

*Select Board Meeting Minutes*

*Monday, September 23, 2024 meeting held at Hinsdale Town Hall*

Present: Chairman Steve Diorio, Selectman Bernie Rideout, Selectman William Hodgman, Selectman Richard Johnson and Selectman Mike Carrier. Also present were Kim Worden, Town Administrator Kathryn Lynch, and Finance Director Jodie Holmquist. Others in attendance included: Senator Denise Ricciardi and staff member, Lisa Borst, Kelly Gilmartin, Ann Diorio, Jessica Green, Chief Evans, Wayne Dingman, Josh Green, Bill Nebelski, Karen Johnson, Kendra Gardner, Gary Seymour, Dennis Nadeau, Mr. & Mrs. John McCarthy, Peter and Lori Howe, Jack and Pam White, Marc Sprague, Taran Benedict, Kaylee Howe, Paul Eldridge, Dan Seymour, Kenny Howe, Janice Nichols, Bob Truesdell, Heather Howe, and other town employees, town committee members, and members of the public.

6:00 p.m. Chair Diorio called the meeting to order and introduced Senator Denise Ricciardi, NH Senate District 9. She provided updates and gave a synopsis.

Denise presented that she is a voice for the community, represents 13 towns, is very present and visits frequently. She added that she finds problems, fixes them, and gets results. She spoke of the 40% NH Rooms & Meals Tax that was set for revenue sharing for property tax relief. The State broke its promise on that for two decades. Through Senate Bill 99, this has been restored to 30% of the revenue and now goes into a dedicated fund. It is currently up to \$370,514 in 2024 that Hinsdale would not have received, if not for her bill. This goes towards helping the property tax rate for Hinsdale. She sponsored legislation for clean water and for PFAs remediation now included in the state budget (HB2). 15.9 Million was secured to expand, repair, and maintain municipal water infrastructure so that towns won't have to foot the entire bill. She offered to work with us on grants and other needs. She co-sponsored the MOMnibus bill and supported 15 million for childcare initiatives, the expansion of Medicaid and increased rates. She also supported Senate Bill 270 to provide addition one-time funds for road and bridges (109,000+ for Highway Block Grant; \$26,953 for HB 2 Highway Block Grant, and \$34,266 for bridge aid). She has supported a bill to help funding education for students in Hinsdale (\$10,519 per student) and sought extra funding for our kids. From a \$3000 grant award, she chose Hinsdale's *48 Hours of Hunger* at the school. She has also supported funds for Invest NH, affordable housing and municipal housing champions program. She mentioned various bills sponsored/co-sponsored and supported. One bill relates to creating reasonable timelines for insurance approval and authorization. She stressed that local control is important. Her email is [denise.ricciardi@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:denise.ricciardi@leg.state.nh.us). Denise was thanked for the update and information.

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Selectman Carrier **made a motion** to approve the manifests of September 23, 2024 and minutes public and non-public of September 16, 2024, second by Rideout. The vote was as follows: Diorio-aye; Rideout-aye; Hodgman-aye; Johnson-aye; and Carrier-aye. Motion passes unanimously.

An Application for Open Container/Alcohol Permit was presented for Hinsdale Fireman's Association for Annual Ladies Night Dinner on September 27, 2024. Selectman Johnson **made a motion** to approve and for the Chair to sign the Application for the Fire Department, second by Carrier. Motion passes unanimously.

The Memorandum of Understanding re: School Resource Officer (MOU re: SRO) was presented for signature. The Board previously received a copy for their review. Selectman Carrier **made a motion** to approve the MOU, second by Hodgman. Motion passes unanimously.

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The 2024 MS-232 Report was presented for signatures. Selectman Hodgman **made a motion** for the Board to sign the 2024 MS-232, second by Rideout. Motion passes unanimously.

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*T.A. Reports/Requests:*

T.A. Lynch furnished information to the Board re: COLA. The rate in June for northeast region was 3.8% and 3.6% for July. In speaking with other towns, they include in their personnel policy to use a specific date to lock-in a rate. Selectman Johnson briefly discussed this. The idea being, once June is posted they can set the rate in July. T.A. Lynch gave differences in amounts of setting the COLA at 3% with up to 2% merit and of setting COLA at 2% with up to 2% merit. The difference being \$24,838.76. Selectman Johnson **made a motion for 2% COLA with up to 2% merit**, second by Hodgman. There was no discussion. Motion passes unanimously.

T.A. Lynch spoke of Chris Bolt working with three towns with Hinsdale being one that still hasn't settled with Eversource. Chris is filing a motion to consolidate the cases. Eversource is asking for an abatement of 1 million from Hinsdale. Chris continues to work on this.

Front doors are pretty close to being complete. Brandon is painting 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows and door trim and basement windows of Town Hall.

Budget Workshops proposed for the *Select Board and Department Heads:*

First meeting **Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>** at 6 p.m. to receive budgets and go over list of 10 budgets (Finance and T.A. Office).

Second meeting **Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>** at 6 p.m. (**upstairs** as Planning Board will be downstairs) (with Department Heads – 6 budgets).

Third meeting **Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>** at 6 p.m. (with Department Heads – 6 Budgets).

T.A. Lynch's hope is to have the budgets ready for presentation to the Budget Committee by October 28<sup>th</sup>. She passed out the tentative budget schedule for the Board.

T.A. Lynch updated that the Request for Quotes (RFQ) for Consulting Engineers will be advertised for the clean water Feasibility Grant CWSRF. She will be meeting with both MRI and BS&A Software for conversion from BMSI/Gworks. She presented the Board with copies of Complaints from Stephen Weaver for their review. She informed everyone that the Town Offices will be closed on October 14<sup>th</sup> (Columbus Day). There will be a non-meeting later with legal for consultation.

*Board Comments:*

Selectman Hodgman will have a Parks & Rec Meeting on Thursday.

Selectman Johnson has a Cemetery Trustees Meeting tomorrow that he is unable to attend. Jodie mentioned that they will be going over their budget and trust fund. Selectman Hodgman offered to attend in his place.

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Selectman Carrier attended a Planning Board Meeting on Selectman Rideout's behalf. Great Lakes Marine of 723-725 Brattleboro Road was approved. They are a wholesale company selling docks, lifts, and related equipment.

Chair Diorio toured the town with Senator Ricciardi today and spoke of economic development opportunities and good ideas.

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Kelly Gilmartin was present to discuss her Petition to Implement Mail-In Paper Voting for Major Capital Decisions in Hinsdale, NH. Chair Diorio directed that questions be directed to the Chair. It was clarified that no one was recording. Kelly mentioned that she had overwhelming support on a Petition with 111 names to implement paper ballots on all matters concerning the Town. She expressed that residents would not need to be present; with today's technologies this should be offered; this would be more representative of majority vote and reasons she would like to see this on a warrant article. When asked for the Petition, she responded that it could be found on *Change.org*. She was asked to email it to the Town Administrator. She mentioned that 233 voted at the recent Special Meeting out of 4000 residents. Selectman Hodgman noted that there are 2085 on the Checklist. It was mentioned that normal protocol was for Petitions to be checked by the Town Clerk to confirm registered voters. She expressed that she hopes to see the value of more people being engaged. Selectman Johnson provided clarification that it's state law that is followed. She would be going up against every town in the State and the Municipal Association and Senator Ricciardi is a perfect starting point (in looking for change). Conversation suggests she was looking for SB2 and it was pointed out that this wasn't the petition for SB2, she would need to go to the legislature. She asked if it could be put as a warrant article. It was pointed out that it has been voted down in the past a number of times. Kelly was unaware of that. Kelly expressed her extreme disappointment and informed the Board that she filed a complaint with an Ombudsman person. Selectman Johnson mentioned that the Special Meeting language was boiler-plate; that the Hinsdale Fire Department Building Committee approached the Board in order for the opportunity to get before the taxpayers for possible purchase the Plain Road property. The Select Board offered to assist with that, though it wasn't their presentation, in allowing the Special Meeting to take place. Selectman Hodgman added that the Petition was noticed in the Sentinel for three weeks prior and anyone could have gone to court and spoke to anything related to it.

Heather Howe mentioned that due to unforeseen circumstances, she was unable to vote recently and asked if there was any way to have been able to participate. Discussion included that, though seemingly archaic, voters must be present for traditional town meetings. If it were SB-2, ballots would still need to go by way of voting in booths to check yes or no to all. There would be a prior information by way of a public hearing that should be attended. It was encouraged to look into SB-2. The first session is a deliberative session (to participate in, make changes, and amend). After finalized, all goes to the ballot.

Lisa Borst asked how (tonight's) Agenda ended up on Facebook. It was determined that someone shared it to Facebook. The town posts on the Town Website and bulletin boards in town. It was also clarified that the Petition (for Special Meeting) was posted in the Keene Sentinel and on the website. Lisa expressed appreciation of the Select Board Minutes and would like some of the acronyms spelled out for clarification.

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Karen Johnson wanted to set the record straight by adding that even though there are 4000 residents, 2077 are registered voters and paper is the best way to vote. Five people were not on the checklist that wanted to vote and couldn't.

*6:47 p.m. public left.*

*The Board went into a non-meeting for legal consultation.*

*7:23 p.m. The Board came out of non-meeting.*

7:23 p.m. Selectman Johnson **made a motion** to adjourn, second by Hodgman. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim P. Worden,  
Secretary