

**Wentworth Select Board  
Working Meeting Minutes  
January 7, 2020**

**Select Board Present:** Francis Muzzey, Omer C. Ahern, Jr., and Palmer Koelb

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Muzzey called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. Forty-three people present.

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to seal the minutes of the previously conducted nonpublic session. P. Koelb seconded the motion. F. Muzzey voted yes. P. Koelb voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. **Motion passed.**

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Privilege of the Floor.** O. Ahern asked for an opportunity to speak and took a moment to thank everyone for all the cards, prayers and kind wishes he received during his hospitalization and early stages of his recovery.

**Highway Department Budget Report** (All present were given a copy of the budget)

**First Warrant Article for York Rake Broom.**

F. Muzzey informed the Highway Road Agent, P. Manson, that he had gone through his budget extensively and noted that in addition to his budget, P. Manson was proposing two Warrant Articles, one having to do with a York rake broom. He asked P. Manson to describe the issue.

P. Manson referenced the information about the broom that he had printed off and given to the Select Board and explained to those present that the Town was in dire need of a broom to tow behind the truck. He described it as a 2-speed hydraulic broom costing "\$16,000 and some change". The broom is interchangeable. It comes off with two pins and a 10-foot York rake goes on it. It takes 10-15 minutes max, to go from a broom to a York rake.

P. Koelb commented that the Town used to have a York rake. P. Manson agreed and said the Town has an old one which was worn out and needed axles, which can be replaced, stating that he intended to use the old York rake behind one of the bigger trucks, because it is a manual one. He added that he had used it all year but that it had not been used in about five or six years.

F. Muzzey said that previously the Town had a broom that went on the front of the backhoe. P. Manson said it was down at the shop but was not something to sweep the roads with. At best, it held maybe two wheelbarrows and sweeps the debris into a little container. P. Manson said he did not know the Road Agent who had bought it but it was something that might be used in the Town Common to pick up material as you go instead of sweeping it off the road.

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F. Muzzey asked if it was more desirable to use a broom that swept debris off the side of the road if the Road Agent had to go back to pick it up. P. Manson explained that they do not pick up debris off the road, it is normally swept off the side of the road.

F. Muzzey then informed everyone that he had presented P. Manson with a rewording of the Warrant Article and invited him to take his time to look over it.

P. Manson then discussed raising of the Highway's main budget by \$8,000 and explained why he wanted to take the \$8,000 out of a particular line item. He informed the Board that his goal in 2020 was to ditch all the paved roads and some of the gravel roads that got ditches. Since P. Manson does not have a broom, he would have to rent one, which was why that line item was so expensive. That line item (4312.04.0) was also for roadside mowing and similar maintenance.

### **Second Warrant Article for Paving.**

F. Muzzey discussed the second warrant article to appropriate \$135,421 for the purpose of paving Red Oak Hill and a portion of the road in front of 'King's Lumber' (about 400 feet of rough-going), and added that when appropriated, \$45,421.00 would come from the Road Paving Capital Reserve Fund and the rest was to be raised in taxation. P. Manson added that he intended to use \$50,000.00 from line item, 4312.09.

P. Manson informed the Board that he had obtained pricing for paving this year and that he understands it is expensive, but it is necessary. He said the road would last a long time if it is graded and compacted the right way, with a two-inch base coat and a one-inch topcoat. F. Muzzey asked if the road would have to be re-sealed in another year or two and P. Manson said no since it would have the base and topcoat. P. Manson added that if the road was not paved, it would have to be turned into a gravel road at some point and he estimated the cost of that to be about \$40,000.

F. Muzzey said that there were only two other items that he had questions about: Salaries for Highway Employees ("the top item") and Magnesium Chloride.

**Magnesium Chloride.** F. Muzzey informed the public that there had been a presentation about the use of Magnesium Chloride during a previous Select Board meeting and stated that his only reason for questioning the amount (line item 4312.09X) was because he thought it might need to be doubled.

**Salaries for Highway Employees.** Resident and Town Moderator, Steve Welch asked the Board if there was enough money in this budget to allow the Road Agent to have enough employees to do the job that he needs to do. F. Muzzey said that the question fell under the salaries and personnel and would probably require a separate meeting with Paul alone for a nonpublic session because he would be talking about personnel. Another resident pointed out that at this point they would only be talking about numbers, not people. S. Welch said his personal thought was that the Board ought to let P. Manson come to the Town Meeting with that budget and if the payroll is to be cut, then the Board ought to let the Townspeople decide it, not the Select Board.

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The Chairman acknowledged O. Ahern, who said that when he ran for office, he ran for office saying, "We have to be careful with the people's money." He said that the taxpayers pay a lot in taxes and that his priority was the taxpayers. O. Ahern has been involved with budgets in several different settings and said that we need to differentiate among needs, wants and desires, pointing out that the Road Agent had done an amazing job with the budget that he had to work with and that he understood that the previous Select Board had cut the highway budget pretty significantly. He said P. Manson had done a tremendous job with what he had and even turned back a surplus to the Town as of the first of January. O. Ahern said he agreed 100% with all those present who feel the Road Agent has done a tremendous job and has no problem at all with what the Road Agent was doing with the town roads. He also added that he (O. Ahern) was one of the ones who had voted for the third highway employee.

O. Ahern informed everyone that the situation was such that P. Manson had done a great job with less money than what the previous Road Agent had. At this point a resident made a comment about the Board needing to do what the Town's people would like done with that money. O. Ahern continued and said their job and obligation was to look at the numbers, talk with the Road Agent and present a budget to the Town Meeting and then the Town Meeting will make its decision, a unique process of New Hampshire Town Meetings. The Townspeople, with the help of the Town Moderator, will be able to discuss their concerns, make motions to add things back in, make motions to take things out, but that the Select Board, as he understands it, has an obligation to present a total complete budget for the Townspeople to consider. There will be Warrant Articles that people are going to present and those are all going to be considered and discussed by the Town.

The Chairman acknowledged resident, Ray Welch, and invited him to speak. R. Welch said with all due respect, the Board does have a duty to present the budget, but would argue that the man who should choose that budget is probably the one who designed the budget and the one who is going to have to work with that budget. He said if Mr. Manson believes that he needs three people, he probably needs it since he maintains the roads every day, adding that the reason P. Manson was hired was for his expertise in roads. R. Welch also pointed out that previous to Mr. Manson taking the Road Agent position, the Highway Department operated with two full-time employees and a full-time Road Agent, which he knew to be a fact. F. Muzzey commented that they did half the job and R. Welch agreed and asked if P. Manson was doing such a great job, why not reward him? F. Muzzey reminded R. Welch that they were just discussing the budget and reviewed the Warrant Articles. Another resident pointed out that F. Muzzey had said that he one of the things he had an issue with was the top item and asked where would that come in (for discussion). F. Muzzey agreed and said the Board hadn't talked about the numbers or where those numbers came from or what it involves.

B. Dubois asked F. Muzzey if after the Board meets with the Road Agent and he presents what he thinks he needs for money, and the Board presents the article for what the Board feels the Road Agent needs for wages for the employees working with the Road Agent, and if the public at the Town Meeting, don't feel there is enough money in there for wages and think maybe the Road Agent needs or that there should be a third full-time person in the Highway Dept, can the Townspeople make a motion on the floor? F. Muzzey said absolutely. Another resident clarified that the public can do that, but with a caveat: the public can dictate how much money is put in

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that budget but cannot dictate which line item that will serve. B. Dubois elaborated further on the Highway Dept budget and asked if he gets up at the Town Meeting and says for “x” number of dollars the third person we have should be a full-time employee, and the public is in agreement, could the Board say okay we’ll add the money but we’re not going to hire a third person. We’ll put the money somewhere else?

F. Muzzey responded to say that it was not likely, but that he was right. B. Dubois asked for a yes or no response and asked again if he made a motion, the Board didn’t necessarily have to hire a third person. F. Muzzey said it was true but not likely. P. Koelb assured B. Dubois that the Board tries to follow the wishes of the Town at the Town Meeting. B. Dubois went on and referenced the night they all discussed the hiring of the third person (Select Board meeting on Oct 15, 2019), and when O. Ahern said he was not really in favor of it, but he still listened to the many people who spoke in favor of it. B. Dubois then paraphrased what O. Ahern said about this being why America is the greatest country in the world because we have a Democracy and that he, as an elected official, was going to listen to the taxpayers – the constituents. If the people want a third person, then he was going to vote for a third person and B. Dubois applauded O. Ahern for making that decision. At that, B. Dubois summarized to the Board that he understood from what the Board had just said, that if such a motion is made, the Board does not have to but will probably go with what the Townspeople have requested. The Board said yes.

F. Muzzey informed everyone that they were listening to the first of three presentations of the budget. The second is a hearing required by law, 14 days before the March meeting and the third will be right at the Annual Meeting floor and that S. Welch will be sure to call on B. Dubois.

F. Muzzey then discussed with the public when the budget meeting should take place and said the Board would inform the Town of that date. He then acknowledged S. Welch and invited him to speak.

S. Welch asked everyone to keep in mind that when they vote on the Highway budget, they vote a bottom line on this budget, whatever that number happens to be. He added that, as evidenced by this past year, money got pulled from different line items when P. Manson had to replace a truck. Since that can happen, the townspeople needed to keep that in mind also. The public votes a total budget, not the items one by one. The only way that anything can change would be to specifically vote out a line item. It would take a full vote from the Town. If the public votes out a line item, the Town cannot fund it any other way. Resident A. Patten (?) asked if it was true that the public cannot reduce a line item, they can only zero it. S. Welch said he believed so but would have to check. F. Muzzey added that from his experience, when money has been raised in a budget, there has always been a good faith effort to budget items where they go.

F. Muzzey acknowledged resident, Donna King, who asked about the budget hearings and when they would be posted on the Town website so that people could plan their schedules. F. Muzzey replied that State Law states that the latest date the Town could have the hearing was February 14<sup>th</sup>, but that the budget hearing had not been posted because the Board had not decided on the exact date yet and that they have to notify everyone about the hearing seven days before the hearing. A discussion ensued about when would be the best date to schedule the budget hearing, so that it does not interfere with the Presidential Primary.

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F. Muzzey acknowledged fellow Board member, O. Ahern, who said that an issue of concern was the hiring of a third person for the Highway Dept. When it was presented to the Board by the Road Agent, it was basically for the employee to be there for the winter and to make sure the roads were plowed, especially during the week when the school buses would be picking up the children. He referenced the incident that occurred with one of the buses last year, which influenced his decision. O. Ahern stated that in his review of the minutes, the request for the third person was basically during the wintertime. He said that part of his thought process was the understanding that the third person would not be a full-time employee for the entire year. The Board asked the Road Agent to look at other possibilities, such as sub-contractors. O. Ahern said that he would still like the Road Agent to explore these options. He said that P. Manson and highway employee, John Corso do a great job in the summertime when things are not quite as hectic, but he believes the need is in the wintertime to make sure the roads are safe for the school buses.

F. Muzzey asked P. Manson what the hourly wage (something about numbers 2 and 3?). P. Manson said that combined it was \$37/hour. P. Koelb asked if that number represented wages or cost. P. Manson replied that it was wages.

The Chairman acknowledged resident, Kay Bailey who said she wanted to ask a question that she did not see in the budget nor did she know if it would be in a warrant article. She said she did not want the Highway Department to lose sight of the bridges. P. Manson assured her that he had not. K. Bailey asked the Fire Department Chief, Jeff Ames what the current situation was with the bridges. J. Ames said the process is in place and that to his understanding, working with the Board and having just worked with Paul Hatch from the State on Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, the information has to be put out for the Engineers for a design of the bridge. From there, the Select Board and Road Agent need to look at the information and make a choice as to who the Town would use for the construction.

K. Bailey asked if the Town needed anything in the budget for that – a warrant article? P. Manson said that the next step was for the Town to put out a request for qualifications for a company to design the bridge but that the chances of anything happening with the bridges in 2020 is zero. K. Bailey asked if there was money in the budget for the design. P. Manson said that money would not be coming out of the Highway Dept's budget and was not sure what budget item the Board would use for that. ??--> F. Muzzey clarified that it did have to do with P. Manson for the simple reason that he would have to have the authority to spend, so the money would have to be in his budget. He mentioned \$12,000 in the Highway budget.

P. Manson brought up the two bridges that need to be rebuilt: Saunders Hill and Ellsworth Hill because they're rotting. K. Bailey asked what happened to Rowentown and Frescoln Bridges and said that those were the two bridges she was referring to because the Town is getting funding for those. J. Ames said that is in process. The Select Board has new information and needs to get that information to the design engineers of the bridges, which is good to do during the winter months. Once the Board gets the information back in, they can work with the Road Agent as to what direction they want to go for a bridge. He agreed with P. Manson in that he does not think it will happen during this next incoming year, but there is a process in place. K. Bailey asked if the

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Town would lose the funding and J. Ames replied that as long as the Town keeps going with the process, we will not lose the funding.

F. Muzzey reminded everyone that the Town has a 75% reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and 80% of the remaining balance from the State, if we're in that program, adding that the Town's bridge replacement cost could be approximately \$5000 per hundred – a deal for replacing bridges. P. Manson added that it was for the Frescoln Road Bridge only.

P. Manson said that if the Board was going to put money in his budget for that, a good guess for the design and other associated fees, depending on the request for qualifications that the Town puts out, would be \$40,000 for an engineering company to design it and build it.

F. Muzzey asked P. Manson if he felt the Board had presented his budget to the extent that he hoped they would. P. Manson said he thought so. F. Muzzey then asked the public if there were any other questions because if not, they needed to move on to other business. There were none, so he wrapped up the Highway budget briefing and reminded everyone that keep their eyes and ears open for when the hearing is because it will give them another opportunity to question and critique and it will be the last time the Board can change the whole budget before the Town Meeting.

A resident asked what the budget was for legal fees for the Town and what it cost to have a lawyer come out to the Town. F. Muzzey said that the Board had not gotten the bill yet. The resident said that it was an expensive item for taxpayers.

D. King asked if the Board had done its office budget yet and F. Muzzey said yes and that the Municipal budget was the first one presented – three to four weeks ago. The other budget from the Town Clerk/Tax Collector had not been presented yet.

The Chairman acknowledged a resident who informed everyone that the school budget hearing is February 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the school.

F. Muzzey answered D. King's question and said that the general municipal budget so far presented was \$257,307.00 and expects another \$57,475.00 to be added on to that for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, which is pretty much a zeroing of the budget because it did not go up that much.

The Chairman asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

P. Manson informed the Townspeople that unfortunately the third highway employee had given his notice and would be leaving on Friday. A resident asked why he was leaving the job and another resident said it was because he expected steady hours. P. Manson agreed.

The Chairman acknowledged another resident (Jenna/Jennifer?) who said she wanted to speak on P. Manson's behalf and add to the fact that the Town has well over 40 miles of road of dirt road

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and requires year-round maintenance – winter, spring, summer and fall. She said the Town requires a full team - full staff of three people that need to take care of these roads.

Another resident (A. Patten?) asked to add on to what Jen said and informed the Board that several times last winter, he had ended up going out with his own plow and sand trucks to maintain the icy roads and to help get trucks up to the mill. He said the Town had three people working last winter and they had a hard time keeping up with the roads.

The Chairman asked if anyone else had a comment and B. Dubois said he seconded what Jen said. With the dirt roads and flash flooding over the past several years, the Town really has to keep up with them – filling in the potholes, grade them out and really stay on top of them.

The Chairman said the Board needed to move on to other matters and asked if he was being disrespectful to anybody. P. Manson and others said no. P. Manson then excused himself. The Chair informed everyone that it was not the end of the meeting, just the presentation of the Highway budget. P. Manson thanked everyone and the residents applauded him. O. Ahern said it was good to see everyone there and thanked them for attending.

#### **Administrative Business.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion that the Board approve the refund request as presented by the Tax Collector, Deb Ziembra, to the Board for a Veteran's Tax Credit to be refunded to the individual. P. Koelb seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board reviewed an application for a Driveway Permit and informed everyone that when the Board receives this application, the first thing they need to do is send the Road Agent out to investigate the need for a culvert and to see if there is approximately 200 feet of visibility in both directions, in order to accommodate safety. As a result, the Chair recommended waiting to sign the request until they received the Road Agent's input.

The Board reviewed a request for an abatement of a \$10.00 penalty fee for a resident who had not returned the PA-28 Inventory of Taxable Property form on or before the due date of April 15, 2019. The Board discussed how the possibility of extenuating circumstances may prevent someone from returning the form by the due date, but none were presented to the Board. J. Ames informed the Board that he was penalized one year when he accidentally returned his inventory late and it would set a precedent if the Board made an exemption. The Board discussed this and agreed.

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion that the Board not approve the abatement request. P. Koelb seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board reviewed two invoices relating to groundwater testing where the landfill used to be (now the Transfer Station) – one from McGibbon Environmental, LLC for \$990.00 and one from Eastern Analytical for \$862.00. O. Ahern was concerned whether the charge was a violation of Article 28-A of the NH Constitution and whether the State Government was imposing an obligation on the Town, Municipality or County, after a certain date, that the State should be

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funding. O. Ahern suggested the Town call to the Dept of Environmental Services (DES) because the Town wants to cooperate with the State and make sure all the environmental needs are addressed. The Board decided to hold off paying the invoices until the appropriate phone calls could be made, in order to clarify the reason and necessity for the testing.

The Board reviewed two approvals from DES for Individual Sewage Disposal Systems (ISDS).

The Board reviewed an email from a resident asking the Town to furnish a letter to a bank stating that the Town has no zoning laws. The Administrative Assistant (AA) said she had a template for a standard letter from the Town stating that Wentworth has no zoning laws and could easily generate a letter to the resident. The Board said yes. O. Ahern asked the AA and the Board if they minded if he reached out to the resident via telephone and no one objected.

The AA informed the Board that she had received several similar requests in the past along with requests asking about the location of certain floodplains in Town, which she had spoken with F. Muzzey about the previous week.

The Chairman acknowledged that the Board had received seven emails from residents complimenting the Highway Road Agent's job performance.

#### **Old Business.**

Cell Tower Complaint. The Chairman reviewed the complaint the Town had received from William and Debra (sp?) Allen, Vivian Bates (sp?) and Randall Kimball regarding the Cell Tower being built next to their property. F. Muzzey summarized the assistance he had provided to the Allens and the Board's advice that these residents seek independent private legal counsel since the Town has no authority on the matter.

O. Ahern asked Chief Trott to recount the chain of events beginning in December 2018 when Industrial Tower and Wireless, LLC. (ITW) first briefed the Select Board as a courtesy (due to no zoning in the Town of Wentworth) up until the present time when the complaint was filed. F. Muzzey said all the parties had acted pleasantly and that he had spent several hours with the Allens trying to help them find information on the subdivision and other relevant documents.

F. Muzzey agreed with the other Board members that the Town had done their due diligence and did not need to do anything further except send the residents a courtesy letter informing them that the Town had made some phone calls and had not had much success in finding the answers to the questions they asked, but have been told that it was not a matter of enforceability by the Select Board. P. Koelb said he would refer the residents to the deed and F. Muzzey said he had done that. There was further discussion about whether it was clear in the deed whether the property was residential or not. O. Ahern identified some of the legal processes that might be involved and agreed with the Chairman emphasizing that if the company (ITW) went to the right State Agencies and got permission then there might be more to this matter, unknown to the Select Board; therefore, it might be necessary for the affected residents to do their due diligence on the matter.

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One resident reminded the Board that a similar situation arose when residents spoke out against the building of the Dollar General, but due to their being no zoning in Wentworth, it had been a moot point, much like this issue. Another resident acknowledged that the point remained that this was not a Select Board issue. F. Muzzey agreed but said that the residents did deserve to receive a response from the Board and asked the AA to draft a letter for the Board to sign at the next meeting.

### **Reports of Town Officials.**

#### **Administrative Assistant.**

Tanya Vela announced that all of the Select Board Meeting Minutes from 2019 were now available in a binder in the Select Board office, adding that many are in draft form, but all were available to the public. The Select Board decided not to post the Minutes online until they were finalized and signed by the Board, which they planned to do in the coming weeks. F. Muzzey informed everyone that T. Vela had been given the challenge to complete all the Minutes by Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, and had thought that the task might be insurmountable due to all that needed to get done, but she had worked until 11pm the night prior and completed the task by Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. O. Ahern added that T. Vela had worked the past 5-6 nights in a row and the Board congratulated her on getting the job done.

#### **Public Comments.**

None.

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. P. Koelb seconded the motion. F. Muzzey voted yes. P. Koelb voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. **Entered nonpublic session at 6:44 p.m.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to leave nonpublic session and return to public session. P. Koelb seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**

#### **Public session reconvened at 6:48 p.m.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to seal the minutes of the just finished nonpublic session because it is determined that divulgence of this information would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board. P. Koelb seconded the motion. F. Muzzey voted P. Koelb voted yes. F. Muzzey voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. **Motion passed.**

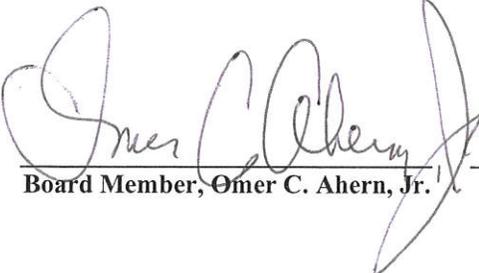
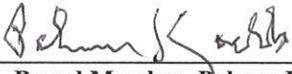
The Board discussed scheduling a meeting to finalize their revision of the Employee Handbook. The AA said she would look at her calendar, speak with L. Franz and P. Manson and obtain three dates for the Board to choose from. F. Muzzey commented that he would appreciate L. Franz and P. Manson's input, but does not want to impose on their time if they have other work to be done. The AA said she would also reach out to the Deborah Ziemba and Randy Rugar but that R.

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Rugar had not been able to make it in the past due to work. She also reminded the Board that D. Ziemba was working by herself and had a lot on her plate.

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to adjourn the meeting. P. Koelb seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.**

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

 _____ Chairperson, Francis Muzzey	 _____ Board Member, Omer C. Ahern, Jr.	 _____ Board Member, Palmer Koelb
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**Wentworth Select Board  
Working Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2020**

**Select Board Present:** Francis Muzzey, Omer C. Ahern, Jr., and Palmer Koelb

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Muzzey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

The Chair notified the public that the Select Board meeting was being recorded live by resident, Andrew Lasser.

**Budget Briefing - Town Clerk/Tax Collector (Deborah Ziemba)**

D. Ziemba handed out her budget sheet and the Board reviewed it and positively noted that it had come in \$1000 under last year's budget. The Chair opened up the floor to questions/comments.

O. Ahern noticed that line items (4140.1, Supplies/Postage) had gone down and D. Ziemba explained that she had some rolls of postage leftover, so it helped her lower that portion a little bit to help save the taxpayers some money. O. Ahern commented that with the use of electronic mail, he thought there would be a reduction in the cost of postage, but D. Ziemba explained that she still had an obligation to mail out certain documents out via certified mail.

There were no other questions or comments. The Board thanked D. Ziemba for her briefing.

The Board discussed some figures with the Bookkeeper, Linda Franz.

**Budget Briefing – Fire Chief (Jeffrey Ames)**

J. Ames presented his budget for 2020, which will remain the same as last year's budget: \$41,250. \$2500 will come from the unexpended fund balance and the remaining \$38,750 will come from general taxation.

J. Ames informed the Board that he tried hard to keep the budget the same as last year but pointed out the increase in communication due to the increase the Fire Dept received from their dispatch center (Lakes Region Dispatch). The Fire Dept said they also do training with the Lakes Region Medical Center.

P. Koelb said he had always been impressed with the work of the Fire Dept and thanked J. Ames and the entire department for their service.

O. Ahern asked if it was possible for the Fire Dept to take donations. J. Ames discussed the a fund where some proceeds from Old Home Day are received and he gave an example of how the

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Fire Dept was able to use that money to buy a thermal imaging camera (\$8500). The Board asked if it was possible for the FD to take donations and J. Ames said the fund is called the Wentworth Fireman's Fund.

Janice Thompson commented that the Fire Dept was losing members and asked how many firefighters they had. F. Ames responded and added that some had moved out of town, which is why the incentive pay dropped. The Board thanked the Fire Chief.

A. Lasser read some of the online comments about the necessity of upgrading communications in the Town Offices and they briefly discussed the issue.

F. Muzzey mentioned that the Historical Society was going to be putting a new roof on the building and discussed the associated warrant article. F. Muzzey said the warrant articles were not even close to being complete at this time, but everyone would get a copy at the hearing. He asked everyone to just understand that nothing is final.

FM discussed possible dates for the next Budget Meeting and the need to plan for dates to fall back on in case of inclement weather. Possibly January 10<sup>th</sup> at 5 or 5:30pm.

#### **Administrative Business.**

The Board reviewed the Intent to Cut for Reed and all signed the form. (17:43)

The Board reviewed the Abatement recommendation from Avitar and approved it. The Administrative Assistant will type it up for their signature.

**5:52 Motion.** F. Muzzey made a motion that the Board approve the land use change tax. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion.** F. Muzzey made a motion to approve the Tax Collector's request for a refund to a resident. O. Ahern seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Administrative Assistant responded to J. Thompson's question about taxing recreational vehicles.

**Public Comments.** P. Koelb said he received a call from Dr. A. Scheller informing him that the the movement of the electric poles would be done at no cost, but that the Co-op would be charging a fee. A. Lasser informed the Board that the Co-op had had issues with the Town in the past, so are hesitant to tackle the project. F. Muzzey said he did not remember a prior issue and K. Bailey informed him it had been with the bridge, when the Co-op was stuck in the middle of that. A discussion ensued about ownership of public property. K. Bailey asked where the poles were going to be moved and A. Lasser responded to say that there was going to be a meeting about it.

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**Motion.** F. Muzzey made a motion for the Board to authorize P. Koelb to call the phone company to address any possible reduction in cost of moving the phone lines. O. Ahern seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Police Department.**

Chief Trott began by first handing a corrected copy of his budget to the Board and informed them he had presented it as \$2000 less than what it was and that it had been done in error, so he wanted to ensure they all were aware. He also informed the Board that there had been an increase of \$402 due to the same increase in communications as the Fire Chief had just briefed the Board about, due to the increase in communications cost by Lakes Region Dispatch, otherwise Chief Trott would be flatlining the budget with everything he had control over. The Board thanked the Chief.

### **Theft of Monies from Trustees of the Trust Fund**

Chief Trott the Grafton County Attorney, Marcie Hornick for being present and read a prepared report detailing an investigation begun in 2019 by the Wentworth Police Dept and the Grafton County Attorney's Office with some assistance by the Attorney General's Office regarding the misappropriation of one specific fund in excess of \$80,000.

After eight months in an investigation that is nearing completion, but they have elected this time to share this information with the Wentworth community for the purposes of transparency and due to various inquiries. While the Board was aware of the situation to some extent, but only with what the police and attorney's office had been able to share due to the fact that it was an active investigation. There were some things that they could and could not share. Chief then turned over the briefing to M. Hornick.

M. Hornick thanked the chief, introduced herself again and said she would be able to tell everyone what had been filed and made part of the public record, which was that she had "filed a Class A Felony Complaint which was signed by Charles "Chip" Stata and his attorney, Bob Kerry and submitted to Grafton County Superior Court on December 20, 2019 alleging that he was being charged with purposely obtaining property to wit United States currency in an amount in excess of \$80,000 from the Town of Wentworth, specifically the Town of Wentworth Land Fill Closure Account, in his capacity as the Town of Wentworth Treasurer of the Trust Funds. He was subject to a legal obligation to make specified payments in regard to the disposition of said funds and purposely failed to make the said payments and/or the disposition of said funds, dealt with the property obtained as his own by placing the said funds in his personal accounts."

M. Hornick informed everyone that they have received a notice of intent to plead guilty, but it had not been filed yet. She relayed her discussions regarding accountability, sentencing and paramount to all: repayment to the Town. M. Hornick then opened up the floor to questions she could answer without going too far into the evidence until such time as the case is resolved.

J. Thompson asked how the money would be paid back to the town and M. Hornick said the Town's insurance company (Primex - whose services many towns use) would be making the

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payment. M. Hornick clarified that she is unable to say for sure but hopes that the deductible (\$1000) is paid to the Town first and then the rest.

F. Muzzey asked for the exact amount. M Hornick said it was \$84,394.65 and does not include anticipated.

A. Lasser asked what the maximum penalty was for doing something like this, keeping in mind that the goal, by his assumption, is to get the money back. M. Hornick said that for a Class A Felony – how she has charged it – the potential penalty is 7.5 to 15 years in State Prison. Martha Morrill commented that the sentence was pretty bad for someone having kids at home. M. Hornick explained that the sentencing scheme set up by the legislature that allows the court discretion, but that amount of time applies to this type of crime and this amount of money; however, it is a potential penalty, not mandatory. Chief Trott said to keep in mind that this was the *maximum* sentence and could be from zero to that. Chief reiterated that both he and M. Hornick have been in touch with Cassandra (Primex representative) and the Crane & Bell and that they know what the exact amount is and are all working on the paperwork so that they can complete all that is needed to be done on our end.

F. Muzzey discussed with M. Hornick the future disposition of the funds to be refunded to the Town and M. Hornick said she would research the answer to some of his questions about where the funds would be put, but cautioned the Board not to make plans now as there may be requirements from each of those funds.

F. Muzzey asked M. Hornick when the money would be refunded and she said that if the court case scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup> goes as anticipated and resolves that day, then ideally it would not be long after that, but it would be up to Primex.

F. Muzzey discussed the need for the town to create a warrant article in order to decide what to do with that money and would need to know by the tentative hearing date of February 10<sup>th</sup>. He asked if she would advise the Board to put off the decision for a year, based on the fact that there was a crowd of things that needed to be done. M. Hornick said she's not sure she would advise waiting a year and he said then that might mean having a special meeting. P. Koelb said the thought the Town ought to make provisions for it *now*.

O. Ahern said he was concerned about the other expenses incurred by the Town and the County Attorney's office. He asked Chief Trott if he worked overtime and Chief said that he does not get paid overtime and while the situation was labor and time intensive, he believed (and asked M. Hornick to correct him if he was wrong) that there were certain things in statutes that they would not be able to recoup, as this is one's job, profession and what they do. He added that there are some expenses that could be recouped in a civil court cannot be recouped in a criminal court and not always in a case such as this. Chief gave the example of recouping interest on monies that one may have been able to obtain if that money were to have remained in that account – restitution for something like that. M. Hornick explained that necessarily means restitution is a very specific loss incurred and when she discussed some of these things with the Board during her last visit, they discussed that particular issue and whether certain costs incurred by the Town

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could be offset somehow as part of plea negotiations, whether by community service or something else by C. Stata. M. Hornick reminded the Board that once the paperwork filed is received and becomes a public document, she can discuss this issue more thoroughly.

F. Muzzey asked for clarification about whether the money would go back into the Capital Reserve Fund, but M. Hornick said she would have to get back to him on that particular question since her focus is on criminal law.

Kay Bailey asked M. Hornick what her advice to the town would be to prevent this from happening and referenced a statute 31:34 in her efforts to look at the books and others who have been trying to look at the trust funds for more than five or six years. M. Hornick said it was a good question and since this town isn't the only town in the state that has had to go through something like this, it made sense to her that she or the head of the Select Board contact a lawyer from the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) to ask what other towns do and/or to reach out to other Select Boards of other larger and smaller towns to speak to them about this. She also suggested dispatching a study committee to go out and ask what they can do to prevent this from happening. M. Hornick said that she does the same thing in her office if something comes up that she is not quite sure about. She checks what other county attorney offices do.

M. Hornick said that she is happy to come back when she can to try and explain this and the Chairman's questions, if she can and when she can once this is resolved to try and assist, but does not have the answers at this time, but reiterated her advice to reach out to companion towns to ask what they do.

F. Muzzey asked M. Hornick if there were any other capital reserve funds or otherwise in the Town of Wentworth that were touched in this process. M. Hornick said they did not find any other discrepancies.

Chief Trott also confirmed that this was the only account found with any concern or manipulation. He also took the opportunity to remind everyone about a presentation to the town by an accounting firm who said that they could take care of these accounts for a short period of time and give the Board a genuine authentic bottom number for each one of them. Chief said it was his understanding that this has always been the problem, at least in last 4-5 years, that the Town did not know what was really in those accounts for monies or where the dividends were going, etc. He added that the presentation was agreed upon but never made it to fruition. He suggested that the Board, with the Town's approval, look into those services to allow a firm and outside entity to look at each of the accounts for accuracy and provide another point of accountability and transparency, this way if a resident is looking for information, the Town can show it with nothing to hide.

There was further discussion about the vulnerabilities of the funds and reasons why this might have occurred. K. Bailey reiterated that there needs to be some sort of safeguard put in place at a higher level to protect the taxpayer's money. M. Morrill mentioned that one of the problems was having one Trustee for 20 years. People became very relaxed. She said having one person making the decisions made her very nervous.

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Linda Franz, as the current Treasurer of Trustees of the Trust Fund commented to say she hadn't been at liberty to give out any information about Chip but that the accounts are okay and the books are open now. Everything has been liquidated down into two steady income-producing accounts – one with PDIF (?) and one with Fidelity and that includes all of the Capital Reserves and the Plummer Trust. The books are open as of tonight and she provide any detail a resident wants to see: the checkbooks, the statements that match up, etc. L. Franz said that when she went to liquidate or sell off the shares they had, she was able to find the original stock certificates, so everything matched and monies that Chip said were there, were there, the correct number of shares dating way back to the 1970s. She said that it had been an extensive project and all was down to the penny.

J. Thompson asked what happened to the Bear Casey Financial Advisors that were hired by a previous Select Board. L. Franz said she put a stop to it as soon as they discovered some discrepancies in the land fill funds. She also clarified that there are no discrepancies in the Plummer Trust fund.

F. Muzzey asked if there were any other comments/questions and then thanked M. Hornick on behalf of the Board and the Town for coming in. He asked if there was going to be a report in a local paper. M. Hornick said she would be happy to come back and report to the Board, once other paperwork is filed and made public in order to help explain what is going to happen and then will put out a press report with their blessing.

M. Morrill took the opportunity to say that she wanted everyone to know that L. Franz had put in “hundreds of hours to clean up this mess” and “if it weren't for Linda...” M. Hornick agreed and Chief Trott said L. Franz had done a fantastic job in helping the town navigate through this. M. Morrill said Chief and Linda both. Chief Trott also acknowledged K. Bailey and J. Thompson who knew something was wrong and were persistent in their inquiries but respective of Chief being unable to give them any information up until this point. M. Hornick said that she had been looking forward to meeting L. Franz because she was grateful of all the time she had put into this case and that Wayne had spoken highly of her, as well as a someone at the Attorney General's office.

F. Muzzey reminded everyone that a lot of people had put in a lot of work and a lot of hours and thanked everyone again. M. Hornick added that the Commissioner she would be seeing O. Ahern tonight and had wanted to extend a special hello to him.

### **Public Hearing.**

**Motion.** F. Muzzey made a motion that the budget hearing be on Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m at Wentworth Elementary school (subject to availability). O. Ahern seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

*Handwritten signature*

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F. Muzzey reiterated that the notice needed to be posted seven days prior to the meeting – no later than February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Having the meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> will allow the town room to reschedule if there is inclement weather.

### **Reports of Town Officials.**

#### **Administrative Assistant.**

The AA asked who is on Conservation Committee per question from D. Ziamba. F. Muzzey said no one had volunteered to be an active part of the committee. Everyone present talked about who had been part of the committee in the past.

The AA then asked to schedule the next revision of the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Board agreed to meet for that meeting on Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.

P. Koelb informed everyone present that he, O. Ahern, Chief Trott, Chief Ames had been at the Hazard Mitigation Meeting Monday night, January 13<sup>th</sup> and that he found it extremely enlightening, interesting, educational and important. He said the meeting relates to things that happened in the town which sets a pattern of things that could happen in the future. He reminded everyone that the town also gets paid for every person that attends, so he encouraged anyone who had not been to consider coming to the next meeting scheduled for February 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Wentworth Elementary School. The two meetings after that are March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the school and March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. F. Muzzey thanked all who attended because the town had an excellent turnout. Chief Ames said he counted at least 15 people.

#### **New Business.**

F. Muzzey reviewed a Department of Revenue Administration report regarding local assessment values of municipalities. A long discussion ensued about real estate and sales in town.

#### **Old Business.**

F. Muzzey reviewed the application for a driveway permit and said to attach P. Manson's recommendation from January 10<sup>th</sup> to the permit. The Board discussed the expiration of permit and agreed on one year.

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to approve the driveway permit subject to the recommendation of the Wentworth Road Agent to expire on 14 January 2021. P. Koelb seconded the motion. All voted yes **Motion passed unanimously.**

F. Muzzey asked the AA if she had contacted the legal department for NHMA about the two invoices for groundwater testing and the AA said she had spoken to attorney, S. Buckley, who encouraged the Board pay the invoices for the landfill groundwater testing due to the fact that the testing was part of the requirements in closing the landfill to ensure that there was no leakage of hazardous material into the nearby water sources. A landfill is always a landfill and requires yearly testing for compliance.



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The Board discussed the Wentworth-Warren ambulance and said the next meeting on the topic would be Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. F. Muzzey asked if G. Morrill would be attending and to please let the Select Board know. O. Ahern said he had had a chance to utilize the services of the Wentworth-Warren Ambulance service and said they were "top notch and very professional". M. Morrill shared an experience she had had and added that they were very good to have when you need somebody. The Board discussed who the members were and also discussed the co-pay and other details associated with the ambulance service.

**Nonpublic Session.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. P. Koelb seconded the motion. F. Muzzey voted yes. P. Koelb voted yes. O. Ahern voted yes. **Entered nonpublic session at 7:40 p.m.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to leave nonpublic session and return to public session. P. Koelb seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**

**Public session reconvened at 8:16 p.m.**

**Motion.** O. Ahern made a motion to seal the minutes of the just finished nonpublic session because it is determined that divulgence of this information would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board. P. Koelb seconded the motion. O. Ahern voted yes P. Koelb voted yes. F. Muzzey voted yes. **Motion passed.**

The Board discussed R. Rugar's concern about the muddiness of the Transfer Station.

**Motion.** P. Koelb made a motion to ask the Road Agent to provide a solution to the dump mud problem to the Board in writing as soon as possible, along with the associated costs. O. Ahern seconded. All voted yes. **Motion passed.**

F. Muzzey asked the AA to mention to P. Manson that he has 30-ft long telephone poles for Buffalo Road that the former Road Agent, Kevin Gilbert gave him.

F. Muzzey said that if anyone asks Tanya to do something, she should not do it unless the Board tells her and said it was important for her to focus on their priorities first.

The Board discussed the need for R. Rugar's new employee to attend training and directed the AA to call the Department of Environmental Service to find out a date and cost for the new dump attendant to attend a licensing class as this is in the best interest of the Town.



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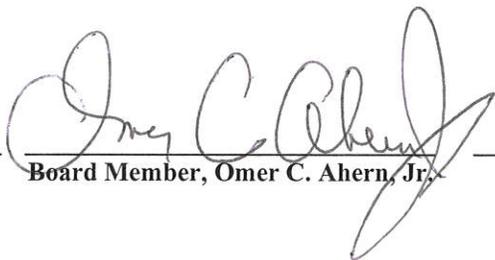




The Board briefly discussed options and possibilities for hiring a third person for the highway department. O. Ahern and P. Koelb said they would each make a phone call to individuals who may be able to do the job.

**Motion.** F. Muzzey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. O. Ahern seconded the motion. All voted yes. **Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.**

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

		
Chairperson, Francis Muzzey	Board Member, Omer C. Ahern, Jr.	Board Member, Palmer Koelb

**Wentworth Select Board  
Working Meeting Minutes  
January 16, 2020**

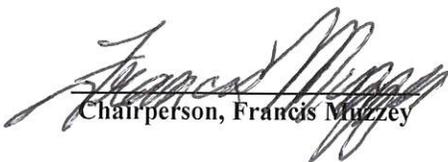
**Call to Order:** Chairperson Muzzey called the meeting to order at 1:30p.m.

**Select Board Present:** Francis Muzzey, Omer C. Ahern, Jr., Palmer Koelb

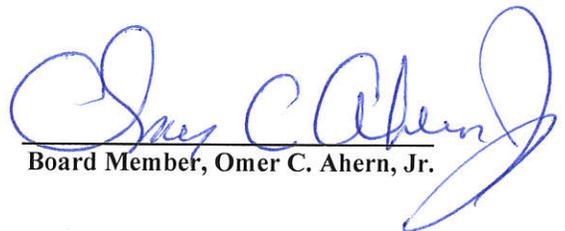
**Staff/Officials Present:** Chief of Police - Wallace Trott, Bookkeeper - Linda Franz and Highway Road Agent - Paul Manson

**Public Present:** None

- The Select Board conducted a meeting to revise the Town Personnel Policy & Employee Handbook. Under the section titled "Hiring of Relatives", employment of any relatives will include any elected town official and Selectboard members.
- Chief Trott delivered a letter of resignation from Tanya Vela, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen.
- Omer C. Ahern, Jr. made a motion to enter into a nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.* Palmer Koelb seconded the motion. FG voted "yes", PK voted "yes", OA voted "yes". All voting "yes" the MOTING CARRIED. The meeting moved into Nonpublic Session at 2:15pm.

  
Chairperson, Francis Muzzey

  
Board Member, Palmer Koelb

  
Board Member, Omer C. Ahern, Jr.

**Wentworth Select Board  
Emergency Meeting Minutes  
January 16, 2020**

**Call to Order:** The meeting returned to public session at 3:23pm.

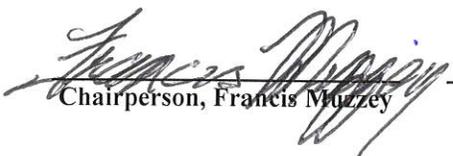
**Select Board Present:** Francis Muzzey, Omer C. Ahern, Jr., Palmer Koelb

**Staff/Officials Present:** Bookkeeper - Linda Franz

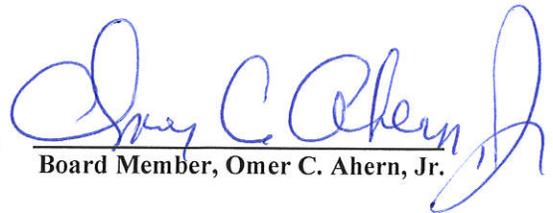
**Public Present:** None

- Motion made by Palmer Koelb to accept the resignation of Town Administrative Assistant. Seconded by Omer C. Ahern, Jr. All voted yes, motion carries.
- Motion made by Omer C. Ahern, Jr. to hire Linda Franz as the Interim Administrative Assistant to serve in such capacity through Town Meeting or until a permanent Administrative Assistant is hired by the Selectboard. Seconded by Palmer Koelb. All voted yes, motion carries.
- Motion made by Palmer Koelb to seal the minutes of the January 16, 2020 nonpublic session. Seconded by Omer C. Ahern, Jr. All voted yes, motion carries.
- Motion made by Omer C. Ahern, Jr. to adjourn meeting. Seconded by Palmer Koelb. All voted yes, meeting was adjourned at 3:35pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Linda Franz  
Interim Administrative Assistant

  
Chairperson, Francis Muzzey

  
Board Member, Palmer Koelb

  
Board Member, Omer C. Ahern, Jr.

TOWN OF WENTWORTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 21, 2020

**Those present:** Omer C. Ahern, Jr., Palmer Koelb, Francis Muzzey, Chief Trott, Chief Ames, Paul Manson, Matt Barnard, Donna King, Corey Cormiea, George Morrill, Andrew Lasser, residents

**Called to Order:** Francis Muzzey, Chair Person, called the meeting to order at 5:07pm.

Matt Barnard presented an amended septic design for an auxiliary dwelling.

**Motion to accept and sign the amended design was made by F. Muzzey, seconded by O.Ahern. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve public meeting minutes from 11/12/19 was made by O.Ahern, seconded by F.Muzzey. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve non-public meeting minutes from 11/12/19 was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve public meeting minutes from 1/16/20 was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve non-public meeting minutes from 1/16/20 was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve emergency meeting minutes from 1/16/20 was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**At 5:28pm, F.Muzzey made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss an employee pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted, seconded by O.Ahern. F.Muzzy voted "yes", O.Ahern voted "yes", P.Koelb voted "yes". All three voted in the affirmative, and motion carried.***

Re-entered into public meeting at 5:53pm.

**F.Muzzey made a motion in the non-public session to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to approve and sign abatement request for Boucher was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

**Motion to accept and sign the boundary map for the U.S.Census Bureau was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

Letter from Grafton County regarding the Stata case was reviewed and briefly discussed. L.Franz to complete required forms with assistance from Chief Trott.

Notification from Grafton County regarding additional taxes was reviewed and briefly discussed.

F.Muzzey read a letter from Councilor Michael Cryans, member of the Executive Council.

J.Ames inquired about going forward with engineering of bridges. Could possibly lose funding if we don't show some progressive movement. P.Manson estimates each bridge engineering to cost between \$50,000-\$75,000. Suggested that a warrant article be written for this engineering, that will show that we are moving forward. Next step is to set up a meeting with Paul Hatch to discuss procedure. Meeting should include Select Board, J.Ames, W.Trott, P.Manson, L.Franz. P.Manson will forward email to L.Franz regarding Requisition for Qualification.

L.Franz spoke briefly about becoming Interim Administrative Assistant and asks for the public's patience over the next couple of months.

L.Franz to post notices and update town website regarding the upcoming budget meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm at the school.

P.Manson expressed concern about repairs needed for the International truck. He will get an estimate.

P.Manson expressed disappointment that expenses for bridge engineering came out of his 2019 budget. Funding came from Capital Reserve. Francis explained the process.

P.Manson informed the Select Board that the State of New Hampshire requires towns to have a "Winter Weather Policy" (RSA) in place to eliminate liability in case of an accident on town roads. To be addressed at a later date.

P.Manson inquired about hiring someone to plow snow. Select Board agreed to advertise for position. Advertisements to be placed in PennySaver, Record Enterprise, The Bridge Weekly, Face Book page, and town web site. Must include the statement "Select Board reserves the right to reject any and all applications".

Donna King previously proposed job sharing for the Administrative Assistant's position to F.Muzzey and P.Koelb. She submitted her application. Select Board informed her that they are working on a job description and will advise in the future after the Town Meeting.

**Motion made by O.Ahern to make an amendment to the 3/19/19 Select Board meeting minutes per request of a resident as follows: A resident made a Point of Order objecting to all the employees, residents and outgoing Selectmen discussing who should be chair of the incoming Board of Selectmen. The employees, because none of them were residents, and it is a conflict of interest. The residents and outgoing Selectmen, because it is unprecedented. Discussion of who the Chair of the Board of Selectmen is always done by the new board with public present and observing the process as it's done. F.Muzzey seconded. F.Muzzey voted "yes", O.Ahern voted "yes", and P.Koelb abstained. Motion carried 2-1.** *o uat  
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George Morrill and Corey Cormeia informed that the Ambulance Service is working on a presentation to the Select Board to explain cost increase for 2020, \$40,850 based on number of residents.

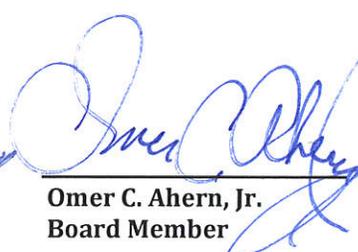
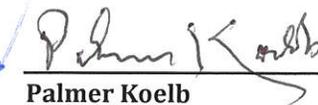
P.Koelb suggested a picture of the Town Hall and a short history, both provided by him be put on the front cover of the 2019 Annual Town Report. He received a favorable response.

F. Muzzey discussed various 2020 Warrant Articles. A draft copy may be obtained from the office for your review. Further discussion at budget meeting.

**P.Koelb made a motion to adjourn at 8:08pm. O.Ahern seconded, three voted "yes". Meeting adjourned.**

**F.Muzzey made a motion to end non-public session at 5:50pm. Seconded by O.Ahern. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted by:  
Linda Franz  
Interim Administrative Assistant

 Francis Muzzey, Chairperson	 Omer C. Ahern, Jr. Board Member	 Palmer Koelb Board Member
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**Wentworth Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
January 28, 2020**

**Those present:** Omer C. Ahern, Jr., Palmer Koelb, Francis Muzzey, Chief Trott, Chief Ames, Paul Manson, Donna King, George Morrill, Andrew Lasser, other residents

**Called to Order:** Francis Muzzey, Chair Person, called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Selectmen signed checks and approved Select Board meeting minutes for 4/19/19, 12/17/19, 1/21/20 and 1/21/20 non-public session.

**Motion to have F.Muzzey sign the Health Trust Authorized User Agreement to add Linda Franz and remove Tanya Vela from their portal as primary contact was made by O.Ahern, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

Intent to Cut submitted by Gilbert, Trustee for Baker Valley Community Land Trust was postponed until verification of authority to act on behalf of the trust. L.Franz to follow up.

Cohos Advisors letter to Grafton County regarding time line of events with a legal matter was approved with one minor change.,L.Franz will forward to Cohos for the record.

Application for Current Use submitted by Bouchers in December 2018 was not signed. L.Franz to follow up with applicant to see if the circumstances have changed or if they want us to move forward.

Avitar Mapping Services Agreement was signed by F.Muzzey.

Request for tax refund for Benson was approved and signed.

P.Manson updated Select Board about conversations and meeting with HEB Engineering representative, Chris Fournier regarding Frescoln and Cross Road Bridges. To move forward with the engineering of these projects, C.Fournier prepared three documents on the Town's behalf, a letter to NHDOT, Request for Qualifications, and an advertisement. Select Board requested that F.Muzzey sign letter and the Select Board be the main contact for communications as they are ultimately responsible. L.Franz will forward all communication to parties involved. L.Franz will make changes to documents and present for review and signature.

P.Manson informed that his previous estimate for the engineering on the two bridges would be in the vicinity of \$150,000. After contacting several engineering firms, he discovered that costs have increased dramatically. Total costs per bridge

could be in the \$700,000 to \$900,000 range. Town would have to find a way to pay as no advanced funding from FEMA and other agencies would be available until project is ready to go. All agreed to start process by sending the prepared letter to NHDOT and placing the advertisement. L.Franz to take these steps. P.Manson suggested to table further discussion on funding bridges as it will take some time to decide on an engineer.

Donna King presented a Petition for Warrant Article for video taping and Pemi-Baker TV for \$3,370. Costs were discussed, and the Select Board approved increasing amount of Petition to \$4,930 (\$90 per meeting up to 52 weeks plus \$250 for membership fee). Town will write the warrant article.

**Motion to write warrant article as stated in Petition with the increase to \$4930 was made by P.Koelb, seconded by O.Ahern. O.Ahern called the question, three voted "yes" and motion carried.**

Donna King presented a Petition for Warrant Article to hire a third Highway Department employee for \$40,000 salary. Warrant Article 4 will be reduced by 40,000 and a new Warrant Article for \$40,000 as stated in Petition will be created. L.Franz to provide costs for benefits for third employee and present at February 10, 2020 budget hearing.

Regarding a previous complaint from resident about cell tower construction, the Select Board advised that the Town cannot assist due to there being no zoning in the town. Resident may have to pursue a civil suit. L.Franz to reply to resident follow-up request.

A.Lasser made a public comment that he was doing some research on internet service providers regarding expanding physical internet infrastructure in town. He suggested that it may be effecting economic development in town as some potential home purchasers are discouraged by lack of dependable internet service. He is also looking into grant funding.

**At 7:43pm, O.Ahern made a motion to go into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(b) *The hiring of any person as a public employee*, seconded by P.Koelb. F.Muzzy voted "yes", O.Ahern voted "yes", P.Koelb voted "yes". All three voted in the affirmative, and motion carried.**

Re-entered into public meeting at 8:03 pm.

**Motion was made by O.Ahern to seal the minutes of the non-public meeting above, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes", and motion carried.**

Tanya Vela requested of the Select Board that her letter of resignation be made public.

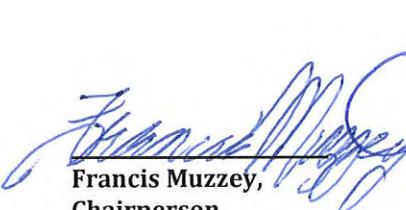
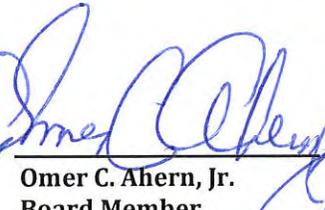
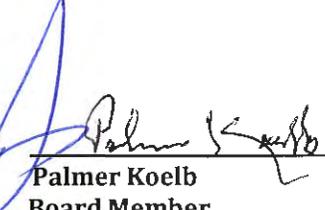
At 8:08pm, O.Ahern made a motion to go into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant*, seconded by P.Koelb. F.Muzzy voted "yes", O.Ahern voted "yes", P.Koelb voted "yes". All three voted in the affirmative, and motion carried.

Re-entered into public meeting at 8:26pm.

Motion was made by O.Ahern to seal the minutes of the non-public meeting above, seconded by P.Koelb. Three voted "yes", and motion carried.

At 8:30pm, P.Koelb made a motion to adjourn. F.Muzzey seconded, three voted "yes". Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Linda Franz  
Interim Administrative Assistant

		
Francis Muzzey, Chairperson	Omer C. Ahern, Jr. Board Member	Palmer Koelb Board Member