



**Town of Plymouth  
Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Plymouth Town Hall  
Plymouth, NH 03264**

**March 18, 2019**

**Members Present:** Mr. John Randlett, Chairperson, Mr. William Bolton, Mr. Bryan Dutille, Mr. Michael Ahern, Mrs. Katharina Kelsey.

**Others Present:** Mr. Paul Freitas, Town Administrator and Ms. Kathryn Lowe, Executive Director

6:00 PM: Mr. Randlett called the meeting to order with Mr. Dutille leading in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approve Minutes:**

- **February 25, 2019 Work session** – Mr. Bolton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dutille to accept the minutes as written. All in favor with Mrs. Kelsey abstaining
- **February 25, 2019 Non-Public Work Session Meeting Minutes** – Mr. Bolton made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ahern to accept the minutes as written. All in favor with Mrs. Kelsey abstaining
- **February 25, 2019 Regular Meeting minutes** – Mr. Ahern made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dutille to accept the minutes as written. All in favor with Mrs. Kelsey abstaining

**Announcements:**

- The Select Board will meet on the following dates:
  - **Regular Meetings** –6:00PM: Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, April 8<sup>th</sup> and April 22<sup>nd</sup>
 Work sessions prior to the regular meeting will start at 5:00 PM.
- Spring Fling is April 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> 2019.
- Road bans for the Town of Plymouth will be in effect from March 1 through May 1, 2019. A list of the roads can be found at the Town Hall and on the Town website.

***All of the above meetings will be held in the Town Hall, unless otherwise posted***

- Citizens wishing to be listed on the Select Board's Agenda should notify the Town Hall before 12:00 PM the Friday before the scheduled meeting.
- Alternate members are always needed to fill positions on the Zoning and Planning Boards. If interested, please submit a letter of intent to the Plymouth Select Board's Office; 6 Post Office Square, Plymouth, NH 03264.
- The Board is starting a new Advisory Budget Committee and asks anyone with interest in serving to submit a letter of intent to the Plymouth Select Board's Office; 6 Post Office Square, Plymouth, NH 03264.

**Chairman's Comments:**

- Welcome to Katharina Kelsey who has been elected as a new member of the Select Board.
- The Select Board would like to provide the results of the past couple of weeks elections and voting which may and will affect the tax rate. As things stand, we are looking at an overall project increase of 46 cents which was noted at the end of the budget and as reported at the Annual Town Meeting. As a result of the high school public hearing and meeting, the high school is at a projected 68 cent increase. As a result of the elementary school public hearing and meeting, the elementary school is at a projected \$2.17 increase. The County is looking at a potential increase of between 5 and 8 cents. In an effort to continue transparency, the Board would like to make the voters aware that the New Hampshire Electric Coop (NHEC) has filed and has been pressing the Town of Plymouth and many surrounding communities for abatements on their assessed value for the poles, lines and transmission equipment. To date, the Town has been successful in holding off these appeals. However, the Board is still waiting for final language from the Town attorneys on Part 1 of these appeals. There is also a proposed Part 2 legislation that could set a new precedent for these assessed values over the next few years under House Bill 700 (HB700). Both of these could have a large increase on Plymouth's tax rate. The Select Board, when the tax rate is set in the Fall for the 2019 tax year, will have to take into consideration any adjustment to these utility assessments and are hoping that the increase and assessed value gain from development of the rest of the Town will make up for the difference that is lost to these impacts from NHEC. If it cannot be made up this year, it is anticipated that the Town's portion of the tax increase will be more than the proposed 46 cents that we had originally discussed. With seven or eight months left in the assessing process, it is still much too early for the Select Board to know how these numbers will shake out. We do know, however, that more entities, such as the Market Basket and other future development in the Tenney

Mountain corridor will add to the tax base and help lower the taxes. The Board hopes over the next seven or eight months to sustain the tax rate as much as we can and we will continue to update the public.

Plaque Presentation:

Correspondence:

Appointments:

PSU Update:

Visitors:

- Chris Buckley – Recreational/Economical concerning Oxbow and “secret beach” on Holderness side of the river. Two developments to bring to the Board’s attention being the Oxbow initiative which started in Holderness but is also in Plymouth. South of Holderness Road, east of the Interstate down to the golf course. Two conservation commissions and a lot of moving parts and entities, i.e., University, Holderness School, Golf Course, etc. Some of that is in Plymouth. A big chunk is owned by Plymouth Academic Committee. That area is basically undeveloped, which a snow mobile corridor, a maze of mountain bike trails and people use it for birdwatching, dog walking, etc. That being a valuable asset to the 3 towns, especially Plymouth. They have a vision to make it an urban park and have worked to keep automobiles out of there as that tends to lead to partying on Secret Beach. They are hoping to monitor that problem. Access would be gated with emergency vehicles having keys. They are working to get easements from Holderness property owners and get everyone together for this purpose. This is Part 1. Part 2 of this initiative is the mountain bike trail called the Gyroscope which is very popular state-wide and more. Mr. Freitas stated this area is on that the police have to frequent regularly and there is not good access to get there. This development in Part 1 would make that more accessible for the Town. Chris Buckley said they have met with the all the Chiefs, including the University. They are aware of this initiative. The area is becoming less desirable as there have been people sleeping down there and tenting and potentially living there.

This does cause some discomfort for visitors. By creating an 'urban park' it would benefit the Town. Part 2 is more of an economic driver involving mountain bikes. There are a lot of developments for mountain bikes, Green Woodlands in Dorchester who the owner is making all kinds of incredible trails. Smarts Brook by White Mountain National Forest has those trails which are maintained by the local mountain bike chapter, Franklin Falls has trails there and, most importantly, the Kingdom Trails, north of us is in Burke, Vermont. Mountain biking has basically saved that community. It brings in a lot of money and very little downsides as with motorized vehicle recreation. Somewhere we adopted an eco-tourism definition which this bill would fit perfectly. NEMBA is the association now for mountain biking. They make and monitor trails and could potentially capture this recreational activity. If you want more information, check out the Kingdom Trails website and see what it offers. The Plymouth Conservation Commission is a little anti-mountain bike but mostly because it's more foreign to them and they might not know all of this information. The local mountain bike community has been very cooperative working with the Conservation Commission. Resident, Thomas Santori, asked if this bill was both to make Plymouth a spot for mountain biking, as well as a hospitable spot to wait to go to a more popular trail like the one in Vermont? Chris Buckley confirmed that was the intent and although Plymouth does have some mountain biking areas, we will probably not be like the Kingdom Trails and we do offer more places to stay and eat on their way to and from mountain biking. Mr. Bolton asked what the intent was to tie in Green Woodlands. Chris Buckley confirmed that Plymouth has more accommodations for the mountain biking community. Mr. Ahern asked stated the Business & Economic Development Committee met over several meetings and identified bike trails in their economic plan. One of the goals would be to connect trails from downtown to Tenney Mountain Highway, etc.. Would that be enough to hook into any other trail systems. Chris Buckley said absolutely and NEMBA would be a great resource to discuss this with. The connectivity in other towns has been remarkable and an economic boom to those areas. Chris Buckley suggested he would like to speak with the Business & Economic Development Committee on this topic. Mr. Ahern stated that the Business & Economic Development Committee has done their task on determining the projects identified. Mr. Dutille also has a friend from NEMBA who has also mentioned this to him and who could come and talk to the Select Board on this topic. Mr. Freitas mentioned Miriam Bader, who was a planner and is now working in DC as a planner and who had secured a \$285,000 grant for Plymouth that was rejected after it was won. Mr. Freitas will reach out to her to see how much of that information she might still have on that grant which might be helpful as it included a lot of mapping on the town map that went from Holderness

to Ashland. She is now involved in federal funding which might also be very helpful. Mr. Bolton stated he spoke with Annie Kuster's staff and there is a chance of funding through Northern Borders who has funded bike paths, housing, etc., and they also might be a source. Mr. Ahern said that the Committee would be putting their project list in front of the Select Board to see what projects they want to undertake. We won't be able to handle everything on the list but the Select Board would need to determine that. Mr. Randlett suggested some sub committees for some of these projects to see where to take it.

**New Purchase Orders:**

**Updates and Recommendations:**

**Personnel:**

**Carry-Over Requests:**

**Permit Requests:**

**Unfinished Business:**

**New/Other Business:**

**Committee Reports:**

- Business Economic & Development Committee has morphed into a Main Street Committee is trying to get a committee established. There were approximately 15 businesses in attendance at last week's meeting. Mr. Ahern expected that part of the meeting would be a discussion about parking and the other park about promoting the businesses in the downtown area. However, it was primarily about parking. Business

owners were strongly commenting on the fact that the lack of parking has caused potential business to go elsewhere. 3 locations were suggested to add parking for short or long-term solutions for that problem. One being a short-term location where the snow piles are now for 30 to 40 spots in that space alone. That would be for employee parking to free up space for customers. The Plymouth Inn property is another option which the Board would need to explore the options for that property, as well as North Main Street across from the Barber Shop. In that area the cars are parking one after the other and a sidewalk as opposed to diagonal parking, moving some of the sidewalk there to provide additional spots. The downtown businesses appeared happy with those solutions understanding the details would have to be worked out and the Town is supportive of this effort. More meetings to come on this issue. The packets handed to the Board need to be reviewed to see what projects would be addressed now and what might be put off. Also, Mr. Ahern and Mr. Randlett met with Dr. Lee on the middle school student coding to show statistics on what questions they had on how to promote more business in Plymouth. The students did a great job in presenting. One thing identified was that in the Plan, the history of Plymouth is an agricultural community and that's why there is an agricultural zone. One item pulled out of those statistics was Plymouth more than twice the state average had fishing, agricultural and lumber as skill sets our population had. There is much more information there. Mr. Randlett also spoke on this presentation and how much information they are able to get from this coding project. This presentation would be ideal for businesses wanting to come to Plymouth to give them some statistical information that would be beneficial in a presentation package for this potential. It was agreed a follow up would come.

- Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee, Mr. Bolton as the Chair of this Committee stated that we have been awarded through Lakes Region Planning Commission, a grant for mapping the development of local ground water for protection ordinance. We would be working with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Water & Sewer District to make them apprised of the mapping that's going to be happening.
- Mr. Dutille attending the annual Village Water & Sewer meeting and they stated the only major project in the works is the exploration of a new water source for Plymouth in the lower Holderness field area. That is all they have the docket at this time. Mr. Bolton stated they contacted **Poolac???** In order to have us sign off on their intent for a 48-hour purge of two wells in the Holderness School Athletic Field for a 48-hour test and ultimately a week test as well. The company doing this evaluation

said the water quality is excellent, no sodium, which on the other side of the river downstream on 93 the water quality is not as good. Mr. Freitas asked if there was any discussion on a Main Street closure. Mr. Dutille stated no mention of that project at all. Mr. Randlett confirmed that Village Water & Sewer were asked and they stated there was going to be nothing done this year. We were looking for a commitment and the only discussion was the water source in Holderness and, when asked specifically, they stated unless there is a break or some other issue, there is no plan for construction or anything else. Mr. Randlett did inform them that the State would be asphaltting on Route 3 and they had no comment on that.

### Committee Assignments:

- Village Water & Sewer – Mr. Ahearn and Mr. Dutille
- Planning Board – Mr. Bolton and Mr. Ahern
- Chamber of Commerce – Board previously agreed to remove this.
- Campus Community Council – Mr. Dutille and Mr. Randlett. There was also a Task Force initiated between the off-campus housing community and PSU in general, and they asked for a Select Board representative Mr. Dutille agreed to do. There is not an official name for this Task Force at this time.
- Plymouth School Board District – Mr. Ahern
- Ambulance Committee – Mr. Randlett
- Energy Committee – Mr. Bolton
- Conservation Commission – Mr. Bolton
- Capital Improvement Budget Committee – Mr. Randlett
- Lakes Region Planning Commission – Mr. Randlett and Mr. Bolton. Staff also attend, i.e., Brian Murphy.
- Northern Pass Representatives – Mr. Ahern and Mr. Bolton
- Park & Recreation – Mr. Dutille
- Economic Development Committee – Mr. Ahern
- Advisory Budget Committee – Mrs. Kelsey
- Parking Committee – Mr. Ahern

Public Comments: Frank Miller spoke on diagonal parking versus parallel in front of Silver Hall and the discussion on the sidewalk being affected by this change. Mr. Miller stated the sidewalk could be done the same way as on other parts of Main Street (NAPA, Minuteman Printing, etc.) with just two lines. We would just need to have the appropriate drainage design. Another big piece is going to a kiosk and raising the parking to \$1 an hour. Most towns and city are \$1 an hour which would help with

parking patrol, the purchase and maintenance of the equipment and providing future funds for parking lot construction in the future. We need to paint the lines establishing a sidewalk if not on a raised sidewalk system to make all of Main Street sidewalks complete. Mr. Miller plans on inventorying the businesses and parking identified on a map for police to have showing all of this information. At that time, we can review any potential opportunities for parking. There currently are not enough spaces for business owners and employees, let alone patrons. Mr. Freitas reminded the Board that they need to be careful when discussing the sidewalks as they are not all owned by the Town. This has been an issue in the past. Although we plow them, we don't own all of them. Some are owned by PSU. Mr. Miller also mentioned that Route 3 is obviously not a parallel road and there are several places where the road bottlenecks and the sidewalks end. We would need to get an updated inventory and establish guidelines on what we can do for parking and sidewalks. Mr. Dutille asked if there was any estimate on what is gained by parallel parking. Mr. Miller said we also need to find out what regulations need to be adhered to before we change the configurations. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting for anyone who would like to come to the meeting and speak on this issue.

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Bolton made a motion to go into Non-Public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a thru i)

- a) Personnel
- b) Hiring
- c) Reputation
- d) Real Estate
- e) Law Suits
- i) Emergency Preparations

*Please note:*

The public is invited to attend all meetings of the Select Board. During official public hearings, the public is welcome to speak. For other items, the public may speak at the discretion of the chair/board.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Kenny

**CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:**

I'd first like to this opportunity to welcome new Select Board member Katharina Kelsey.

The Select Board wants to report the results of the past couple of weeks elections and voting, which may and will affect the tax rate.

As things stand right now we are looking at an overall projected increase for the town of 46 cents (which was noted at the end of the budgets provided at the Public Hearing and Town Meeting).

As a result of the High School's public hearing and meeting the High School is at a projected 68 cent increase and as a result of the Elementary School's public hearing and meeting the Elementary School is a projected \$2.17 increase. The County is looking at a potential increase of between 5 and 8 cents.

To continue with Select Board's efforts to be more transparent, the Board wants to make voters aware that the NH Electric Co-op has filed and has been pressing the Town of Plymouth along with many surrounding communities for abatements on their assessed value for the poles, lines and transmission equipment. To date the Town has been successful in holding off these appeals; however, the Board is still waiting for final language from the Town Attorneys on part one of these appeals and there is also a proposed part 2 legislation that could set a new precedence for these assessed values over the next few years known as House Bill (HB) 700. Both of these could have a large increase on Plymouth's tax rate.

The Select Board, when the tax rate is set in the fall for the 2019 tax year, will have to take in to consideration any adjustment to these utility assessments and are HOPING that the increase in assessed value gained from development of the rest of the town will make up the difference that is lost due to these impacts from New Hampshire Electric Co-op. If it cannot be made up this year, it is anticipated that the town's portion of the tax will increase more than the proposed 46 cents.

With 7 or 8 months left, in the assessing process, it is still much too early for the Select Board to know how those numbers will shake out. We do know however, that more entities, such as Market Basket and other future development on the Tenney Mountain Corridor, adding to the tax base will help lower the taxes.

The Board hopes over the next 7 or 8 months to sustain the tax rate as much as we can and we will continue to update the public.