearson is willing to move forward with a proposal if it is good for the Town, if the Board agrees.

***G. Taillon motions to direct the Town Manager to move forward with a proposal of \$123,000 contingent upon Attorney Kalman and Mark Pearson coming to agreement that the proposal favors the Town. Seconded by J. Kiszka.***

***Vote: 5-0-0***

***Motion carries***

- Water Tank – RFP.
- Atkinson Easement.
- Shovel Ready Projects for a Stimulus Package.
- Pollard Park Sidewalk Replacement Project.
- Street Sweeping.
- Comcast Phone Change Over.
- Town IT Vendor Change Over.
- Public Safety Antenna Problems.
- COVID-19 Updates – EOC Meeting.
- Emergency Operations.

- Virtual Meetings and Equipment.

***J. Kiszka motions to spend \$2862.68 from the cable department budget for cable equipment to allow for virtual meetings. Seconded by G. Taillon***

***Vote: 5-0-0***

***Motion carries***

- Emergency Management & Health Officer.
- Town Hall Hours Changed.
- Staffing Changes – furloughs four (4), working from home two (2) to four (4), some are working from different offices and opposite hours, workers are separated, sickness is handled on as a case by case determination, screening is done daily by the Fire Department for all employees.
- P1 Contract for the water mains. The RFP will go out soon.

J. DeRoche commends Mark Pearson for all he has done to keep the Town and the employees safe. He also commends the employees for continuing to work.

J. DeRoche asks if once the virus dies down will the EOC room go back to its regular use?

M. Pearson states that room is a dedicated room and should remain that way. It can be used as a training or community room if needed however it will primarily be used for emergency management and the room should always be ready.

J. Kiszka states the room has been used in the past by Unitil for weather events.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

F. Hart states Helen Hart recently passed away. She was 97 years old and was Plaistow's Town Clerk for many years.

Cab Vinton, Library Director wants people to know that even though the Library is closed there are many online activities available. See the Library's website for information.

### **SELECTMEN'S REPORTS**

J. DeRoche

- He set up a new Face Book page for the Town. It will be used as another avenue to get information to people. He hopes it will add value to the Town.

There are no other Selectmen reports as committee's have not been meeting.

***G. Taillon motions to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (A) Public Employee; (B) Hiring; (C) Reputation; (D) Property Transactions; (E) Pending or Threatened Litigation; (I) Emergency Functions; (J) Confidential Information in Adjudicative Proceedings; (L) Consideration of Legal Advice. Seconded by J. DeRoche.***

***Board Polled: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes***  
***Motion carries***

Exited public session at 9:04 p.m.

Resumed public session at 9:25 p.m.

F. Hart adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack, Recording Secretary