

**Town of Pownal**  
**Select Board Minutes**  
**Monday, February 28, 2022**

**I. Call to Order-In Person Meeting** called to order by Chair Morris at 6:28 pm.

Select Board Members: Jon Morris, Andy O'Brien, Heidi Cushman Curry

Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase

Road Commissioner: Dick Clarke

Fire Chief: Jesse Peters

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting moved to a new agenda item: N. Pownal Methodist Church immediately after the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrant**

**AP Warrant #50 in the amount of \$325,724.65**

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approved AP Warrant #50 in the amount of \$325,724.65.

Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**Payroll Journal #253 in the amount of \$8,593.07**

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approved Payroll Journal #253 in the amount of \$8,593.07.

Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**III. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**• Minutes of Regular Meeting February 14, 2022**

Selectperson Curry motioned to approve the minutes of the regular February 14, 2022 meeting as written. Selectperson O'Brien seconded.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**• Minutes Special Town Meeting February 14, 2022**

Chair Morris motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Town Meeting on February 14, 2022 meeting as written. Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**IV. Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items**

Kim Drew spoke regarding the future of the N. Pownal Methodist Church. She stated the pastor retired last June and that put her in the leadership role of the church. The Church is not doing well and after 178 years it is facing closure. There is a thriving food pantry so she reached out to see if the church closed could they still retain the property. The conference approved a zero-dollar transfer to the food pantry. It will take some time to get the paperwork complete and she has applied for the name of North Pownal Outreach. There have been conversations about using part of the building for a center. She is passionate about this project and there is enough interest in the community to get this done. But it cannot be successful without the community's help. Chair Morris asked what thoughts had been given to the center; what

would that look like? She mentioned ideas of a senior luncheon, clothes closet, AA meetings, warming center, home schooling. Selectperson O'Brien asked at what date will the food pantry take ownership? Mrs. Drew is unsure at this time. The final meeting is on March 20<sup>th</sup> and they will have more information then. Sandra Schumann asked what can we do to help? Chair Morris approached some people and offered a possibility. If the church cannot continue to function as a church, then maybe there can be a partnership with the town to develop a community center. Is there anyway the town can support this vision? Collaboration with FCS (Freeport Community Services) is another option to offer support. Is there some way to come up with a plan? Generate a working group to discuss possibilities? Are there resources to help maintain the building? Mrs. Drew stated they had just spent \$20,000 on a new roof but other repairs are needed. Chair Morris acknowledged that help is needed at some point but is not sure that the town government is the agency that responds but he will look into it. Tom Harlow mentioned that the newly adopted Comprehensive Plan mentions a community place is lacking in Pownal and was important to the town. Kathy Hogue stated that FCS was excited to talk to Mrs. Drew and there might be an umbrella to thrive under them. Age Friendly Freeport/Pownal could piggyback with FCS. There may be grant opportunities. Mr. Harlow asked how many people patronize the pantry? Roughly 300 people per month. This includes families that come multiple times during the month. They have seen more veterans visiting the pantry recently as well. Chair Morris said they are working on a statement so he is reaching out to the board for approval to post to the website. Selectperson Curry asked if we allow posts on the website for other organizations not associated with the town. She wants to be careful that the town is not appearing as spearheading the project. The board was in agreement to post the statement provided by Kim Drew. She will send the statement to the Town Administrator and wanted to thank the remaining members of the church.

The meeting moved back to agenda item 3 Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrant.

Paul Schumann spoke about the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan – see attached statement. This is a brief summary of the key points he spoke about. He would like to see a more proactive approach and was pleased to see that pg. 10 was being addressed in the meeting. He questioned what the priority of the Ordinance Review Committee was and how it fit into the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that 3 key reports from 2006 to 2021 mention the need for a new fire station so what needs to change to move this discussion forward. When polled 61% of the people want to keep the government the same but the first objective is to research other forms of government. Is there a disconnect between citizens idea for government vs. reality of the Select Board. How and when will the town focus on implementing the plan. Selectperson Curry agrees with Mr. Schumann on a number of points. Chair Morris stated we are taking what we heard at Town Meeting and prioritizing.

Susan Briggs Peters asked if the dedication read at the Town Meeting will be in the annual report. It was answered yes. She also requested that the meeting night for the Economic Development and Sustainability Committee be changed from Wednesday to Monday when the Select Board does not meet. Selectperson O'Brien said he was waiting on the schedule for the Budget Committee.

## **V. Department Head Reports – Submitted Electronically**

(Department head reports can be viewed on their respective website page(s))

- **Select Board**

Selectperson O'Brien noted trash pickups had been missed the past Friday, has done checks at the pump house and has meet with Dick.

Selectperson Curry nothing new to report.

Selectperson Morris nothing new to report.

## **VI. New Business**

- **Budget Presentations: General Government, Planning Board, Mallett Hall, Human Services**

The Town Administrator presented her initial budget requests for FY23 for General Government, Planning Board, Mallett Hall and Human Services. Chair of the Planning Board, Matt Altieri gave an overview of the Planning Board requests. She shared a spreadsheet broken down by category and expense line sharing brief reasons for the request. Questions from the public included asking what benefits we receive from being a member of GPCOG, is there tracking of time saved when procedures are improved and had we addressed cyber security. Questions from the Select Board included what the General Maintenance line was specifically used for and confirming the amount of the Worker's Compensation line. There will be a workshop on March 7 at 6:30 pm to go over the evaluation process and work on the budget lines.

- **Comprehensive Plan Page 10**

Chair Morris read Goal #1 and is looking for volunteers for responsibility.

1. Research different forms of government. Chair Morris will take charge of this and report back on the first Select Board meeting in April. He will speak with the Town Administrator and surrounding towns that have a Town Manager form of government.
2. Maintain Fiscal Responsibility. He stated this is addressed at the annual Town Meeting.
3. Funding Opportunities. Chair Morris will reach out to North Star Planning to see if they have insight on what other towns have used for funding opportunities. Report date will be first Select Board meeting in April.
4. Cyber Security Plan – completed.
5. Neighboring Municipalities. Selectperson O'Brien will look into this. Already working with North Yarmouth to explore police sharing.
6. Gain Revenue and reduce Expenses. The Select Board will collaborate.

Goal #2 Increase public participation.

1. Educate residents. Welcome packets, notes from the Select Board. Monthly emails are now going out and quarterly mailers.
2. Recruit residents. Include volunteer forms in with welcome packets. Selectperson Curry is actively trying to recruit volunteers.
3. Resolve barriers for public participation. ARPA grant could address this by upgrading the Dewitt Room and having a communication center. Continued conversations with RSU5 to use the Rec Room to build a meeting lab.
4. Utilize resources. The email list has been improved, notes from town hall is on regular schedule. Constant Contact gives data on email open rate, click rate, new subscribers and any emails that have been removed from the list. The Town Administrator will meet with Kathy Hogue to discuss disconnect with certain populations and technology.
5. Provide information to new residents. Utilize the welcome packet, add feedback form and volunteer form to the packet.

Marcia Bowen asked how the welcome packets are distributed. The Town Administrator stated that when someone comes in with an out-of-town vehicle registration or to update their voter registration card that is the indication that they are new. The office staff will ask and welcome them and give them the welcome packet. Chair Morris stated that neighbors are the best welcome wagon. Mr. Schumann remarked that he is very pleased that 2 weeks after the town meeting the town government has addressed goals and strategies. Chair Morris stated that many items are directed by the Comprehensive Plan but it is not often referenced. We will be more proactive in referencing the plan. Mr. Schumann suggested reports be attached to the current plan so future generations can see the work completed. Chair Morris agrees. The goal is to give more information to residents of the process, be more informative and transparent.

- **Evaluation Process/Schedule**

There will be a workshop on March 7, 2022 at 6:30 pm to go over this process. Department heads, employees and the public are welcome to attend. Matt Altieri asked what the workshop is for. Chair Morris stated at the Special Town Meeting it was voted to amend the ordinance to a policy to give more flexibility. Now we need to come up with guidelines for evaluations. Jesse Peters noted he would not be able to attend.

- **Planning Board By-Laws**

Christine Watson stated the bylaws needed to be amended to incorporate North Star Planning in the process. Chair Morris motioned to accept the amended bylaws. Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- **ARPA Funds**

The Town Administrator attended a training on the Final Rule and printed off the PowerPoint slides for each board member. We learned that we can use ARPA funds for a consultant to tell us how we can spend the funds. It was also pointed out that we could use the Revenue Loss category with the standard equation and that would open up a broader range of uses for the funds. They need to be allocated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026 so we have time to come up with a plan. Chair Morris would like to include the Budget Committee and CIP Committee in the process. Selectperson Curry stated that after the last meeting she read over the MMA guidelines and still felt unsure of uses. She drafted a letter to send out to department heads to brainstorm ideas but had not sent it out yet.

- **Joint Meeting with N. Yarmouth and CC Sheriff**

Selectperson O'Brien has written to the North Yarmouth Select Board Chair but has not received a response yet about rescheduling the meeting with the Cumberland County Sheriffs. He suspects they are busy setting their Town Meeting Warrant. He will also reach out to the Vice Chair. Chair Morris stated we are taking the Comprehensive Plan suggestion and exploring police protection. Initial thought was to collaborate with other towns to share the service.

Chair Morris stated we had heard from EcoMaine about regionalizing trash hauling service within 4 towns. He has spoken to other towns and they are interested. He feels N. Yarmouth will want to talk about collaboration to make things more efficient. We want to explore other options. He has talked to the Freeport Transfer Station about Pownal residents using that facility and/or private contractors. He will also contact the Cumberland County Sheriff's office and will report back on March 14. He will contact Freeport again.

**VII. Old Business**

None

**VIII. Correspondence**

Chair Morris noted a lot of phone calls about missed trash pickup. The Town Administrator stated that Casella notified her by email at 2:45 pm they were pulling their trucks off the road. Due to lack of staff, they would not be able to send a truck over on another day. Residents were told to watch the website for updates on the pickup due to the storm.

Chair Morris received calls commending the Public Works department on the care of the dirt roads. He also received a call about a moose on Fickett Road.

**IX. Any Other Business**

None

**XI. Adjournment**

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to adjourn the meeting. Selectperson Curry seconded.


Discussion: None

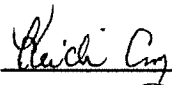
Vote: Yes 3; No 0

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Becky Taylor-Chase  
Town Administrator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Morris

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andy O'Brien

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Heidi Curry

## **Presentation to Pownal Select Board re: Comprehensive Plan**

### **1. Good Evening...**

- a. I want to talk about the recently approved Comprehensive Plan
- b. I will focus not on the content of the plan, except in one area – Town Government, but rather the implementation of the recommendations in the plan.
- c. I am not expecting answers to any questions I may raise tonight
- d. What I say is not intended to be criticism of anything in the plan or what the town has done since the previous update
- e. I just would like to see a more proactive approach to being who we want to be...

### **2. My Concerns...**

- a. Not aware that we, as a town, are focused on rising up to the inspiration of the plan
- b. Conversations with the Select Board, individually and collectively, lead me to believe we, the town, need to step up more
- c. As a citizen of Pownal I'm not aware of how we are addressing the recommendations included in the plan – maybe we are and I'm not seeing it

### **3. I did Research to determine what I have been missing...**

- a. I read through the Town Annual Report from 2021 back to 2006
  - i. Missing report for 2013 – 2014 – not online and not in my files

- b. I will leave you with a summary of what I found in those reports
- c. 2006 – Select Board sets up new committees in response to 2006 Comprehensive Plan– Housing and Ordinance Review committees
- d. Housing Committee issued report in 2007
- e. Ordinance Review Committee has reported activity in most years since created. It was not clear, from the Annual Reports, what objectives coming from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan were met
- f. My conclusion – based on what was found in the Town Annual Reports, not much importance (accomplishments don't get mentioned) is given to the Comprehensive Plan in town activities – maybe it is there intuitively...

#### **4. Ordinance Review Committee...**

- a. I don't know what the focus of that committee is...
- b. I am not here to cast any dispersion on anyone on that committee or the work that they do, but I have to ask
- c. What is the priority for their work over the last 15 years? How is it aligned with the Comprehensive Plan?
- d. As an example -- The Economic Development & Sustainability Committee is suggesting we need to review ordinances as if that is not already being done

#### **5. An example...the same one I used at the Special Town Meeting**

- a. Three key reports have recommended a new fire station replacing the Elmwood Road station – 2006 Comprehensive Plan, 2010 Needs Assessment, 2021 Comprehensive Plan
- b. There has not yet been a public discussion of this recommendation

- i. It is not a simple discussion, but we still need to have one
  - c. What needs to change to let that discussion happen?
- 6. Let's get specific – Town Government section of the plan**
  - a. My Observations:
    - i. 61% of survey respondents said keep the form of government the same, however...
    - ii. The **First** recommendation is to research and analyze moving to a different form of government
    - iii. I've heard the Select Board say, over the past few months and even longer, that they are too busy...just putting out fires – no chance to be innovative...
    - iv. In one Annual Report, the year we moved to the current form of government, it talked about how the Select Board members would be freed up from their everyday items and have time to focus on policy stuff...
    - v. From talking with you folks I'm not sure that really happened
  - b. I believe there is a **Disconnect** between what the public thinks and how the Select Board feels things are working
  - c. Do we, the town, need to have a discussion here?
  - d. If so, how does that discussion get started
  - e. If this is important to our future, don't let it follow the example of the fire station
- 7. Final question – how/when will the town focus on the plan?**
  - a. You are the leaders of our Town – it starts with you
  - b. Discussion will help us sort out what things we can do, and when



- c. It also will help identify the things that are wishful thinking and what changes should be made based on the reality of today

**8. Thank you for your time tonight**