

Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 7, 2023
2:30 pm Work Session
Approved



1) Open Meeting

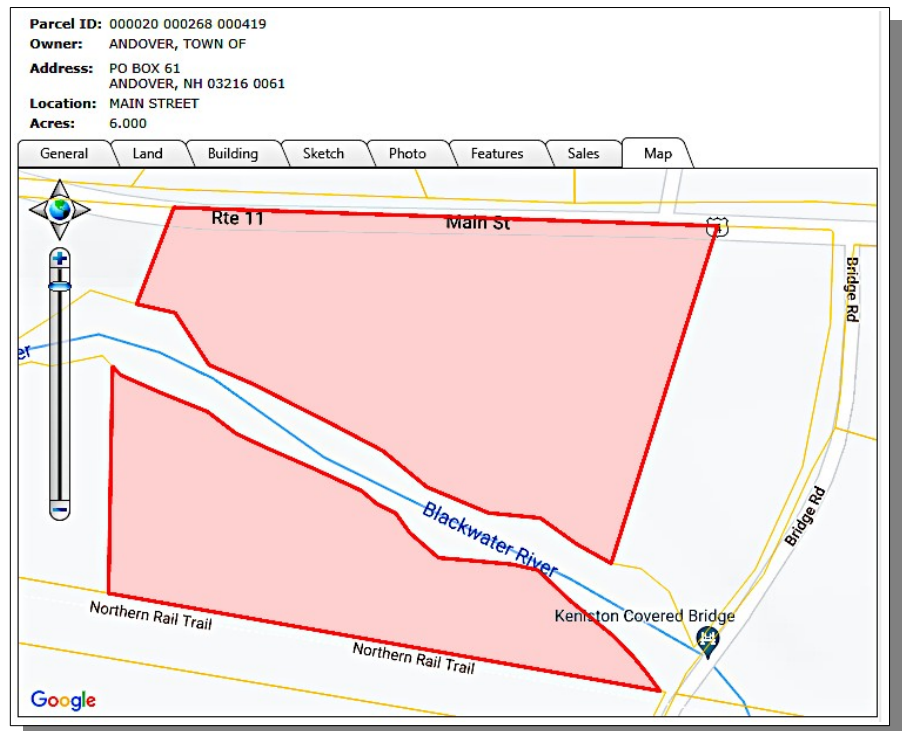
Selectman Dudek called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Board members present: Michelle Dudek, Andy Guptill, Jim Delaney, Also present includes: Town Administrator Kimberley Edelmann, Lenny Caron

2) Map 20, Lot 268 / 419 - Buswell Property

Selectman Dudek shared that earlier in the day she spent time with Town Counsel Matt Serge reviewing in detail all of the documentation in the Town Office regarding the Town owned property known as the the Buswell property. The property consists of approximately 6 acres, approximately 4 of which are above the Blackwater River and approximately 1.5 acres below. Documents reviewed included correspondence going back many years.

Mr. Serge recommended the following:

- 1) Break the property into two parcels.
- 2) Work with Mr. Caron and his attorney, the Town Assessor, and any other applicable people to figure out a fair price for the lower half based on back taxes and fees. Take care of that parcel.
- 3) Go to public auction with the upper parcel as there were multiple parties interested in it. It was also noted that per RSA 80:80, which the Town had adopted, the Town did not have to hold a public hearing.
- 4) Once both parcels were processed, the tax cards and property lines would be updated.



It was made clear that the price for the lower parcel had not been calculated yet.

Mr. Caron stated that he had a handwritten \$3,000 timber contract with Mr. Buswell. Selectman Dudek said that had been discussed with Mr. Serge and it did not play into the vested interest in a property; a quitclaim did. Mr. Caron felt he had equity in the land. Selectman Dudek said that from a legal standpoint, that could not be considered equity to give him the property versus another abutter; thus the recommendation to go to auction. Selectman Dudek reiterated that the lawyers would take over the discussion.

3) Warrant Articles

It was noted that the Highway Supervisor would not be able to attend the Town Meeting due to other obligations.

TA Edelmann reported that she had met with Town Moderator Stu Green and discussed the warrant articles with him.

Selectman Dudek said that there were some people who wanted to discuss the pros and cons of solar energy. TA Edelmann said that was potentially a big topic and would probably have required proper notification so that residents could decide whether they wanted to go to the Town Meeting or stay at home. Topics outside of warrant articles should pass a "Stay at Home" test.

a. Operating Budget

It was agreed that the operating budget should be covered section by section, following the line item budget used by the Budget Committee instead of the MS-737. Any questions that came up could be answered by the department head for that section.

Selectman Guptill said he would move to apply the Selectmen's budget each time it differed from the Budget Committee. Selectman Dudek noted that the Selectboard needed to be able to talk about those deltas between budgets.

TA Edelmann noted that the reason there was an MS-737 inserted into the Town Annual Reports was because the column to the far right was not completed when the report went to print. The Selectboard reviewed the budget line by line.

Selectman Dudek asked for the operating budget lines to show % of increases. Tax impact would be helpful, too. TA Edelmann noted that at the current Town valuation, \$100,000 equated to about 31 cents per \$1,000.

Selectman Delaney said mowing for the ball field was no longer in the budget. Selectman Guptill said it had been moved to the Highway Department along with all grounds maintenance with exception to cemeteries.

b. Bond Article

Selectman Dudek recommended having visuals. TA Edelmann asked where the meeting was and what equipment was available to use. She asked for the screen size / perspective. A dry run the day before would be needed.

TA Edelmann said she would talk to the engineer and the architect to request posters suitable for display during voting. Selectman Delaney said that Staples was able to make large prints.

TA Edelmann said she would put together presentation material and present the bond. She noted that she knew of people who would be speaking in support of the bond and some who would be speaking against it. She would absolutely stress to the public that the scary numbers won't be as scary when the actual bond interest rate is known and the bids come in. She would also stress that the Selectboard could reject all bids and not go forward with a bond at all. But, first, the Town would have to approve the bond article to allow the Selectboard to continue that discussion.

Selectman Delaney shared that he could get a building built with no new tax impact. The cost of the building came in at \$997,000. The building contractor was by LaValley. It could be paid for with funds already set aside for the project, \$400,000 from unassigned fund balance and some of the remaining ARPA funds.

Selectman Guptill cautioned about use of ARPA funds as they require compliance with the Davis-Bacon Wage Act.

c. Highway Garage Construction

If the bond article fails, TA Edelmann would present the other article about the highway garage. She noted that the tax impact for with that article was higher than the bond due to the request for \$250,000 in new taxes at approximately 75 cents per \$1,000, but only for one year.

d. Summary

After discussion, who would present which articles was as follows:

#	Presenter	Warrant Article
5	TA Edelmann	Bond for Construction of Highway Garage
6	Selectman Guptill	6 Year Lease of Dump Truck
7	Town Moderator Green	Operating Budget
8	Warden	Forest Fire Labor
9	TA Edelmann	Highway Garage Construction
10	Selectman Delaney	Town Buildings
11	Selectman Delaney	Transfer Station Projects
12	Selectman Dudek	Revaluation
13	Selectman Guptill	Road Equipment
14	Selectman Delaney	Highway Special Projects
15	Police Chief Mahoney	Police Cruiser
16	Selectman Dudek	Bridge Rehabilitation
17	Selectman Dudek	Bridge Evaluation Project
18	Town Clerk Meier	Town Clerk / Tax Collector Move to Full Time
19	TA Edelmann	Readopt Optional Veterans' Tax Credit
20	TA Edelmann	Readopt All Veterans' Tax Credit
21	Conservation Commission	Petition

4) Town Annual Report

Selectman Guptill noted that the charts in the Town Annual Report that showed tax history were helpful. TA Edelmann said she would provide a chart of the history of taxes for Town Meeting. She could prepare a pie-chart which would help explain the operating budget.

TA Edelmann recommended the Selectboard be ready to discuss revenues, shown on pages 47 and 48. Selectman Guptill said he would be able to answer questions.

5) LaValley Building

Selectman Delaney shared the LaValley information provided by N. M. Ross in Newport, NH which was provided to him on February 27.

Selectman Dudek commented that the Town had assembled a Highway Department Advisory Committee who put in a lot of time and effort into designing a building that they felt was best for the town. She was not comfortable with disregarding that work and the committee's recommendations. She was supporting the process.

Selectman Delaney wanted to find a less costly solution. He noted that the LaValley option would have to go out to bid and might come in lower or higher. It was an option in case the bond failed.

TA Edelmann asked if the building would have the air system that was required. She also commented that the drawing presented was hand drawn, not architectural drawings. Selectman Delaney said he had his son draw it off the architectural plans.

In support of the LaValley building, Selectman Delaney added: "This is the problem that we seem to have all of a sudden. Everything has to be done by engineers, everything has to have general contractors. We have contractors in town who have built more than one barn or garage. Everything built by LaValley was already done by engineering. Nathan Ross is the contractor for LaValley."

6) **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, Selectman Delaney made a **motion** to adjourn at 4:10 pm. Selectman Guptill **seconded**. The **motion passed** with both in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberley Edelmann, Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved at the
Select Board meeting on March 22, 2023.