Call to Order:
Chairperson Curier called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Select Board Present: Morgan Curier, Francis Muzzey, and Omer C. Ahern, Jr.

Staff/Officials Present: Administrative Assistant – Tanya Vela, Chief of Police – Wallace Trott, Bookkeeper – Linda Franz, Road Agent – Paul Manson, Transfer Station Manager – Randy Ruger,

Public Present: Kay Bailey, Sue Bliss, Elsey Cormiea, Tracy Currier, Paul Ducharme, Ron Hajj, Elsey Cormiea, Brian Dubois, Palmer Koelb, George Morrill, Travis Heath, Maureen Horgan, Donna King, Jordan King, Larry King, George Morrill, Hannah Paquette, Arnie Scheller, Sonia Scheller, Janice Thompson, Steve Welch, Patti Welch, Logan Wiggett, Ray Youngs

Meeting called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chairperson
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Minutes and accounts payable reviewed for signature.

Motion. Morgan Curier made a motion to nominate Brian Dubois as the new Supervisor of the Checklist of Wentworth. F. Muzzey seconded the motion. All vote yes. Motion carried.
- Brian Dubois sworn in as Supervisor of the Checklist and an explanation was given about his duties.

General Public Comments
- Janice Thompson had two questions. The first question was concerning a withdrawal from a landfill closure account in April of this year. The Board informed her that due to legal issues, they were unable to answer any questions about it at the present time. J. Thompson said she just wanted to make sure the Board was aware of the situation. The second question was regarding the recent testing of waterways by the Conservation Commission and J. Thompson wanted to know if the Town had paid for the water testing because not all of it had been done and suggested that the Town consider having our Conservation Commission do the testing so we can receive the reports. F. Muzzey informed J. Thompson that the budget for the Conservation Commission was $1000 and aside from the $250 in membership dues, the town had not paid any additional expenses.

Reports of Town Officials
- Police Department. The Police Chief gave an update (attached) and emphasized the importance of ‘if you see something, say something’ because there had been an incident over the weekend where shots were fired on Route 25 in front of a residence and it was posted on social media but nobody reported it to the police. Chief Trott only learned of
considered. O. Ahern said he felt that what the Town needed was someone to do
the snowplowing only and as needed. He said the Road Agent doing a great job
and pointed out that a couple of months ago, when NHPR reported the results of
the flooding, of all the towns in the areas who had culverts going out and
washouts, the only town that NHPR that did not mention as having washouts or
roads going out was the Town of Wentworth. O. Ahern said that in his mind, that
is attributable to the new Highway Road Agent and said the Town is very
fortunate in that regard. He added that money is another big concern of his He
reminded everyone that the Town’s budget only goes until Dec 31st and then the
Town doesn’t vote on it again until March.

- **D. King** said it was her understanding that the Highway Dept budget had been cut
  by $100,000 and engaged the Board on how other avenues for finding money.
  Finally, she stated that for safety reasons, the Highway Dept needs a third person.
  People need to get to work and don’t get snow days.

- **Steve Welch** spoke in favor of hiring a third person and said that the roads need
to be safe, after “last year’s fiasco”. He reminded everyone that the Chief of
Police came in to plow last year, which took time away from his Police Dept
duties. He stated that historically, there have been at least three people working
during the winter and encouraged the Board to work to the best of their abilities
with the Road Agent who is doing a good job. S. Welch agreed with D. King
about everyone needing to be able to get out and go to work. He said he pays his
taxes and needs to get to work in order to pay his property taxes. He lives on a
Town-maintained road, 3.2 miles off the main road and says his expectation for
the road being maintained is not unreasonable.

- **Brian Dubois** spoke in favor of hiring a third person. He said, as someone who’s
been in town for over 20 years and lives up Atwell Hill Rd, 2.5 miles off the main
road, he agrees with everyone else and that the Town really does need a third
person. He said the fact of the matter is that the Town has 54 miles of road. He
also reminded the Board about the previous year’s ice storms, the school bus that
went off the road and about another collision with a tractor trailer.

- **F. Muzzey** clarified the road mileage and said that plowing both ways, the Town
basically has 90 miles of road.

- **Ray Youngs**, former (previous) Selectman for the Town of Wentworth spoke in
favor of hiring a third person and provided three reasons to Select Board for why
the previous Board had cut the budget significantly.

  - 1. Taxes skyrocketed, so the previous Board tried to reduce the Town’s tax
    rate.
  
  - 2. The previous Board was concerned about Town resources as a whole
    and took funds away that were being mismanaged or used inappropriately.
asked for a special meeting which would’ve been cheaper and prevented “this crowd of people here to beat up on one Selectman”. She said she in favor of somebody helping, but not for 30 hours/week.

- **M. Currier** responded to K. Bailey’s questions: The Town paid $80 for the Road Agent’s medical card, but that the Town did not pay anything for his CDL. P. Manson paid $280 out of his pocket.

- **P. Manson** reiterated that he has been asking the Board for a 3 rd person since May 23 rd and has been careful with his budget throughout the summer in order to do so. He stated that he still has $25,000 in the line budget and at the very most, as stated in his proposal, has $5900 between the weeks of November and December, even with overtime.

- **Tracy Currier** voiced his concerns about the volunteers F. Muzzey mentioned and questioned whether those people would be willing to come in at 3am to help the Town. F. Muzzey said one would be willing to come in at noon.

- **S. Welch** reminded everyone that prior to the Hwy Dept person being arrested in the past, the Hwy Dept originally had two full-time people and that the Town had voted to hire someone for 6-months and 6-months for 40-hour weeks with no benefits, which seemed to work. He said he doesn’t think that the necessity has changed any.

- **Jordan King** voiced his support for hiring a sub-contract, or for 3-4 months that is on-call to P. Manson. His concerns were if one Hwy Dept employee got sick, that would cause an issue and also said that volunteers tend to be unreliable and can’t be counted on, since they’re not being paid. He added that he is more concerned about ice, not snow, which is more dangerous.

- **Travis Heath** voiced his full support for hiring a 3 rd employee and stated that he feels a sub-contractor is not a cost-effective decision. He has done plowing and snow removal and said that the Town will spend on hiring a sub-contractor for a few months the same as you would spend hiring an employee year-round for 30 hours/week.

- **M. Currier** reminded everyone that the Town did advertise other options but the only interest received was for the part-time position.

- **Patty Welch** voiced her concern with firefighters and ambulances being able to get to her house in a timely manner if her house caught fire.

- **Hannah Packet** said that it’s her 4 th year working for the school in Town and that hearing the stories from the bus drivers about driving on the ice is pretty scary and that the buses sometimes have to slide past kids waiting for the bus because they can’t stop on the hill.
• Motion. O. Ahern made a motion that the Select Board approve that the Road Agent fill with a qualified applicant, as soon as possible, for the Highway Dept on a part-time basis, 30-hours/week and could be advertised again if we lose the qualified applicant. M. Currier seconded the motion.

  o O. Ahern added that he is really not happy about this situation but because of the safety issues, the children and making sure that people are able to get to work in the morning. He said he really doesn't feel the Highway Dept needs a 3rd person the way that the Highway Dept is working, but his intent is to vote Yes on the motion (and is open to discussion).

  o B. Dubois asked what will happen if there is a snowstorm like one of the bad ones in recent times? He wanted to be sure that the employee wouldn't just stop at 30 hours and go home. M. Currier said that P. Manson’s proposal for 30 hours, part-time, states that in Wintertime, it will include additional hours, including overtime, if needed for plowing.

  o O. Ahern responded saying that this is definitely part of his motion and added “overtime, as needed, in the winter” to the motion. He called the question. M. Currier voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. F. Muzzey voted no. Motion carried.

• Motion. F. Muzzey made a motion that the Select Board return to having a weekly meeting on Tuesday, time to be determined following this motion. O. Ahern seconded the motion. O. Ahern asked that a memo be submitted by Dept Heads or others at a Select Board meeting if there is any requested action, especially if money is to be spent, in order for the meetings run more smoothly and be over in a timely manner.

  o Discussion took place about how beneficial a weekly meeting would be. Chief Trott pointed out that in the past 4 or 5 years, there are often 2 or 3 people in attendance because not everyone can make a weekly meeting, but those few people are speaking on behalf of the entire community. After those present weighed in, O. Ahern and F. Muzzey voted yes. M. Currier voted yes. Motion carried.

• F. Muzzey spoke in favor of starting the meeting at 5pm in order to finish at a reasonable hour. The Administrative Assistant agreed and said it would make sense to start the meeting at 5pm in order to sign checks and take care of the administrative and business issues, which will allow people who want to participate in the General Public Comments at 6pm. M. Currier said she was in favor of leaving the meetings at 5 pm to get the general business matters out of the way – still a public meeting – with the understanding that more than likely the general public comments will start at 6pm.

  o Palmer Koelb sought clarification and asked if the intent was for the Board, aside from signing checks, was not going to make any decisions until after 6pm. M. Currier said yes and the other Board members agreed.
• P. Manson wanted to make a point to clarify that he wants to remain transparent with regard to the Facebook posts on the Highway page and has never used anyone’s name when asked for the Townspeople to come out to speak out one way or another on Highway issues. Hannah Paquette spoke up to say that she follows the page and said that despite whatever negative comments other residents make, P. Manson’s response is always to encourage them to come to the Select Board meeting and voice their concerns. She added that she has never seen him make any inappropriate comments and she appreciates the photos he posts and information he shares on Facebook to let the Town know what work is being done.

• F. Muzzey reiterated that he does not like the politicization of the page and said the Board did not authorize the webpage. P. Manson informed the Board that every week since he started the page on June 5th he posts the Select Board meeting and asks that anyone with questions or concerns come to the meeting. P. Manson said that the Town of Wentworth page is a group he formed on his personal account and encouraged the Board to research the Town of Farmington vs the State of NH. M. Currier added that P. Manson is careful not to post any public opinions on the page and uses it purely on an informational basis. M. Currier also stated that the Town of Wentworth Forum page is also not approved by the Select Board.

• Motion to Adjourn. M. Currier motioned to adjourn. O. Ahern seconded the motion. All voted yes. Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Tanya Vela
Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

Chairperson, M. Currier  Board Member, F. Muzzey  Board Member, O. Ahern, Jr.