

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
January 22, 2024

PRESENT: Gary Daniels, Chairman Lincoln Daley, Town Administrator via Zoom
Chris Labonte, Vice Chairman Tina Philbrick, Executive Assistant
Paul Dargie, Member
Tim Finan, Member
Dave Freel, Member

1. CALL TO ORDER, BOARD OF SELECTMEN INTRODUCTIONS & PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTRUCTIONS:

Chairman Daniels called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., introduced Board members, and then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. APPOINTMENTS – (Approximate times)

5:30 p.m. - Quote Request for Provision of EMS Services – Ambulance Director, Eric Schelberg
In summary: Amherst Fire Rescue (AFR) has provided EMS service to Mont Vernon (MV) for over 20 years.

Milford Ambulance Service received an email from Fire Chief Jay Wilson requesting a quote for the provision of EMS service. MV annually averages 130 requests for ambulance service based on call volume data from 2021 to 2023. The per-call cost of the department is \$969.12. This amount is the sum of all department, expenses – 2024 proposed budget, 2024 benefit expenses, facility bond, ambulance lease, and utilities. Using the MV call volume, a quote for service is \$126,309.

In addition to an annual fee for service, ambulance transport revenue is estimated to be \$64,137. This amount is calculated using a 74% transport rate and an average revenue per call of \$665. Director Schelberg believes that his department could take on the additional call volume with the current ambulance schedule without the need to add personnel or infrastructure. This is contingent on all positions being filled and the approval of both Boards.

Chairman Daniels asked about protecting ourselves from a scenario where we would lose money. Director Schelberg said it's providing them a service and this is what it will cost for them. We would also bill for transport. There would be no change to our staffing.

Director Schelberg gave a detailed explanation of how he got to his numbers. The number provided is the cost per call. Selectman Freel said we shouldn't be using the revenue stream. There was additional discussion about call volume, overtime, and staffing. Amherst is currently charging Mont Vernon \$17,000 per year plus transport costs and they are going up to \$90,000. Mont Vernon is unhappy with the increase so they are shopping around. Selectman Freel asked why Director Schelberg doesn't make his number match Amherst's number. Why would we go lowball? That wouldn't be done in the private sector. Selectman Dargie said our number isn't a low-ball number, it's higher and includes transport costs.

Mike Thornton, a Milford resident, asked if we have a third ambulance available. Director Schelberg said we don't staff the third ambulance. It's a ready spare. Director Schelberg said we would not need to add additional staffing to cover additional calls.

Lynn Coakley, a Milford resident, responded to Selectmen Freels comment about the private sector, a town isn't the same as a private business. Selectman Freel doesn't want to take resources from Milford residents.

Selectman Labonte asked about eventually combining Ambulance and Fire. Ken Flaherty, Fire Chief, said it would have some impact on the fire department. He explained the process. Chief Flaherty said a combined department was looked into before and it could be an option.

Selectman Dargie is in favor of this but feels we should quote a lower number. The incremental cost would be small. This would be a good revenue stream.

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING – 1/22/2024

57 Selectman Labonte asked how long it's been since Ambulance was fully staffed. Director Schelberg said since
58 August. He has two spots that should be filled shortly. Selectman Labonte is concerned about staffing and pay
59 levels with the additional workload.
60

61 Chairman Daniels said at this time, we are just authorizing Director Schelberg to talk to Mont Vernon. He could
62 support this as long as we are not losing money. He is concerned about wear and tear on the ambulances and
63 having to buy new ones. Director Schelberg said we still need to stay in a replacement cycle. This is an oppor-
64 tunity to get our foot in the door. This would add about 6,000 miles to an ambulance.
65

66 Selectman Labonte asked what an average call costs on a third-party ambulance. Director Schelberg said he didn't
67 know.
68

69 Selectman Finan asked if Director Schelberg was confident about the amount that Amherst may go up to. Director
70 Schelberg said it was just mentioned to him but there is nothing in the minutes. Selectman Finan said Director
71 Schelberg should get more information. Administrator Daley asked for more information on how this would
72 affect the Fire Department as well.
73

74 Selectman Dargie recommends Director Schelberg offer Mont Vernon a rate of \$90,000 at a flat rate with a 5%
75 escalation cost for up to 5 years.
76

77 Scott Kimball, a Milford resident, said he agrees that our ambulance service should stay in Milford. Mont Vernon
78 has more money and can buy their own ambulance service. He is concerned about the wear and tear on the ambu-
79 lances.
80

81 Mr. Thornton, suggests that the Finance Director and Ambulance Director work together to figure out if we are
82 going to make money without risk to ourselves. Director Calabria agrees with Selectman Dargie that the incre-
83 mental cost won't be much.
84

85 The consensus was to have Director Schelberg go forward and talk to Mont Vernon.
86

87 **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (items not on the agenda) –**

88 Jay Duffy, a Milford resident, gave an update on the plaque for Mr. Courage to be placed at the Public Works
89 building. He thanked the Keyes Trust for donating the money for the plaque.
90

91 Susanne Fournier, a Milford resident, referenced a status report that Administrator Daley will be giving about the
92 AoT permit. She talked about the threatened and endangered species on the Brox Town land. She feels the town
93 isn't interested in protecting the endangered species.
94

95 Mike Thornton, said he understands Ms. Fournier's comments but the Brox property was set aside for multiple
96 uses, not just conservation. There has been an opportunity for compromise for all parties and to take the land away
97 from the public who paid for it is wrong. He encourages taxpayers to make their voices heard about this property.
98

99 **4. DECISIONS**

100 **a. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 101 1. Acceptance of Milford Emergency Operations Plan
- 102 2. Approval of donation for the Granite Town Rail Trail Revolving Fund from a Ghost Train Trail Race
103 Runner processed through Piscataquog Land Conservancy - \$500.00
- 104 3. Acceptance and Appropriation of Unanticipated Revenues Under \$10,000 (31:95(b))
105 • Donation to the Milford DPW Department for the Robert Courage plaque to be placed at the DPW
106 office facility from the Arthur L. Keyes Memorial Trust - \$1,200.
107

108 Selectman Labonte asked that 4. a) 1) be removed from the consent calendar for discussion. Selectman Finan
109 asked that 4. a) 3) be removed from the consent calendar for discussion.

110
111 **Selectman Freel made a motion to approve the 4. a) 2) on the consent calendar. Seconded by Selectman**
112 **Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

113
114 Selectman Labonte asked to hold off on decisions for 4. a) 1), the Milford Emergency Operations Plan
115 because he had additional questions that he needed answers for. He will meet off-line with Chief Flaherty.

116
117 Selectman Finan thanked Jay Duffy for a great job with the plaque for Mr. Courage. Selectman Finan is on the
118 Arthur L. Keyes Memorial Trust Committee and won't be voting on 4. a) 3.

119
120 **Selectman Dargie moved to accept item number 4. a) 3 from the consent calendar. Seconded by Selectman**
121 **Labonte. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Selectman Finan abstaining.**

122
123 **b. OTHER DECISIONS**

124 **1. N/A**

125
126 **5. TOWN STATUS REPORT –**

127 **1. Milford Community Lands (Formally Brox) Alteration of Terrain Permit - Gravel Operations (Update)**
128 The Town and Northeast Sand & Gravel submitted responses and revised plan set to the NH Dept. Of Environ-
129 mental Services (permitting agency) and NH Fish & Game (NHFG) on December 1, 2023. The submittal was in
130 response to a list of detailed comments from NHFG involving several areas of the project.

131
132 Town staff continues to communicate with NHFG and await their response/comments. The Town and Northeast
133 Sand & Gravel will be meeting with both state agencies in February to hopefully resolve the remaining elements
134 of the application/permit for approval and allow the Town to resume the gravel operation this year.

135
136 Selectman Labonte asked about the cost. Administrator Daley said there will be survey cost on the conservation
137 area. Who pays it will be determined at a later date.

138
139 **2. Milford Community Power/ Standard Power - Informational Meeting**

140 Milford Community Power is launching this spring after being approved by Milford voters in March 2023. The
141 program provides stable rates for 20 months, from March 2024 to November 2025, and three options with more
142 renewable energy for electricity customers up to 100%. There is no cost to the municipality for running the pro-
143 gram, no individual customer contracts, and customers can leave, change products, or rejoin the program with no
144 fees or penalties effective on their next meter read date. See the attached Press Release.

145
146 On Wednesday, January 31st, the Town will be hosting an informational meeting to present and discuss the pro-
147 gram. The public meeting will be held in the Town Hall Auditorium (3rd floor) beginning at 6:00 pm. A short
148 presentation will be followed by an opportunity for residents to ask questions about program options and how to
149 enroll, opt-out or make another choice. We encourage residents to bring their electric bill to the public session to
150 ask questions. Please visit www.MilfordCommunityPower.com for more information.

151
152 Administrator Daley said the default rate was around .10 or .11 cents. Eversource came in slightly lower. The
153 Town has an opportunity to opt-out or in at anytime. Mr. Thornton said he would encourage people to opt out at
154 this time unless they which to use renewable energy.

155
156 **3. Library Building Maintenance**

157 Town Staff and two Selectmen attended the recent Library Trustees' meeting to discuss several maintenance items
158 involving the library. Staff discussed the roof project, the proposed warrant article to replace the electrical panels,

159 and water issues infiltrating the interior of the building from sections of the exterior brick walls which is causing
160 additional water damage. Our Public Work Director, Mr. Lessard is currently assessing the building and will be
161 contacting contractors to provide cost estimates, mostly likely in the early late Winter/early Spring.

162
163 Mr. Duffy asked how many trusts the library has. Lynn Coakley said they have small ones for books and programs
164 and one larger trust that they can use at their discretion. Mr. Duffy recommends the library review their trusts and
165 if there is one in there for infrastructure, bring that information to the Selectmen. The Cemetery Trustees were
166 able to have work done at the cemeteries with their trust monies.

167
168 Ms. Coakley said they have talked to the Trustees of the Trust Funds and will be discussing items needed at a later
169 date.

170
171 Mr. Thornton, a Cemetery Trustee, thanked prior Cemetery Trustees for building up monies in the trust that were
172 used to solve the water spigot problem. It's been a team effort. He also thanked Director Lessard and Mr. Brickley
173 for all of their hard work. There are more items that the team wants to accomplish within the budget at no taxpayer
174 expense.

175
176 **4. Town Staff 2024 Goals & Objectives**

177 Department Heads were asked to submit their 2024 Departmental goals and objectives. Staff was challenged to
178 include several what are termed "Stretch Goals". A stretch goal is one that will be difficult (not impossible) and
179 will "move the needle" or make a noticeable difference for the town.

180
181 **5. Ambulance Mutual Aid Agreement (DRAFT)**

182 Director Schelberg discussed a draft Emergency Medical Services Mutual Aid agreement with the Board for con-
183 sideration, discussion, and approval at a future meeting. This agreement would update and replace the previously
184 executed agreement from 1994. Participating towns include Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, and Wilton.

185
186 Director Schelberg, said there are not many changes, we are just making sure it's compliant and has the current
187 RSAs. It would now be a joint agreement signed by the five communities. It's a five-year agreement that will
188 renew annually every year until year five where it forces all parties to reevaluate the agreement and resign if
189 changes are made. This doesn't lock the town into providing mutual aid if we are on another call. He is hoping
190 to have this available at the first February meeting for review and signatures.

191
192 **6. Boards, Commission, Committee Volunteers**

193 The Town is actively seeking volunteers to serve on various boards, commissions, and committees. The following
194 is a list of current vacancies:

195
196

Zoning Board of Adjustments	2 alternate positions
Conservation Commission	2 alternate positions
Economic Development Advisory Council	TBD (January 2024)
Recycling Committee	1 full-time position
Planning Board	2 alternate positions

200
201

202 **6. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS**

203 **1. 2024 Warrant Article Votes – Pre-deliberative votes were taken on the Town Warrants**

204
205 **WARRANT ARTICLE 4 - TOWN OPERATING BUDGET - \$18,264,516**

206 Director Calabria found an error in the default budget. He left some of the warrant articles out of the total. This
207 dropped the default budget. He later sat with Chief Viola and realized that they also didn't include the differential
208 pay, military stipend, and educational benefits for the AFSME in the default budget. He had to take the default
209 budget down by the \$106,000 that was left in but then add the \$61,640 back into the default budget. This left a

210 delta of about \$50,000. He approached the Town Administrator with a solution to shrink the gap of the new delta
211 of \$290,000 down to \$259,000 by reducing a couple of items for positions in the town that have not yet been
212 filled. They are all one-month cost for the Planner position, DPW Truck Driver, DPW Cemetery Laborer, and
213 Patrol Officer. If these changes are made, we can reduce the budget and the new delta between the operating
214 budget and the default budget would be \$259,000. Administrator Daley said all Department Heads agreed to the
215 changes.

216
217 The new proposed budget would be \$18,261,680. This is a 4.6% increase over 2023's approved budget. The new
218 default budget is \$18,002,107.

219
220 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to accept changes to the default budget as presented. Seconded by Select-**
221 **man Labonte. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

222
223 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to accept the change to the operating budget for \$18,261,680. Seconded**
224 **by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

225
226 **Selectman Freel made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 4, Town Operating Budget. Seconded by**
227 **Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

228
229 Chairman Daniels will write the majority report on Warrant Article 4 Town Operating Budget.

230
231 **WARRANT ARTICLE 7 - RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN ROADS - \$ 300,000**

232
233 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 7, Reconstruction of Town Roads. Se-**
234 **conded by Selectman Labonte. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

235
236 Selectman Freel will write the majority report on Warrant Article 7 Reconstruction of Town Roads.

237
238 **WARRANT ARTICLE 8 - WADLEIGH LIBRARY ELECTRICAL SYSTEM SAFETY AND**
239 **EFFICIENCY UPGRADES - \$90,000 (Final project cost to taxpayers offset by \$25,000 from the Wadleigh**
240 **Library Maintenance and Upkeep Capital Reserve)**

241
242 Ms. Coakley said the Library Trustees voted at their last meeting to ask the Select Board to remove this from the
243 Town warrants.

244
245 **Selectman Freel made a motion to remove the Library Warrant Article from the Town Warrants. Se-**
246 **conded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

247
248 **WARRANT ARTICLE 8 - SOCIAL SERVICES - \$40,000**

249
250 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 8, Social Services. Seconded by Selectman**
251 **Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

252
253 Selectman Finan will write the majority report on Warrant Article 8, Social Services.

254
255 **WARRANT ARTICLE 9 - NON-EMERGENCY COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BUS SERVICES**
256 **– \$32,000**

257
258 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 9, Non-Emergency Community Trans-**
259 **portation Bus Services. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

260

261 Selectman Dargie will write the majority report on Warrant Article 9, Non-Emergency Community Transportation
262 Bus Services.

263

264 **WARRANT ARTICLE 10 - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL**
265 **RESERVE - \$ 20,000**

266

267 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 10, Information Technology Infrastruc-**
268 **ture Capital Reserve. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

269

270 Selectman Finan will write the majority report on Warrant Article 10, Information Technology Infrastructure
271 Capital Reserve.

272

273 **WARRANT ARTICLE 11 - SUMMER BAND CONCERTS SUPPORT - \$9,000**

274

275 **Selectman Labonte made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 11, Summer Band Concerts. Seconded**
276 **by Selectman Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

277

278 Selectman Labonte will write the majority report on Warrant Article 11, Summer Band Concerts.

279

280 **WARRANT ARTICLE 12 - MEMORIAL, VETERANS & LABOR DAY PARADES AND**
281 **RECOGNITION SUPPORT - \$8,000**

282

283 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 12, Memorial, Veterans & Labor Day**
284 **Parades and Recognition Support. Seconded by Selectman Finan. Selectman Dargie removed his motion.**

285

286 Selectman Labonte mentioned that this was overspent last year, he asked about lowering our expenses to match
287 the \$8,000 or increasing the amount. Chief Viola said he can't go lighter on details, they already cut it down as
288 much as they can. There was some additional discussion on details and how many flags may be needed.

289

290 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 12, Memorial, Veterans & Labor Day**
291 **Parades and Recognition Support, and increase the amount to \$11,000. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All**
292 **were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

293

294 Selectman Dargie will write the majority report on Warrant Article 12, Memorial, Veterans & Labor Day Parades
295 and Recognition Support.

296

297 **WARRANT ARTICLE 13 - ANNUAL LABOR DAY PARADE - \$6,000**

298

299 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 13, Annual Labor Day Parade. Seconded**
300 **by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

301

302 Selectman Finan will write the majority report on Warrant Article 13, Annual Labor Day Parade

303

304 **WARRANT ARTICLE 14 - DISCONTINUE OSGOOD POND CAPITAL RESERVE TRUST FUND - \$0**

305

306 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 14, Discontinue Osgood Pond Capital**
307 **Reserve Trust Fund. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

308

309 Selectman Labonte will write the majority report on Warrant Article 14, Discontinue Osgood Pond Capital Re-
310 serve Trust Fund.

311

312 **WARRANT ARTICLE 15 - CONSERVATION LAND FUND - \$30,000 By Petition**

313

314 **Selectman Labonte made a motion to not recommend the Warrant Article 15, Conservation Land Fund.**
315 **Seconded by Selectman Freel. The motion passed 3/2 to not recommend with Selectman Finan and Dargie**
316 **opposed.**

317

318 Selectman Freel asked if they are looking to purchase something in the next year. Chris Costantino said no, it's
319 there for when something comes up. The Budget Advisory Committee recommends that Conservation hold
320 \$118,000 in its account. Selectman Labonte said he has a hard time supporting conservation when we cut things
321 like a police vehicle. Selectman Finan said Conservation voluntarily removed this last year. There is currently
322 \$82,000 in this account of which \$15,000 is already spoken for.

323

324 Selectman Freel will write the majority report on Warrant Article 15 and Selectman Finan will write the minority
325 report on Warrant Article 15.

326

327 **WARRANT ARTICLE 16 – WALKABLE MILFORD - \$0 By Petition**

328

329 Selectman Dargie moved to not recommend this warrant article. Seconded by Selectman Labonte. Selectman
330 Dargie removed his motion.

331

332 Selectman Dargie is in favor of sidewalks but are working on a master plan that includes sidewalks. Selectman
333 Finan agreed that we already have a process but it might be good input to the Planning Board on how to proceed.

334

335 Janet Langdell, a Milford resident, said the concept of making Milford walkable isn't new. We've fallen off when
336 projects have been brought forward with funding attached to them that have not been supported by the Selectmen.

337

338 Chairman Daniels said we've made a good effort to increase the price and prioritize roads and this is kind of
339 competition for that.

340

341 Selectman Labonte feels we already have this as a priority. There is no action item on this, it would be easier to
342 accept if they came in with a plan or number. Selectman Finan said we have a Steering Committee for things like
343 this. Selectman Freel said we are already looking into this type of thing. After more discussion, the Board decided
344 to not take a position on this warrant article. Administrator Daley said the intent is good but it's not committing
345 us to do anything.

346

347 **Selectman Dargie made a motion to not take a position on Warrant Article 16, Walkable Milford. Seconded**
348 **by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.**

349

350 **a) FROM PROJECTS, SPECIAL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES**

351 Selectman Finan said Selectman Freel came to the Library Trustee meeting and helped them understand what was
352 needed with the electrical panels.

353

354 Chairman Daniels said we are still lax on Committees and Boards having minutes up to date.

355

356 **b) OTHER ITEMS (not on the agenda)**

357

358 **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS -**

359 **8. APPROVAL OF FINAL MINUTES –** January 3, 2024 work session, January 8, 2024, regular meeting and
360 January 8, 2024, Budget and Bond Hearing.

361

APPROVED MINUTES OF BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING – 1/22/2024

362 Selectman Freel made a motion to approve the final minutes of January 3, 2024, as amended. Seconded by
363 Selectman Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

364
365 Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the final minutes of January 8, 2024, as amended. Seconded
366 by Selectman Daniels. The motion passed 4/0/1 with Selectman Freel abstaining.

367
368 Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the final minutes of the January 8, 2024, Budget and Bond
369 Hearing as presented. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

370
371 **10. INFORMATION ITEMS REQUIRING NO DECISIONS.**

372 a. Selectmen’s Goals and Initiatives

373
374 **11. NOTICES.** Notices were read.

375
376 **12. NON-PUBLIC SESSION –** Selectman Finan made a motion to go into non-public at 8:17 in accordance
377 with (RSA 91-A:3, II(a)) Personnel and approval of non-public minutes from January 8, 2024. Seconded
378 by Selectman Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

379
380 In nonpublic the Board addressed two sets of minutes and made two decisions.

381
382 **13. ADJOURNMENT:** Selectman Freel moved to adjourn at 8:35. Seconded by Selectman Dargie. All
383 were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

384
385
386 _____
387 Gary Daniels, Chairman

386 _____
387 Tim Finan, Member

388
389
390 _____
391 Chris Labonte, Vice-Chairman

388 _____
389
390 _____
391 Dave Freel, Member

392
393
394 _____
395 Paul Dargie, Member