

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
July 31, 2023

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

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

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

2. APPOINTMENTS – (Approximate times)

5:30 p.m. - Appointment of Bill Parker to the Milford Ethics Committee – Term Expires 2026

Mr. Parker was unable to attend. His appointment will be tabled until August 28th.

5:40 p.m. - Appointment of Dan Sadkowski to the Milford Solid Waste & Recycling Committee – Term Expires in 2026

Mr. Sadkowski enjoys working with people and would like to serve on additional committees in town. He attended one Recycling Committee so far. He is fully retired and only works part-time so his schedule is flexible.

Selectman Finan made a motion to appoint Dan Sadkowski to the Milford Solid Waste & Recycling Committee with a term expiring in 2026. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

5:45 p.m. - Welfare Departmental Update – Director, Lisa Emerson

Director Emerson said Welfare is governed by RSA 165:1 which states: “Whenever a person in any town is poor and unable to support himself, he shall be relieved and maintained by the overseers of public welfare of such town, whether or not he has a residence there”. The RSA gives a few specific rules on what these cover.

In Milford, we generally assist with housing costs (rent, mortgage, lot rental fee, or temporary lodging), utilities (heat, electric, water), prescription medications, and cremation. Anyone seeking assistance must complete an application and provide documentation of income and expenses for the previous 30 days to establish need.

At this time, Welfare is slightly over budget due to an increase in evictions and homelessness. It’s hard to predict where we will be by the end of the year. The Welfare position is part-time at 47 hours in 2 weeks and SHARE covers when Ms. Emerson is out of the office.

Residents who need financial assistance can call the office directly or by email. That contact information is on the town website or online. Referrals come from people calling 211, Share, landlords, and other agencies in southern NH.

Ms. Emerson appreciates continued financial support to the Social Services Warrant Article and to the departments that provide emergency services to Milford residents. The Social Services Committee meets in September to review the needs of non-profit applications in Milford, they evaluate all applications and determine per specific criteria of where the Social Services warrant article of \$40,000 would be best used to help the citizens of Milford.

Selectman Dargie asked about homelessness in Milford. Ms. Emerson said it's hard to say. She knows of homeless people who will not come to Welfare for help. There are some from Milford who are homeless in other towns. She has given aid to several hundred people this year. Her budget is \$104,000 not including the Social Services Warrant Article and her salary.

Administrator Daley asked if Ms. Emerson makes site visits. Ms. Emerson said yes, but she's accompanied by someone and doesn't go alone. She also stated that she doesn't need a town vehicle.

6:05 p.m. - Waiver of Timber Tax for the Conservation Commission, Approval of 1 Exempt Property and 1 Veterans Tax Credit– Assessing Director, Marti Noel

Ms. Noel said the waiver of Timber Cut is for the Milford Conservation Commission (MCC), in conjunction with Forester Eric Radlof. They are in the process of scheduling a timber cut at Mile Slip Town Forest (Map 50 Lot 9), located at the southeast end of Mile Slip Road to re-establish an early succession habitat. This will be scheduled after nesting season. RSA 79:3-b allows municipalities to Waive a Timber Tax for Timber cuts on their land.

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the waiver of Timber Tax for the Conservation Commission. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

The Property Exemption is for the Boys and Girls Club of Souhegan Valley. Their A-9 was filed timely but a couple of things were delayed due to the recent hiring of both a new CEO and CFO who needed time to complete the additional paperwork. Ms. Noel recommends the Board approve this exemption.

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the Property Exemption for the Boys and Girls Club of Souhegan Valley. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

The Veterans Tax Credit applicant was late but the BOS has generously approved late-filed applications out of respect for our Veterans.

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve optional late-filed Veterans Tax Credit. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

6:20 p.m. – Milford Police Department and Fire Department Fee Increase - Chief Mike Viola and Chief Ken Flaherty

Chief Viola presented a suggested fee increase for Police Department Detail Rates based on a 4-hour minimum. The last time the rates were increased was in 2019. The increased rates would be comparable to other towns.

Rates	Current (April 2019)	Proposed
Police Officer	\$50.00	\$55.00
Administrative	\$15.00	\$16.50
Vehicle	\$15.00	\$16.50
4 Hour Minimum Total with Cruiser	\$320.00	\$352.00
4 Hour Minimum w/out Cruiser	\$260.00	\$286.00

Vice Chairman Labonte said it's weird that you are charging for something that is already funded. Chief Flaherty said some of the admin fees are taxes, the officer or firefighter would get a certain number and the admin gets a certain number. Worker's Compensation comes in after that. Details don't cost the taxpayers anything.

The Milford Police Department Detail Rates are covered in the 2023-2026 AFSCME contract. If the Board of Selectmen were to approve the proposed changes; this would only affect the rates. The remainder of the Private Details stipulated in Article XV, Private Details, would not be subject to change.

There was additional discussion on what the percentage was that covers benefits and salaries. Vice Chairman Labonte asked if our cost is covered using a cruiser. Chief Viola said he wanted to come in with a reasonable amount. Idling miles add up. Selectman Freel asked how much revenue details bring in. Chief Viola said this year so far, their vehicle fees were \$5,700 and Admin fees were \$10,665. In 2022 the vehicle fees were \$33,517

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and Admin fees were \$43,312. In 2021 the vehicle fees were \$45,375 and Admin fees were just over \$56,000. He also provided hours that pertained to a vehicle and admin fees. Administrator Daley suggested keeping the vehicle fees for both Police and Fire the same as what is being suggested by the Fire Department at \$19.00 as per FEMA

Selectman Freel asked if town events get a discount rate. Chief Viola said town events receive a 3-hour minimum, not a 4-hour minimum, that's the break. Most of the time we don't use our vehicles. Selectman Freel feels that the Pumpkin Festival should get a bigger discount as a town event.

Chief Flaherty presented fee increases for Fire Department Detail Rates. The last time the rates were increased was in 2013. The firefighter rates are comparable to other towns.

Rates	Current (July 2013)	Proposed
Firefighter	\$33.00	\$45.00
Administrative	\$9.00	\$14.00
Vehicle	\$19.00	\$19.00
Engine/Rescue	\$95.00	\$95.00
Ladder	\$145.00	\$145.00

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the charts as presented but increase the Police Vehicle fee to \$19.00 versus the suggested \$16.50. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0. amended due to incorrect amount 8/21/23

6:40 p.m. - Milford Spartan Solar LLC. Update/Review – Dominic LeBell

Milford Spartan Solar, LLC. presented an update on the Milford Spartan Solar project and discussed possible amendments to the existing expiring Lease Agreement with the Town. The lease agreement was executed on September 22, 2019, and included 3 years with a 1-year extension. The company and Town agreed to the 1-year extension in August 2022. They have spent several years doing environmental assessments of the property. They will enter the design process upon extension of the contract.

Administrator Daley said no action is needed by the Board at this time. The purpose and intent of this agenda item is for the Board to receive the update and to begin discussions involving the terms of the lease agreement, possible extensions, additional amendments, or other actions.

Suzanne Fournier, Brox Environmental Citizen, said her committee is not in favor of this solar project on the Milford Community Lands, formerly Brox property. She feels it's the wrong site for a solar array as well as the private sites that are scheduled for solar. She proceeded to explain why it would best suited elsewhere and provided suggestions on where the town should put solar.

Selectman Freel asked Ms. Fournier what building project she felt would be suited for the Milford Town Community Lands. Ms. Fournier proceeded to explain why the property was special and said the best use of the land would be for conservation only. Selectman Freel asked if the people in Ms. Fournier's group would ever support a structure built on that property. Ms. Fournier would not answer the question for her group. She feels that that property is best used for conservation.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS - There were no comments at this time.

4. DECISIONS

a. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval to not use the PA-28 Taxpayer Inventory Form
2. Approval to Accept the Application for Reimbursement to Towns and Cities
3. Acceptance and Appropriation of Unanticipated Revenues under \$10,000 (31:95(b))
 - ACERT Grant 2023 (funding for overtime for the Milford Police Officers to attend meetings as part of Milford Thrives and ACERT - \$5,000.

Selectman Dargie made a motion to accept the consent calendar. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

b. OTHER DECISIONS

1. Milford CP Exhibit II Updated May 18, 2023 – Standard Power
Administrator Daley said there was a minor language change to the existing plan that provides additional requirements for participants to be notified.

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve exhibit II as presented. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

2. Grant Agreement Amendment POP Extension

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the grant agreement amendment POP Extension as presented. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

5. TOWN STATUS REPORT –

1. 2023 Pavement Contract – Sole Sourcing – Public Works Director, Leo Lessard
Brox Industries has submitted an offer to extend Town's paving contract for the current year. Brox Industries offered a reduced price to reclaim, grade, and then asphalt and hold the 2022 price for the cost of milling and paving. Brox has been a long-time, loyal, and valued contractor for the Town of Milford. Additional information was given to the Board at the meeting.

The request by the Public Works Department is to seek approval from the Board of Selectmen according to Section VIII: Additional Provision of the Town's Policy on Purchasing & Procurement to accept the sole source proposal.

Director Lessard said if we go out to bid, those prices will go up. They didn't go out to bid this year, the current bid was from last year. The bid would be for town-wide paving for the roads that were in the queue to be worked on this year. Typically, roads that are scheduled for work are included in a contract and sent out to bid. There was additional discussion about what was spent from last year's budget for paving.

Selectman Dargie is against giving the work out, they should be going out to bid for expensive things, he will not vote in favor of this. Vice Chairman Labonte asked if Director Lessard knew how much of a difference the cost would be if they went out to bid. He's always been an advocate for going out to bid but understands there are exceptions to sole source. Director Lessard said the cost could go up about 15%. It would take a while to go out to bid which will extend the season out longer. Brox is just extending their contract and Director Lessard said he thought it would be a good deal.

Selectman Dargie said we should be going to bid on these types of things every year in March or April. There was concern that if we went out to bid, there would not be time to get the roads complete because of all the rain we've had. The Board agreed that they should be going out to bid early in the year. Selectman Dargie said he understands where we are at, but he would still like us to follow the right process.

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Selectman Freel made a motion to accept Brox Industries roll-over 2023 unit price cost which is an extension of the 2022 contract. Seconded by Selectman Finan. The motion passed 3/1 with Selectman Dargie opposed.

6. DISCUSSIONS

1. Traffic Safety Complaint – Mason Road

Selectman Dargie made a motion to refer the traffic safety complaint – Mason Road to the Traffic Safety Committee for review. Seconded by Selectman Finan. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

2. Review of MODIFIED DRAFT Budget Transfer Policy – Tabled until August 14, 2023.

7. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

a) FROM PROJECTS, SPECIAL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

b) OTHER ITEMS (not on the agenda) There were no comments at this time.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS There were no comments at this time.

9. APPROVAL OF FINAL MINUTES – July 10, 2023

Selectman Dargie made a motion to approve the minutes of July 10, 2023, as amended. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS REQUIRING NO DECISIONS.

a. Selectmen's Goals and Initiatives

11. NOTICES. Notices were read.

12. NON-PUBLIC SESSION – Selectman Freel made a motion to go into non-public at 7:10 under RSA 91-A:3, II(e)) Legal and for approval of non-public minutes of June 26, 2023, and July 10, 2023. Seconded by Selectman Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

Selectman Finan made a motion to come out of non-public. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

Vice Chairman Labonte said in non-public the Board did not discuss anything under legal but they did approved two sets of non-public minutes that were not sealed.

13. ADJOURNMENT: Selectman Freel moved to adjourn at 7:20. Seconded by Selectman Dargie. All were in favor. The motion passed 4/0.

Gary Daniels, Chairman EXCUSED

Tim Finan, Member

Chris Labonte, Vice-Chairman

Dave Freel, Member

Paul Dargie, Member