

**Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, September 11, 2023**

These minutes were transcribed by Angela Eldridge, Secretary. Selectman Martha B. Eldridge was in attendance, Selectman Jonathan H. Smith was in attendance and Selectman Susan J. Simpson was in attendance. Matthew Sawyer Jr., Town Administrator, and T.J. Eldridge, Public Works Director, were also in attendance. The meeting was held in the Bub Avery Gymnasium at Town Hall.

Call to Order/Roll Call: Completed in the Work Session.

M. Eldridge reconvened the meeting at 4:15 PM.

M. Eldridge opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

J. Smith called for a moment of silence for all the lives lost 22 years ago and many more who are fighting the war on terror.

Public Input:

None Presented.

Community Power Purchasing Presentation:

State Representative, Glen Cordelli, representing the towns of Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro and Ossipee and Katy Peternel, representing the towns of Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro, came to discuss community choice aggregation. Cordelli stated that this is community purchasing of electricity for small businesses and residents. Increased buying power is new to New Hampshire but not to the rest of New England and it shows promise with the rates they have seen so far. Cordelli advised that he met with Freedom Energy Logistics of Auburn and Colonial Power out of Massachusetts. Katy Peternel discussed some background. She advised that in 2019 House bill 286 passed to amend RSA 53E, allowing municipalities to develop plans for electric aggregation, giving more local control over their electricity sources and potentially decreasing rates or having access to renewable energy. Stuart Ornsbee of Colonial Power, an energy firm from Massachusetts, advised that the company works with Freedom Energy in NH due to their experience and they currently work with 90 programs. He presented a brief slide show where he discussed potentially lower rates and more options for consumers. He advised that because of how the statutes in NH are written, these are opt out programs, which means any consumers taking electricity supplies through Eversource or NH Co-Op are already considered an eligible customer. They would be brought into the program unless they elected to opt out. No one is forced to participate. There are no exit fees or termination fees either. Benefits of the program include choice, leverage, price, and stability. Consumer protections are built into the contract. There is no cost to the Town. The consulting fee is also built into the contract. Billing is still done through the utility company and only one line on the bill will change, which will be the supplier. The utility company is still responsible for the wires and meters. This program does not interfere with energy assistance programs. The steps to proceed would be to have a favorable vote at Town Meeting but prior to that there would need to be 2 public hearings per the statute. The Selectmen would vote to move forward and set up the aggregation committee. Colonial would work with the committee to come up with a plan. Once the plan is developed it will be seen and hopefully accepted by the utility commissioner. Smith asked who would need to be a part of the committee. Ornsbee advised that it would be up to the Board. Smith asked how many times someone can opt in and out. Ornsbee advised that you can go in or out without any cost. There might be limits to commercial properties because they already

get better rates. Smith asked that if 50% of the Town decide to opt out, how will that affect the program. Ornsbee advised that we would still be able to move forward. Smith asked if the terms of the contract would get voted on at the Town Meeting. Ornsbee advised that the voting is to adopt the program, but the leadership of the town makes the decisions regarding the terms. Smith asked if there would be any administrative duties. Ornsbee advised no. Smith also asked what the current rate was. Ornsbee advised that it was in the lower 11 cent range but mentioned that savings could be around 8-12 % over a period of time. Matt Sawyer Jr. asked if those savings are compared to the traditional supplier. Ornsbee said yes. Discussion ensued. Smith asked about people who have contracts with other programs that may have cancelation fee and what happens if they opt in with that fee. Ornsbee said that they will get a list of customers from the utility company and will only mail opt out notices to those on the list so they don't accidentally enroll someone already in another program. Discussion ensued. Smith asked what the impact is if they agree and decide next year that we don't want it. Ornsbee said we would need to complete the terms of the contract, or the suppliers have the right to take action. Sawyer Jr. asked if this was limited to Ossipee residents. Ornsbee said yes. Dallas Emery said we have to form a committee and negotiate a rate and he asked for confirmation they get paid through the supplier. Ornsbee confirmed yes. Emery said the committee makes a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen, and they deal with you. Ornsbee said the committee is to design and set up the program. The Town would decide who will have the responsibility for the program but it is usually the Town Administrator. Discussion ensued. Emery asked how people will know to opt out and he was advised that there will be meetings to get people informed. Emery mentioned that he just wants to understand why it is even necessary. Discussion ensued. Giradelli asked if Ornsbee can estimate the number of residents that opt out. Ornsbee advised that opt out average is around 8-12%. Discussion ensued. Smith asked if Ornsbee was the point of contact. He advised that the administration creates the committee, but they will use him as the point man. Discussion ensued.

Meeting Minutes:

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the Work-Session Minutes for 8/14/2023. Simpson seconded. Smith abstained.

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the Work-Session Minutes for 8/28/2023. Smith seconded. Simpson abstained.

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the Selectmen's Meeting Minutes for 8/14/2023. Simpson seconded. Smith abstained.

Accounts Payable & Payroll Manifest:

The Payroll Check Voucher total was submitted for the week ending 9/12/2023 in the amount of \$35,834.65. The General Fund is \$96,610.43. Fire Precincts were \$146,029.86. The school accounts payable are in the amount of \$120,407.00. The total was \$408,881.94. M. Eldridge made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

Review of Red Folder:

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$80.00. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$160.00. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$22,782.69. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$12,310.22. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$19,212. Smith made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Motion passed.

The Board received a Notice of Decision from the Planning Board for case# 23-08-SPR for 18 Moultonville Rd. JB Real Estate Investments, LLC owner John DeVitto c/o Bryan Berlind of Land Tech was granted a Site Plan Review to have retail and restaurant on the first floor and 2 residential apartment units on the second floor in the Village District. This will be on file in the Selectmen's Office.

T.J. Eldridge advised that the fine grading on Blake Hill and Huckins will be done next week so the paving should be done soon as well. Discussion ensued.

Old Business:

None Presented.

New Business:

None Presented.

Second Public Input:

None Presented.

The next meeting will take place on September 25, 2023.

Adjournment:

Being no further input, M. Eldridge made a motion to adjourn. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

Adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Martha B. Eldridge, Chairman

Susan J. Simpson

Jonathan H. Smith

To be approved 09/25/2023