

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
October 24, 2022

PRESENT: Paul Dargie, Member Mark Bender, Town Administrator
Tim Finan, Member Tina Philbrick, Executive Assistant
Gary Daniels, Member Andy Kouropoulos, Videographer
Laura Dudziak, Member
Dave Freel, Member

1. CALL TO ORDER, BOARD OF SELECTMEN INTRODUCTIONS & PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTRUCTIONS:
Chairman Dargie 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. - NH National Guard Patriotic Employers Recognition Program – Ambulance Director, Eric Schelberg
Director Schelberg presented an award that the Ambulance Department received for contributing to National Security and Protecting Liberty and Freedom by supporting employee participation in America's National Guard and Reserve Force.

5:35 p.m. - Recreation Commission, Appointment of Alternate, Karen Desjardins Term expires 2023
Ms. Desjardins has been a resident of Milford for 29 years and has enjoyed many recreation programs. She is looking forward to giving her time to the commission.

Selectman Daniels made a motion to appoint Karen Desjardins as an alternate to the Recreation Commission. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

5:40 p.m. - Fireworks Warrant Article - Recreation Director, Arene Berry
Director Berry presented the Board with some fireworks options and dates. Fireworks displays are difficult on the 4th of July due to cost. She proposed that we have fireworks on Milford's summer bash day on June 17th. The warrant article will have to be re-worded because it wouldn't be an Independence Day celebration. She reached out to 5 fireworks companies, two have not responded, one isn't available on any of the dates proposed and the other two are JPI and Pyrotechnical (formally Atlas). Ms. Berry feels she can get a great display for \$12,000 on the June 17th date. JPI isn't available on any of the July dates.

There was additional discussion about the size of shells allowed. They are still trying to figure out the location and we will be having a meeting with the state about that. Selectman Freel wants it as close to the 4th of July as possible. Selectman Finan asked what feedback was given last year. Ms. Berry said it's always mixed, too many delays in between fireworks, can't see because of the trees, or it was awesome, etc. Last year it was more positive because people were just happy to get out post-COVID.

Selectman Freel asked about combining with another town. Ms. Berry said the problem would be finding a place to hold it for both towns.

Chairman Dargie said if the fireworks are not too expensive to upgrade for the additional shells, he would vote for July 1st. If it's too expensive, he would rather have it on June 17th. Selectman Finan would prefer to be close to July 4th. There was some discussion about sponsors to help with the cost.

Ms. Kokko, a Milford resident, said Amherst has donors and a fireworks committee; maybe people can step up and solicit donations. Administrator Bender said the Amherst celebration includes a parade, and food and is similar to the Pumpkin Festival, and includes much more than just a summer bash. Ms. Berry will get the additional information and come back to the next Board meeting.

5:50 p.m. - Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) – Community Development Director, Lincoln Daley and Pete Basiliere, Citizens Advisory Committee.

The recommendations and placement of projects within 2023 are meant to assist the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Advisory Committee in their deliberations during the budget and warrant article preparation process. The projects have been arranged by their highest score using the established two-step prioritization and classification process described and detailed in the CIP Draft Report. This report includes a CIP Tax Impact table and Open Borrowings Table. This list identifies four projects for 2023 ranked by highest to lowest priority. The school is also looking at some large capital improvement over the next year for around \$90,000,000 not including any delayed maintenance which could be around \$7,000,000.

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Mr. Basiliere thanked Mr. Daley for the work he put into the CIP report. Chairman Dargie provided some changes and suggestions to the CIP report on numerous pages to include spreadsheets.

Selectman Finan clarified that at least one grant, if not both are reimbursement grants so we would have to bond the higher amount which would affect the spreadsheet. Chairman Dargie said it's coming from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and they distribute the money as they go. There is no bond at this point. You don't start paying the bond until its post project. It's like a construction loan. Selectman Finan asked if we would be bonding the \$6,931,751 on the Wastewater Treatment Facility warrant article. He had concerns about the spreadsheet depicting that information. There was additional discussion on what would be bonded. Selectman Finan suggested a change on page 29 in the opening paragraph.

Administrator Bender asked if the CIP report was posted on the website. Mr. Daley said it's still in draft format. They will be having two public hearings before the Planning Board when all the changes are complete. Mr. Basiliere publicly recognized the committee for their great work.

Mr. Basiliere suggests moving a couple of projects forward that are slated for next year into this year. This will keep spikes from happening. Paul Calabria, Finance Director said our maximum allowable debt is \$48.4 million we are currently at \$13.6 million to include both the town and school. Chairman Dargie said he thinks the total for the town is \$48.4 and the total for the school is a different number. Mr. Calabria will look into the exact numbers.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (regarding items that are not on the agenda)

4. DECISIONS

a) CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Acceptance and Appropriation of Unanticipated Revenues Under \$10,000 (31:95(b)) Donation to pay for Milford's Holiday Employee/Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon in December –
 - Granite Town Festivity Committee - \$2,500
2. Request for Approval for the Lions Club to host Santa on the Oval on December 4, 2022, and to decorate the Oval for the Winter Holidays from November 26, 2022, until January 8, 2023. Dates are subject to change due to the weather.

Selectman Daniels made a motion to approve the consent calendar. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

b. OTHER DECISIONS

N/A

5. TOWN STATUS REPORT –

1. **168 South Street** – The Tax deeding was completed on October 6, 2022, on the gas station that was on that property. We took the property after a successful Brownsfield Grant Application to remove the fuel storage tanks and the surrounding soil. There is a clean bill of health on the property. A review of the property has started with steps required to convert it to municipal parking with possible electric vehicle charging stations. There is a possibility that the canopy can be retained.

2. Waste Water Treatment Facility Warrant Article – Water Utilities Director, Jim Pouliot

Two analyses were provided for the Board's review: Tax Impact of Bond funding – Finance Director, Paul Calabria. Corresponding Rate Increase Analysis, Water Utilities Director, Jim Pouliot.

Paul Calabria, Finance Director, said after the grant and Wilton's share we are at \$13,862,752. We looked at various percentages on the tax rate and came up with the table presented, based on a 20 and 30-year loan. Selectman Freel clarified that the users would get the tax impact as well as a rate increase.

WWTF Upgrade with 2024 Tax Rate

Tax Payers Impacts

Term	20 Years	
	Debt Service	Estimated 2024 Tax Rate Effect
Bond amount		Based on a \$375,000 Home

30 Years

30 Years	30 Years	
	Debt Service	Estimated 2024 Tax Rate Effect
		Based on a \$375,000 Home

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Option #1

100% on Tax Rate 13,862,752	892,283	0.44	\$165	665,513	0.33	\$124
40% on Tax Rate 5,545,101	356,913	0.17	\$64	266,205	0.13	\$49
50% on Tax Rate 6,931,376	446,141	0.22	\$83	332,756	0.16	\$60
60% on Tax Rate 8,317,651	535,370	0.26	\$98	399,308	0.20	\$75

Rate Payers Impacts

	Term	Debt Service
Bond amount	20 Years	30 Years

Option #1

100%>Rate Payers 13,862,752	892,283	665,513
40%>Rate Payer 5,545,101	356,913	266,205
50%>Rate Payer 6,931,376	446,141	332,756
60%>Rate Payer 8,317,651	535,370	399,308

Jim Pouliot, Water Utilities Director, said the user fees would increase 25% @ \$105 per year for a 20-year loan and 20% @\$85 per year for a 30-year loan. Commercial users would increase by about \$500 a year. Chairman Dargie is in favor of a 30-year loan and a 50/50 split. About 50% of the project relates to the new permit and the other 50% is old outdated equipment. The new permit stuff is related more to the town in total. The replacement of old and tired things is more of a user-related thing.

Mr. Calabria agrees with 50/50 but suggests a 20-year bond instead of a 30-year bond. It would save a couple of million dollars in interest and isn't much of a difference on the annual bill. Selectman Freel said the upgrades are only going to last 20 to 30 years. Mr. Pouliot said it would last longer.

Dale White, Water Commissioner, suggests a 20-year bond to save the extra money. Chairman Dargie said this bond needs a 60% vote to pass and the average taxpayer looks at the number. If you keep the number low, it may be easier to pass. People tend to look at numbers and vote on them.

Mr. White said he didn't think the tax impact would hit until 2026. You have to wait until it's all done. That should be stated in the warrant article. Chairman Dargie said we have to be careful about how we word the bond. The voter's guide can have as much information as needed.

Administrator Bender said on a 20-year bond, the total interest is just under \$3.7 million versus a 30-year bond with interest of \$5.5 million. The savings is around \$1.7 million if you do a 50/50 split. Selectman Finan said this needs explaining a lot.

Mr. White said the Engineering firm will be retained to do mailings and provide as much information as possible to the town.

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Bob Courage, Water Commissioner, said the project will take 2 ½ to 3 years to complete barring no problems. He figures it will be done in 2026 and the first payment is due one year after the completion of the bond with the SRF funding. During construction, we can borrow money through the SRF funding at 1% interest. That will be rolled into the bond when we start to pay it off. We don't have to have temporary borrowing to finance this during construction. There was some discussion about interest and how it's calculated.

A majority of the Board is in favor of a 50/50 split. Selectman Daniels is leaning towards a 20-year bond but struggling with the 50/50 split. He is leaning towards a 40/60 split. A majority of the Board is in favor of a 20-year bond and a 50/50 split. Mr. White said the Commission also agrees to a 20-year bond and 50/50 split.

Mr. Thornton would like to see a 40/60 split. He owns a septic system and is facing thousands to overhaul his system in a few years. He is in favor of a 20-year bond. Mr. Courage said the ratepayers are also taxpayers. Milford would not be the vibrant community is it without our municipal sewage collections system and treatment facility. We wouldn't have the industry that we have. He shares Mr. Thornton's feelings on this, but the whole town benefits from this system.

Selectman Freel said that the treatment plant takes on the private dumplings and to go outside Milford might cost more. Jim, ratepayers are responsible for their service lines from the town right away to their house. If something fails, they have to pay for that. There is a cost associated with hooking up to our system.

Chris Labonte, a Milford resident favors the 20-year loan. Dale White said if we didn't have Hitchhikers in town taxes would be higher. If they can't send their waste to our treatment plant, they wouldn't be able to stay in Milford. Taking care of those types of people will help our tax rate.

3. MACC Base Update – Captain Craig Frye and Ray Anderson, MACC Base

Captain Frye said they reviewed page 8 of the IMA and the Town of Mont Vernon believes that MACC Base should be allowed to pay for any emergency repair and they want to add that line as part of the IMA. This Board voted on this language, "Milford Area Communications Center shall be authorized for emergency repair notifications" and he feels that it should remain the same.

Wilton and Milford have their own equipment. Mont Vernon is starting to look at their equipment but they haven't purchased any new equipment. It's up to the Board if they want to increase the line item from \$30,000 to a higher figure to handle all repairs by MACC Base.

Selectman Freel clarified that the Board of Governors wants all the towns to agree that if the equipment breaks in any of the Towns then MACC Base would fix it in their budget and it would be shared cost by all the towns. Captain Frye said yes, and he doesn't agree with it. The Mont Vernon representative said this is how it should be and has been done in the past. We've since made changes and Wilton and Milford have their equipment we were told to fix our equipment, so we did. There are two vendors and if it's not clear what is broken, one town will be called. Director Anderson knows who owns what equipment. Captain Frye said it's not fair for any town to pay for another town's equipment. We have shared equipment in MACC Base and we all should pay for that if it breaks.

Chairman Dargie said most of our equipment is under warranty. Captain Frye said yes, and we have maintenance programs in place.

Director Anderson said the Mont Vernon Police Department and the Town of Wilton's Police Department are operating on the new Wilton's police frequency which is separate from what the Town of Milford's Police Department is operating on. The only agency operating on the old equipment that has always been maintained by MACC Base is the Mont Vernon Fire Department and its low-band radio.

Captain Frye said the problem is that you won't be able to support the low-band radios if they break beyond the point of parts there will be an issue. Two antennas will be decommissioned by 2024 which will start to limit what MACC Base will own within the next five years. There was additional discussion about the remaining equipment under MACC Base.

Director Anderson said he just wants to have the authorization at three in the morning to act on Milford's and Wilton's behalf, to call their service provider and have a technician come out and fix it so we are not down for an extended period.

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Selectman Daniels moved to reject the proposed language that Mont Vernon wants to add. Seconded by Dudziak. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.

4. **2023 Town Warrants** – We will continue to include this for Board meetings until we have a final list from the Selectmen. The CIP report presented earlier this evening should guide several warrant articles. The Library requested that we add their capital reserve fund to the warrants for \$50,000.

Selectman Finan asked about the cost of the bandstand, and if there was an ongoing effort for fundraising. Dave Palance, a Milford resident, said they have plans to go through a fundraising program. They will be looking at grants and other ways to raise money.

Mr. Calabria said there will be another \$300,000 plus bridge money coming in soon and it's non-lapsing. Chairman Daniels provided language for a revolving fund for the transfer station. There was additional discussion on how the warrant article could be worded and how a revolving fund would work.

Mark Parenti, a Milford Resident, said the Library isn't planning to do the restrooms this year their warrant article is just for capital reserve.

6. DISCUSSIONS

1. Key Dates for the 2023 Town Meeting

Petition Warrant Articles

- ❖ Tuesday, January 10, 2023, Last day for voters to petition selectmen to include an article in the town meeting warrant, provided that if a petitioned article proposes a bond governed by RSA 33:8-a, the deadline is the preceding Friday, January 6, 2023 [RSA 39:3;40:13, II-a (b)]

Budget and Bond Public Hearing

- ❖ Monday, January 9, 2023 - 6:30 p.m., Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room

Candidacy Filing

- ❖ Wednesday, January 25, 2023, First day for candidates in towns with non-partisan official ballot systems to file a declaration of candidacy with the town clerk, {RSA 669:19: 652:20; 40:13, VII}
- ❖ Friday, February 3, 2023, Last day for filing of candidacy with the town clerk in towns with non-partisan official ballot system. The town clerk's office must be open at least from 3 to 5 p.m. {RSA 669:19: 652:20; 40:13, VII}

Deliberative Session

- ❖ Saturday, February 4, 2023 - 9:00 a.m., the earliest date to hold the First Session of the town meeting. Governing body sets the date. (RSA 40:13,III) The snow date will be Saturday, February 11, 2023.

Town Voting

- ❖ Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at the Milford High School, 100 West Street, Milford NH from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS. (Regarding items that are not on the agenda)

Chris Labonte asked when the budget will be released to the public. Administrator Bender said a primary budget will be released sometime this week.

8. SELECTMEN'S REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

- FROM PROJECTS, SPECIAL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES
- OTHER ITEMS (that are not on the agenda)

Selectman Freel said the Milford Energy Advisory Committee (MEAC) met and will be having the two power companies come in within the next two weeks. Mr. Labonte asked if it will be televised. Tina Philbrick, Executive Assistant said no, due to staffing issues. There is a possibility for zoom; she will take to Community Media.

9. APPROVAL OF FINAL MINUTES - Selectman Daniels moved to approve the minutes of October 10, 2022, and October 19, 2022, Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0. Selectman Daniels

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266 moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2022, work session, special meeting. Seconded by Selectman Fi-
267 nan. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.
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269 **10. INFORMATION ITEMS REQUIRING NO DECISIONS.**

270 a. N/A
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272 **11. NOTICES.** Notices were read. At this time, the Board decided to not hold the 5th Monday Forum on Monday, October
273 31, 2022.
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275 **12. NON-PUBLIC SESSION –** Selectman Daniels made a motion to go into non-public in accordance with NH (RSA
276 91-A:3, II(a)) Personnel. Seconded by Selectman Freel. All were in favor. The motion passed 5/0.
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278 Selectman Daniels made a motion to exit non-public. Selectman by Selectman Dudziak. All were in favor. The
279 motion passed 5/0.
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281 In non-public, the Board discussed a personnel matter and made one decision.
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283 **13. ADJOURNMENT:** Selectman Freel moved to adjourn at 9:00. Seconded by Selectman Daniels. All were in fa-
284 vor. The motion passed 5/0.
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Paul Dargie, Chairman

Laura Dudziak, Member

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Tim Finan, Vice-Chairman

Dave Freel, Member

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Gary Daniels, Member