

Town Council Meeting Minutes



Thursday June 22, 2017, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Chairman Harrington called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were Vice Chairman Rothhaus, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Dwyer, Councilor Flood, Councilor Koenig, Town Manager Eileen Cabanel, and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Paul Micali. Councilor Albert arrived at 7:50 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Life Scout Mason Landry, led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Town offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day. In celebration of Independence Day: Monday, July 3rd from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. the Merrimack Concert Association Holiday Concert at Abbie Griffin Park, Tuesday, July 4th at 8:00 a.m. the Sparkler 5K Road Race begins and ends at the Merrimack YMCA. Manchester Street will be closed from 7:30 - 10:00 a.m. There will be a lane closure on D.W. Highway that morning between BAE and Henry Clay Drive.

From 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., the Merrimack Rotary will be having their Annual Pancake Breakfast held at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School All Purpose Room. From 12:00 - 9:00 p.m. the Rotary Club will also be presenting the Merrimack Family Fun Day at the Mastricola School fields. The parade begins at 1:00 p.m. at 515 D.W. Highway and ends at the Merrimack High School. The annual fireworks display will be at approx. 9:00 p.m.

The Town Council meets only once a month in July and August unless otherwise needed. Regular meetings will be conducted on Thursday, July 20, 2017 and August 17, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Matthew Thornton Room.

On behalf of the Council, Chairman Harrington expressed condolences to the family and friends of Joseph Darst Thomas, who passed away on June 5, 2017. He commented on how he loved talking about local, State, and national politics with his friends at the local diners, and how he served the Town of Merrimack as a State Representative. His charming smile and his very quick sense of humor will be missed.

The Council observed a moment of silence in memory of Joseph Darst Thomas.

Kyle Fox, Director, Public Works Department (PWD), spoke of the Amherst Road culvert project; located on Amherst Road between Turkey Hill Road and Executive Park Drive. It is a 36" corrugated metal culvert that was installed long ago. The PWD has been watching it for some time as it has been experiencing some corrosion as metal pipes do. Plans had been made to replace the culvert this summer, and the hope was to begin construction in a few weeks. Unfortunately, a divet in the road was noticed the previous day, which is a sign of a sinkhole soon to come. Though the sinkhole isn't obvious to the bare eye at this point, the fact that the road is sagging over about a 6' x 6' area indicates that there is a fair amount of roadbed fines that have washed away through the holes in the culvert. It

was believed critical to get the road closed today; particularly the eastbound lane where the depression is located.

Meetings were held earlier in the day with the Police Department to collaborate on how best to approach the project. For the immediate response, the department closed the eastbound lane on Amherst Road at Meetinghouse Road and Naticook Road. Cars coming eastbound are being detoured either left or right on Naticook and Meetinghouse. For today and tomorrow the westbound lane from the Turnpike side is being left open so cars can hopefully get used to the upcoming closure.

Police Officers are onsite with the Press Release issued earlier in the day and maps on detour route. As folks get snarled in the traffic, the hope is to hand these out to try and get word out. The Press Release was provided to WMUR and posted on all social media sites, Nixle, and the Amherst Facebook page.

On Saturday morning the Highway crew will finish closing the westbound lane beginning at 7:00 a.m. At that point, the road will be completely closed to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The contractor who was scheduled for a few weeks from now has rearranged his schedule somewhat to try and help the Town out in getting the road re-opened as soon as possible. The hope is that the contractor will be mobilized onsite Monday or Tuesday. There is a fair amount of work that needs to be done prior to digging up the old pipe and putting a new one in. There is a 16" waterline and a gas line running through that corridor that need to be addressed either by rerouting the water temporarily or trying to suspend it with a beam as we dig underneath it.

The existing pipe is a 36" pipe, which is really too small hydraulically. A 60" concrete pipe will be put in its place. The hope is that the project will be completed in less than weeks, but they don't anticipate the closure lasting longer than 4 weeks.

When asked, Director Fox commented one of the lucky things about this work having been planned for is we did make it through the end of the school year, which was one of the priorities. The department maintains a drainage masterplan list, and this was climbing up towards the top of the list (#3). It was planned work for the summer, and is just happening a few weeks earlier than anticipated.

Vice Chairman Rothhaus commented he noted some of the social media outreach, and some of the commentary was that there is some neglect going on if this would happen so abruptly, but it had been planned for. Director Fox commented as much as you can plan for the replacement of these metal pipes, they fail quickly and sometimes you just can't plan everything to line up with funding sources and contractor availabilities.

Councilor Flood commented she believes it fortunate that this problem had been identified some time ago, and we're ready to start the project. She questioned if there is an inspection schedule on all of these in Town. Director Fox stated the culvert inspection program is one the department is trying to improve on. During the last budget cycle the Wastewater division was able to budget for and get approved to buy new camera equipment to be able to look through their lines. The Highway folks will utilize that equipment to start inspecting the storm water culverts as well. Right now we don't have the equipment to be able to do it so all you can see is what you can see from the ends of the pipes and with a flashlight looking up the pipes. This will be the start of a more robust inspection program going forward.

Councilor Boyd questioned Director Fox anticipates coming back before the Council for an additional appropriation, and was informed they do not. When asked, Director Fox stated the Police Officers would be detail officers on overtime. It was noted some officer cost was anticipated in the project. Because the closure happened quicker than anticipated, there will be a little bit bigger charge than had been planned for. They will still be able to stay within budget for the project.

Councilor Koenig commented on having heard this included in the traffic reports on WZID as he was driving to the meeting. The detour map ends kind of abruptly on Naticook Road; does not show where anyone goes from there. He questioned if there is an expanded view map. Director Fox responded they were putting everything together pretty quickly this afternoon, and will get a better map out there. Councilor Koenig remarked you don't want traffic going down Greens Pond Road, which is the only thing that shows on the southern part of the map. Director Fox stressed the PWD does not encourage people to use Greens Pond Road; it is not a paved road and has sharp turns and steep grades.

Councilor Koenig questioned if the cutoffs eastbound at Naticook and Meetinghouse would be accomplished by placing barriers in the road, and if residents of the area would have to go around. Director Fox stated local traffic will be able to get through. The jersey barriers will be put out Saturday, and will be close to the work zone. There is a driveway west of the culvert and the barriers will be just to the east of that, and the barriers will be somewhere up the hill towards what used to be White Hen.

Councilor Dwyer commented he is one of those people who has been taking Greens Pond for the last few years. He questioned if an officer could be assigned at those critical spots in the 5:00 p.m. hour where traffic could be backed up for quite a distance. He noted where Meetinghouse meets Turkey Hill Road it is already getting backed up, and suggested that may be the backdoor entrance to take a left over Turkey Hill Bridge and to the neighborhoods out that way. Director Fox stated that could be done, and reiterated the discussions that took place with the Police Department. They are trying to figure out the number of personnel needed and set it so that they can be flexible to areas where they aren't needed because traffic is working well and put them to other areas where they would be needed.

Director Fox requested residents spread the word. He noted the Traffic Management Center in Concord is going to try and put the message on the Turnpike message boards, and noted they reached out to Google to see if they could update Google maps, etc.

Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) Information Update

Councilor Boyd stated it was brought to his attention that the Merrimack Citizens for Clean Water will begin their community assessment study this weekend. They will be meeting across the street from Saint-Gobain in the parking lot of the medical center and bowling alley to basically dispense materials. They will go out into the community on Saturday and Sunday looking for people to participate in the community assessment study.

Highway Garage Project Update

Councilor Flood stated the project continues to move along. Over the past two weeks, the following progress has been made: we hosted the mandatory briefing session for construction management firms

interested in the project. Twelve firms attended the session. The Geotechnical Report for the site was issued. Overall the report was very good news showing good granular soils under the building envelope. There were some areas of fill and ledge that may need to be dealt with during construction depending on the final design of the building. The draft Existing Conditions Plan was issued by the surveyor to the design consultant. The final plan is expected by next week. H.L. Turner is continuing with the design of the building, and will be seeking input form the Highway Garage employees in the coming weeks to gain a better understanding on the needed functionality of the building; in other words how can the design of the building best help them do their jobs.

The next milestones for the project include the following: the deadline for questions from potential construction management firms is tomorrow, June 23rd. The construction manager proposals are due to the Town on June 29th after which the Building Committee will review the submittals and narrow down the group to a short list of firms that will be interviewed and asked to submit a detailed proposal including project costs. The Building Committee expects to be able to update the Town Council on the selected construction management firm on July 20th.

Public Comments - None

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

1. Recognition of Retirement of Police Chief Mark E. Doyle

Submitted by Human Resources Coordinator Sharon Marunicz
The Town Council will present a recognition award to former Police Chief Mark E. Doyle in recognition of his retirement from the Merrimack Police Department with more than 31 years of full-time service. August 11, 1985 - May 31, 2017.

Captain Michael Dudash commented they considered Chief Doyle as what they call a border jumper from Billerica, MA when he got hired back in 1985. What some don't know is that he was assigned as Chief Doyle's Field Training Officer. He was a very quick learner and motivated to be the best he could be and to succeed within the department.

Chief Doyle made Sargent within 3 years. In 1994 he made Lieutenant, Captain in 2002, Deputy Chief in 2007, and has served this community from 2011 to 2017 as the Chief of Police. While under his leadership, the Town of Merrimack was in the top 100 safest communities in the country for four years in a row. During his career he served as Accident Investigation Commander, Motorcycle Officer, Department Prosecutor, and wore many other hats. One thing most don't know is that when he graduated from the Police Academy he also received the Distinguished Most Outstanding Police Officer Award, which is pretty hard to receive.

Chief Doyle has a list of accomplishments that is too great to list. If there is any one goal or accomplishment that he made as Chief and something that he wanted to do from the beginning, it was to knock down all barriers so all people feel free to come to the Police Station and call him by Mark Doyle, Mike Dudash, or Denise Roy. He did this by developing deep and lasting relationships within the community and civic organizations. He created relationships with groups such as Merrimack Crimeline, Lions Club, Safeguard, the YMCA, Greater Nashua Health, Highway Safety Committee, Meals on Wheels, Merrimack Youth Associations, Boy Scouts, but not last, his personal favorite, the Special Olympics. Captain Dudash commented Chief Doyle's greatest accomplishment is raising a

great family with his Wife, Mary, which is not easy to do when you are working midnights, holidays, and weekends.

On behalf of the departing, he thanked Chief Doyle for over 31 years of dedicated service to the people and Town of Merrimack. He wished him luck in his new position as Division Director of Emergency Services for the State of New Hampshire, and remarked "We are proud to say you are from Merrimack."

Captain Denise Roy stated about 27 years ago she walked through the doors of the Merrimack Police Department, was young, intimidated, and did not know what she was getting herself into. One of the people that made her feel comfortable and like she was a part of something bigger, part of a family, was then Sgt. Doyle. She commented she has always remembered that and has hoped to emulate that by making others feel comfortable too. She commented they have been through a lot over the years, and she has learned a lot about leadership from him. Back in 2014 when Ed Pane passed away they were all gathered at the hospice house, and were in shock when he passed. They didn't know what to do. Chief Doyle stood up and said a few words, and in doing so held them all together. She commented it is those kinds of things that won't be forgotten, and is how she wishes to lead people. She thanked him for all that he has taught her.

Chairman Harrington thanked Chief Doyle for his years of service in protecting the citizenry of Merrimack.

Chief Doyle commented police officers, public servants, and first responders are a special breed of folks. The people he has worked with over the past 32 years are really the true heroes; the ones that keep things moving, respond to the calls for service, and the ones we all rely on every time we pick up that phone and make a call for help.

Chief Doyle commented 32 years is a long time, but goes by in a flash. The one thing that has always been there for him has been his amazing wife, Mary. She has been there non-stop; long before he became a police officer. She has been with him through thick and thin and has always been there waiting up for him at night and through whatever it took to be that police officer that people in Town expect you to be. He stated he could not have been nearly as committed or as dedicated without having her behind him the whole time, and to the same degree the wonderful children he has. He commented it takes a family that we have at home and the one that we have when we come to work every single day of the week.

The Town Council presented a recognition award to Police Chief Mark E. Doyle in recognition of his service.

2. Recognition of Retirement of Town Employee

Submitted by Human Resources Coordinator Sharon Marunicz
The Town Council will present a recognition award to former Account Clerk II Janet Killpartrick in recognition of her retirement from Merrimack Town Clerk / Tax Collector's office with more than 19 years of full-time service. September 2, 1997 - May 31, 2017.

Ms. Killpartrick was not in attendance. A plaque in recognition of her 19 years of loyal and dedicated full-time service to the Town of Merrimack will be presented to her. Town Manager Cabanel noted Ms. Killpartrick has returned to employment with the Town on a part-time basis.

3. Recognition of Full-time Years of Service of Town Employees

Submitted by Human Resources Coordinator Sharon Marunicz
The Town Council will present a recognition awards to the following employees:

Fire & Rescue

- Captain Richard M. Gagne (20-year plaque)

Public Works Wastewater

- James E. Taylor (40-year gift card)
- Cecil E. Peters (40-year gift card)

The recipients were unable to be in attendance. The recognition awards will be forwarded along with the gratitude of the Town Council for the years of service to the community.

4. Recognition of Town Committee Member

Submitted by Town Council Chairman Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Finlay Rothhaus
The Town Council will present a certificate to the following individual for his service to the Town of Merrimack:

- Douglas Dowell – *EDCAC*

Chairman Harrington presented a certificate to Douglas Dowell in recognition of his service to the Town of Merrimack as a member of the Economic Development Citizen Advisory Committee from July 2008 to June 2017.

5. Recognition of Town Committee Member

Submitted by Town Council Chairman Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Finlay Rothhaus The Town Council will present a plaque to Chris Christensen for his 15 years of service to the Town of Merrimack as a member on the Parks and Recreation Committee.

A plaque was presented to Chris Christensen in recognition of his 15 years of volunteer service to the Town of Merrimack as a member of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Mr. Christensen commented he has seen a lot of changes to parks and recreation in the Town. The focus is on a much broader range of activities for all ages, families, elderly, etc. He spoke of the strong support of the Town Council for the myriad of activities put on by the department, something that is greatly appreciated by those on the committee.

Mr. Christensen remarked, as the Chairman of the House Resources and Recreation and Development Committee and a member of the Public Water Access Advisory Board of the State Park System

Advisory Council, he is still in the game, and if there are questions on a State level or anything else that he can help with, he is hopeful the Town will reach out.

Appointments - None

Public Hearing - None

Legislative Updates from State Representatives

Representative Chris Christensen stated today was the last session day for this fiscal year. The House is not active until they start doing retained bill meetings in August. They did pass a budgeted earlier in the day, passed the familiarly known Keno-garten Bill. There was a lot of interest in House Bill (HB) 620, which had to do with education and an amendment to that bill that prohibited the Department of Education from promulgating rules that would result in downshifting of activities or finances to the Town tax base. There was a lot of concern about that; that it would result in reduced services. That Bill did not make it through the Senate today so it never came to the House. He stated his belief the issue was difficult to follow because the State, under our Constitution, cannot put out rules and requirements that are not funded by the State; unfunded mandates.

Chairman Harrington requested a brief explanation of why the amendment to the PFOA bill was not passed. Representative Christensen stated HB485 set a specific limit on PFOAs. There was a lot of information that came after the House passed that Bill and it had gone on to the Finance Committee. With all of that new information, the Finance Committee retained the Bill to work on it in more depth, and would report in November for it to come back to the House in January. The sponsor of the Bill didn't like the fact that they wished to study it more, lifted a good portion of the language, and attached it to a bill that had to do with air emitting devices that contaminate ground water. It still had a lot of flaws in that amendment, which is why it had been retained in the first place.

He spoke of the letter written by Jim Taylor outlining some of the problems the amendment had. Those issues were also echoed by New Hampshire Waterworks, the Granite State Rural Water Association, and others who are in that business as well as the New Hampshire Municipal Association. With all of that in mind, the Committee of Conference would not pass that amendment, and because it was tied to the Bill, the whole Bill died. That air emissions device, part of it, will come back in the fall.

Councilor Boyd stated HB463 was the air emissions device, and that is part of the problem with what the Town experienced with the inability to have the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) able to regulate what was being emitted out of Saint-Gobain. He stated his presumption if HB463 remained untouched, there was probably a good chance it would have gone through, and questioned if that is a fair assessment. Representative Christensen's response was that is absolutely accurate. He added it went through his committee, through Dick Barry's committee, and had strong support in the House. It was good until the Senate decided to try and add that other bill back through the back door.

Town Manager's Report

With the passage of Senate Bill 57 and signing by the Governor, Merrimack will begin to receive State Aid Grant funding for the Dewatering Upgrade at the Wastewater Treatment Facility paid out over time. The total eligible State Aid Grant funding for the project is \$640,000. In order to catch up, because it has been on hold for a couple of years, the Town will receive \$81,000 this year.

Work to reconstruct the sidewalks at the Town Hall complex is scheduled to begin on July 5. The main entrance to the east and west wings of Town Hall will be closed between July 8th and July 23rd. Access to the Assessing and Town Clerk offices will be through the Town Manager's office via the concrete steps to the south of the main entrance. The ADA accessible entrance will be through the Town Council chambers via the ramp located at the south end of the east wing of Town Hall.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) is planning paving operations in Merrimack this summer on Industrial Avenue (Exit 10 off the Turnpike) and Continental Boulevard (from Industrial Avenue to Route 101A). The work is scheduled to take place in August and will occur during the night time hours.

Councilor Koenig spoke to questions that have come up about the Executive Park Drive multi-family project in the former Merrimack Hotel area. He remarked it is not finalized by any stretch of the imagination, but he could provide some information. Variances were granted by the ZBA to allow a 280-unit project to be developed (May meeting). The project still has to go before the Planning Board for Site Plan review. It is not currently scheduled for a Public Hearing with the Planning Board as it takes weeks or months to prepare fully engineered plans, drainage analysis, traffic impact analysis, etc. There was a discussion at the last Planning Board meeting around having a specific meeting just to talk about traffic. He suggested residents concerned with the traffic impacts keep an eye on the agendas for the Planning Board to see that come forward.

On June 16th, staff met with the NHDOT to scope the traffic study, and determine the intersections that need to be analyzed.

Approx. 60% of the units would be 2-bedroom with the remainder being 1 bedroom. The project is intended to be "market rate apartments" with rents in the range of \$1,600 - \$1,800/month. There is no intention to have subsidized units at the site to the best of our knowledge. It is likely little additional information will be available until the formal application is submitted.

Plans for the Flatley multi-family project have been signed by the Planning Board, and construction is likely to start in the near future. That is up near the Homestead Restaurant in the north part of Town. The Applicant is allowed to build 4 out of the 5 buildings as part of the development agreement for a mixed use project. The Board approved that back in 2015.

This past Tuesday, New Hampshire Hydraulics on Columbia Circle was granted conditional approval by the Planning Board for a 9,600 sq. ft. addition to their existing facility. The project also requires ZBA relief for front setbacks due to the location of the existing facility (encroaches on the front setback by 1-2'). They could move the whole addition back and be out of that, but then it would look strange and cost more. Councilor Koenig commented from what he saw of that plan, it looked like a very good, well thought out opportunity to clean up an area, and to give them an expanded production area as well.

Councilor Boyd questioned if there would be discussion regarding the signalization at Executive Drive and Amherst Road. Councilor Koenig remarked that is talked about any time anything happens; he is sure that will come up as part of any traffic study involved with that. He is uncertain where that will go at this point.

Town Manager Cabanel remarked with the recent retirement of Lieutenant Dalton from the Merrimack Fire Department, the Fire Chief has gone through significant testing and interviews, and has decided to promote Master Firefighter Scott Bannister to the position of Lieutenant. He is also a Paramedic, and a company officer. He started in 2001, is a Firefighter Level II, Hazardous Materials Technician, Rescue Systems I and II, Swift Water Rescue Technician, Ice Rescue Technician, Confined Space Technician, etc. He has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, and is a Registered Nurse.

Consent Agenda - None

Old Business – None

New Business

1. Committee Appointments

Submitted by Town Council Chairman Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Finlay Rothhaus
The Town Council to consider appointing the following individuals to Town committees, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8:

- **Donald Miner Jr.** Agricultural Commission (*Full member*)
- **Ronald Miner III** Agricultural Commission (*Full member*)
- **Anita Creager** Heritage Commission (*Full member*)
- **Lon Woods** Heritage Commission (*Full member*)
- **Adonis Elfakih** Technology Committee (*Full member*)
- **John Sauter** Technology Committee (*Full member*)
- **Peter Flood** Town Center Committee (*Full member*)
- **Bill Wilkes** Town Center Committee (*Full member*)

<u>MOTION</u> made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Albert to approve the appointments of Donald Miner, Jr. and Ronald Miner III as full members to the Agricultural Commission, Anita Creager and Lon Woods as full members to the Heritage Commission, and Adonis Elfakih, John Sauter, Peter Flood, and Bill Wilkes as full members to the Town Center Committee, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8

ON THE QUESTION

Councilor Boyd thanked the individuals for their willingness to serve the community in this way.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

There being no objection, the Council recessed for five minutes at 8:00 p.m. The Council reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

2. Eagle Scout Project Presentation

Submitted by Life Scout Mason Landry
Town Council to be presented with Mason Landry's Eagle Scout Project idea to renovate the
Merrimack Middle School outdoor classroom area.

Mason Landry, Troop 401, stated his Eagle Scout project to be renovation of the Outdoor Classroom in Grater Woods. The Outdoor Classroom is located directly behind the Merrimack Middle School. The project would entail replacement of benches as well as cutting down of trees standing in front of the classroom (most approx. 3" thick) and some of the undergrowth and shrubs to create a clear view of the meadow.

With regard to the benches, concrete posts would be dug at an adequate depth, braces bolted to the concrete, and the concrete to the benches (2' x 12'). This would allow the benches to be replaced over time, when necessary. The benches would be descending lengths (stadium style) leading to the area where the teacher's bench would be located.

The project is expected to cost approx. \$1,200. An excavator will be required for the project. Anyone interested in volunteering for that activity is encouraged to contact Life Scout Landry.

Fundraising will consist of a pancake breakfast as well as advertising to local businesses seeking donations of materials/discounts.

Chairman Harrington questioned if the outdoor classroom is located on conservation or school property. Life Scout Landry stated his belief it is located on Town property, and noted he appeared before the Conservation Commission a few days prior.

Vice Chairman Rothhaus spoke of the pond that existed in the area previously, and questioned if trees have begun growing, and if the area will become a forest at some point, which would result in the view of the meadow being non-existent. Life Scout Landry stated his belief it is a little marshy with some water remaining. He spoke of Cattails growing in some of the marshy areas. He suggested the meadow would likely last as long if not longer than the planned benches.

Councilor Boyd questioned if the School Board has been contacted and informed of the project. Gage Perry, Chairman, Merrimack Conservation Commission, indicated the project was presented to the Grater Woods Subcommittee of which Shannon Barnes, Chairman, Merrimack School Board, is a member.

When asked, Life Scout Landry stated the benches spanning the greatest distance would have 3 posts whereas others would have 2. The lumber would either be pressure-treated or spruce. With regard to treatment, the intent is to leave it natural. When asked, he stated his Troop to be 401 located in Merrimack; chartered out of St. James Church.

<u>MOTION</u> made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Koenig to endorse Life Scout Mason Landry's proposed Eagle Scout Project to renovate the Merrimack Middle School outdoor classroom area, and furthermore authorize the Town Manager and/or her proxy to sign any and all documentation that may be required. <u>MOTION CARRIED</u> 7-0-0

3. Presentation of Property Purchase by the Merrimack Conservation Commission Submitted by Merrimack Conservation Commission Chairman Gage Perry

The Merrimack Conservation Commission would like to present the intended purchase of the waterfront property off of Caron Ave known as tax map parcel 3D-1/003.

Gage Perry, Chairman, Merrimack Conservation Commission, provided a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached). The Commission has reached agreement with the Sklar family; have a signed Purchase & Sales Agreement. The required Public Hearing was conducted at the Commission's last regular meeting. The request is being made of the Council to approve the purchase.

A photo of the parcel was provided, which included the area believed to be the original Thornton's Ferry Landing. The parcel is identified as Tax Map 3D-1 Lot 003. It is 30.8 Acres of Merrimack River waterfront having Floodplain to bluff topography. It is adjacent to the existing Town owned boat ramp. It is a parcel listed as a key shoreline parcel to obtain in the 2013 Town of Merrimack Master Plan, which was put on that list (in '92) by Andy Powell, former Chairman of the Conservation Commission. Back then, Mr. Powell and Clara Sklar were discussing the parcel. At that time, there was the possibility of that parcel being developed, and the family was looking to sell it for over a million dollars.

The property underwent a Phase 1 Environmental Impact Assessment, which returned with no concerns regarding soil contamination or other environmental matters. The intent is to utilize Fund 53 to cover the purchase price/assessed value of \$154,000. The Commission will cover the costs of fees and taxes, which will result in an anticipated total expenditure of \$156,074.47.

The property will hold a Deed with similar conservation restrictions to what has been used for other donated and purchased parcels over the last 7 years. The Commission, in conjunction with the Sklar family, have agreed to name this property the "Sklar Waterfront Park". The purchase was unanimously approved by the Commission on June 19th.

Acquisition would expand the Commission and Town's protection of the Merrimack River uplands and would create a large open space, contiguous with existing Town property, for passive recreation activities. It was reiterated there is the potential for great historical significance dating back as far as the 1780s.

Mr. Perry expressed gratitude to the Sklar family for working with the Commission to make this possible.

Councilor Dwyer stated his full support for the acquisition, and thanked the Commission and Sklar family for bringing this to fruition. He commented this is truly a unique piece of land that takes you to the river. There isn't another access point that is as user-friendly as this one is.

Councilor Albert questioned if there would be a formal parking lot. Mr. Perry commented the parcel where parking would be located is currently owned by the Town. Consideration has not been been given to what the road surface would be, how large the parking lot would be, etc. There is some area down there that appears would be a good fit for a parking lot.

Councilor Albert questioned if it is the intent of the Commission to keep open the existing roadway down to the boat ramp. Mr. Perry stated that to be the case. When asked, he stated passive recreation would exclude non-motorized access, e.g., foot traffic, bicycles, fishing, etc. Councilor Albert spoke of the need for an educational period given OHRVs have been using that area for the past 40-50 years. Mr. Perry commented the brook comes out of Horseshoe Pond, which OHRV users are currently driving across. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and Fish & Game have been down there, and Fish & Game has cited people for crossing that stream. The property is currently posted "no motorized vehicles". There will be an enforcement issue down there.

Councilor Albert questioned if an archeological dig would be permitted. Mr. Perry stated that is in the Deed; historical activities will be allowed and fostered.

Councilor Flood stated she is pleased about the purchase. She questioned if consideration has been given to joint governance with the abutting parcel, which is also owned by the Town. Mr. Perry stated the Commission has not yet reached that point. The property is currently used as a boat ramp, and users are driving down there to launch their crafts. Councilor Flood commented she has been in the area a few times, and found the Town parcel to be a mess, and questioned if the property proposed for purchase has similar issues. Mr. Perry stated he did not witness a lot of dumping although there is a lot of four-wheel activity.

Councilor Albert spoke of a makeshift bridge that was put in to provide access to the boat ramp. Vice Chairman Rothhaus remarked it should be a good bridge as real money was expended on it. He believed it to be built to a standard for vehicles to go over, is a real bridge, and nothing materialized beyond it. He questioned if the scarring that is occurring on the Sklar property is similar to that which is occurring on the Town owned property. Chairman Harrington commented she cannot believe the trees are still alive because the roots are so exposed. Mr. Perry responded the activities aren't concerned about the boundaries. The Floodplain section looks similar to that of the Town owned property.

Councilor Dwyer commented this is the beginning stages of this park. There will be an educational transition. The activity that has been going on for decades will cease. There will be monies expended on that road to make it more inviting.

Town Manager Cabanel informed the Council of discussions her office has had with members of the Commission, Tim Thompson, Director, Community Development Department, and Captain Dudash regarding the need for increased random patrols of Town owned properties. Those efforts will begin shortly.

Councilor Albert commented, over the years, the Police Department has tried its best to get into the various properties, but there is always that battle of pulling an officer out of his/her sector in a populated area handling calls and having him/her too far in the woods. That was his concern, and he is

hopeful that is what is being strategized about. Town Manager Cabanel stated the discussions have been around patrols that are out on an overtime basis.

Councilor Koenig stated he is pleased with the proposed purchase. He spoke of mention of a name having already been identified and noted the Town has a naming policy. He questioned how critical the name being discussed is to the program going forward. Mr. Perry stated it to have been pretty critical to the family. At the family's request, it was written into the Purchase & Sale Agreement. Other parts of it could be named. Michael Boisvert, Conservation Commission, remarked the naming aspect was part of the reason the Commission was able to acquire the property at the price identified.

Councilor Flood commented the Town's naming policy does allow for this; if we can obtain a parcel, and the seller believes it to be at a discounted price, which it perhaps is, they can make that request. Town Manager Cabanel stated the Council simply has to grant it.

Vice Chairman Rothhaus questioned if the parcel is buildable, and commented there seems to be an empty parcel to the south. Mr. Perry stated that to be privately owned. When asked, he stated there to be a small lot line at the bottom of Star Drive where there is a crossing. That is private property, and the gentleman that owns that crossing is the only one that has the key. That is the agreement between him and Pan Am. He has to go open that gate and go across it. It is not a public crossing; it is gated and locked all the time. The only way over those tracks is on the road now. The parcel above it is privately owned and the access to it is via the trails running parallel with the tracks, Starr Drive, or the access the Town has from the boat ramp. Vice Chairman Rothhaus commented the property is not necessarily developable unless someone were able to get PanAm to make a change. Vice Chairman Rothhaus stated he does not have a problem with the name, but saw the Town had the purchase price as the assessed value, which he considers to be a pretty accurate assessment because it is limited as to what you can do.

Councilor Koenig stated he does not have heartburn over it, and he hasn't had heartburn over a lot of other opportunities, but there have been situations where names have been promulgated and inappropriately in his opinion, and he just wanted to make sure the Town was not giving away the farm by saying we don't care about naming anymore.

Mr. Boisvert commented some 8 years ago the Commission offered in the area of \$300,000 for this property. When asked if the Council was involved in that, Mr. Perry commented it is one of the key parcels to obtain, and that was what was presented to the Council that there is a priority list. Vice Chairman Rothhaus commented he likes the parcel, and is pleased with the purchase. Mr. Perry stated back when the previous offer was made negotiations broke down at around the \$500,000 mark.

Councilor Flood commented she is concerned that she was going along on a misapprehension herself about the name. She questioned if there was anything that was specified in regard to the name. Mr. Boisvert stated the three surviving sons wanted this property to be like a memorial to their parents. Clara Sklar owned it when she was alive, which is when another offer was made years ago. Councilor Flood stated her opinion the parcel is only good for what it will be used for. Mr. Perry remarked if you could gain access to the site and get buildable materials out there to build, it would be a beautiful place to live.

<u>MOTION</u> made by Councilor Dwyer and seconded by Councilor Boyd to approve the purchase of tax map parcel 3D-1/003, and authorize the Town Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the Town, which are necessary to complete the transfer and the acceptance of this purchase

ON THE QUESTION

Councilor Dwyer commented he is sure there will be a committee formed for the design, road construction, etc. He assured everyone in Town that once we take on parks in Town that they are to be taken care of. He has the full confidence and faith that that activity, which has always occurred, will continue. Although he understands the concerns stated regarding the current and past activity, he has full faith that in the future it will be transformed, and the way the property was treated in the past will be something of the past.

MOTION CARRIED 6-1-0

Councilor Koenig voted in opposition

Mr. Perry spoke of how the Commission manages its properties. He used the example of Grater Woods, which he referred to as having previously been the Wild Wild West. As trails have been made, and people have gotten involved and began using the trails, the prior, undesired activities have dropped off considerably. Once this latest parcel begins to be utilized, he is of the belief the undesired activities will dissipate there as well.

4. Donation Acceptance for the Merrimack Police Department

Submitted by Captain Mike Dudash

Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of \$2,405.29 from Merrimack Crimeline, Inc., that was raised at the annual crimeline Magic Show to be used for the Merrimack Police Department's K-9 Program, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

Captain Dudash stated the Police Department had its Open House back in early May during which the Crimeline presented the department with a donation from their Magic Show in the amount of \$2,405.29 to be used towards the K-9 Program; expenses ranging from insurance to equipment to outfitting the vehicle and the officer.

Councilor Albert stated the Crimeline continues to support the K-9 program. He stated his appreciation for the help over the years and the continued help in support of the Police Department.

MOTION made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Albert to approve the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of Two Thousand Four Hundred Five Dollars and Twenty Nine Cents (\$2,405.29) from Merrimack Crimeline, Inc., that was raised at the annual Crimeline Magic Show to be used for the Merrimack Police Department's K-9 Program, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15. Furthermore that the Town Manager or her proxy be authorized to sign any paperwork necessary to expend the monies. MOTION CARRIED 7-0-0

5. Donation Acceptance for the Parks and Recreation Department

Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Casparius

Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of \$400.00 from Bear Christensen Charitable Trust to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used for the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article.

<u>MOTION</u> made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Dwyer to approve the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of Four Hundred Dollars (\$400.00) from Bear Christensen Charitable Trust to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used for the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article

ON THE QUESTION

The Council expressed its gratitude to the Christensen Family.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

6. Disposal of Tax Deeded Properties

Submitted by Town Manager Eileen Cabanel The Town Council to consider the disposal of tax deeded properties, pursuant to RSAs 80:88, 80:89 and 80:90.

Chairman Harrington stated the agenda item was omitted from the agenda as the issue was resolved.

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the Town Council meeting of June 8, 2017.

The following amendments were offered:

Page 3, Line 5; delete "(Commission)"

Page 4, Line 3; replace "Mc." With "Mr."

Page 5, Line 38; replace 'Vaults' with "Vault's"

Page 8, Lines 20-21; correct spacing

Page 9, Lines 3 and 9; there should be no "' in 'Lion's"

Page 12, Line 31; insert "and" after "buses"

Page 12, Lie 33; insert after "be in place. Student Transportation" after "mechanisms"

<u>MOTION</u> made by Councilor Boyd and seconded by Councilor Koenig to accept the meeting minutes of the Town Council meeting of June 8, 2017, as amended. <u>MOTION CARRIED</u> 7-0-0

Comments from the Press - None

Comments from the Public - None

Comments from the Council

Councilor Boyd remarked a few months ago he sought out and was appointed to fulfill the remainder of the term of an open position on the Executive Committee of the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC). Last evening, he was re-appointed to continue serving on that committee.

Director Fox and Dawn Tuomala, Deputy Director/Town Engineer, PWD, asked that he represent the Town as it related to an amendment to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) traffic improvement project where there is a section of road that was part of a study in 2002 that needs to go from 2 lanes to 3. It runs from Pennichuck Square right at Continental Boulevard all the way up to Craftsman Lane. It also includes Boston Post Road. As it stood, the project has been punted down the road for several years. Part of the amendment that was being recommended by the TTAC was to punt it out one more year. He was asked by Director Fox and Deputy Director Tuomala to support the amendment with the caveat that the NRPC recommend to the DOT that they sit down with the Town of Merrimack and have a substantive conversation about the need for this project to occur. It unanimously passed the NRPC.

Tim Roache, Executive Director, NRPC, is leaving to go to the Rockingham Economic Development Commission. The application process to fill his position has begun, and the search committee has narrowed it down to one internal candidate, Jennifer Czysz, who is the interim Executive Director, and three outside candidates. Councilor Boyd commented, although not part of the search committee, he will be a part of the process at the very end before a recommendation is made to the Commission.

Councilor Boyd commented the NRPC has seen a significant period of growth over the past couple of years, and with Tim's departure, two Executive Directors will have left within the past few years. There is concern about being able to maintain continuity of leadership. One of the things he recommended the Executive Committee consider as they move forward with the process is to not have the Executive Director be employed at will, but instead be contracted.

Councilor Dwyer stated he is very concerned with how his Town is changing. Exit 11 to him is the most congested intersection in Town. The Zoning Board has given approval to approximately 260-280 apartments. Speaking as a citizen, he thinks that will be disastrous. He wants everyone in Town to be aware of this. The thought of having 5-6 buildings and what that would do at the location of the old Merrimack Hotel is to him quite frightening; knowing that barrack style buildings, 2-3 stories high, each having approx. 40 units could be put up. He commented that intersection, at rush hour, is a nightmare now. What it will become once the hotel and 260 units are at that property to him is a mind-boggling thing to do to ourselves.

He commented he can understand what it means to own something and want to do something with your property, and he can respect that, but as a Council we're supposed to be looking out for the whole community, and that type of development to him is just wrong. It is the wrong spot for that density; into that intersection where so many of us go to get to and from work and get in and out of our community. He spoke of the 6,000 employees at Fidelity, and the roughly 10,000 people coming and going at rush hour leaving and getting off at Route 3. He spoke of the current congestion on Route 3 and that fact that the widening project is coming, although we don't know when, and suggested it will be obsolete the day it is completed.

He stated his opinion the Town will forever be changed if 260 units are placed at that location. For the protection of all of our homes and the investments in our homes and in the Town, he is hopeful people are paying attention to what is coming in the next 2-3 years. He suggested the Town will become unrecognizable in 3-5 years if we continue to let this kind of density growth of apartments just start springing up not to mention another 260 by the Flatley property down on Route 3. Within the next 2-3 years we will have 500 new apartment buildings plus a second hotel being built at the entrance of the mall. There is also the Edgebrook project. He reiterated people should be paying attention to what is going on out there.

Councilor Koenig stated his appreciation of the thoughts expressed. He noted Edgebrook was tabled indefinitely at the Planning Board meeting. What the future holds there is unknown. If they want to work that project they will probably have to go back to ground zero and start over. With regard to the other properties, he commented it is easy to talk about volumes of apartments and explain that that will cause problems, but the official traffic studies that look at peak traffic times and things of that nature, as they have been presented, peer reviewed, and as they have been vetted, have shown that the properties like the Flatley property can handle that kind of increase in traffic without significant damage to the local areas as far as traffic flow is concerned. He stated he is sure the Planning Board will be taking as thorough if not more deep of a look at traffic in the vicinity of Executive Drive, especially with respect to this property.

Councilor Koenig remarked to tell everyone that you need to pay attention and get upset about it is fine, but the Planning Board is restricted by laws and regulations as to what they can and cannot do, and we cannot take away an opportunity for someone to develop this property; as you alluded to if it were your property you would want to develop it. If they are within their legal rights to do so, we do whatever we can to make sure that they do that in a way that is best for the Town, and makes those improvements, but we still have to follow the laws and regulations of the State as to how we control or try to regulate.

Councilor Koenig stated he is not afraid to be sued if someone does not agree with the Planning Board so he doesn't have any problem with saying no, but realizing that they have that opportunity to also go to court. When that happens, the Court's decision becomes law, and the Town no longer has any say in the matter. The Board always tries to walk an appropriate line there to not go overboard to the point where they think they will be thrown out in court and any concessions or restrictions the Town had put on the property would be totally washed out by the court's ruling.

He stated his belief the Planning Board does its job well, the Community Development staff does its job well, and he encouraged everyone to pay attention to these projects and to go ahead and make wishes known, but realize that there are certain limitations and restrictions that we all have to follow.

Councilor Koenig stated there are public hearings at Planning Board meetings on every one of the projects, and people seldom come forward to discuss the matters. He again suggested residents having concerns attend the meetings, and make those concerns known. He reiterated he expects a special meeting will be scheduled for the sole purpose of discussing traffic on this project.

Vice Chairman Rothhaus stated the surprise to him was the zoning change. He agrees once that happened now they have to abide by the rules laid out in that zoning change, etc. He commented he does believe traffic studies work. It is not only the applicant who has their traffic study, the Town has

its own sources that will confirm the information. The property rights issue is very serious. It is that zoning change that all of a sudden made it a different game.

Chairman Harrington commented it is a State intersection, which will require the State to become involved.

Councilor Dwyer questioned what they can do noting it is a definitive space. It can't be expanded. There cannot be another light. It is fixed. Chairman Harrington responded there will have to be a decision about whether they can accommodate the traffic.

Councilor Dwyer commented it is the homeowners in the area and the value of their homes that he is concerned with into the future; will the values of their homes go down in three years if there are 26 apartments sitting there. That is the planning part where we are supposed to have the Planning Board and the Council thinking about the future. That is the scary part.

Councilor Flood commented she moved into Town when it was 2,000 - 3,000 in size. She didn't want to live in such a small town, and was glad when it started growing. The Town has grown, in very much fits and starts. She was not happy with very much of it at the time, but things did work out. She stated her concern to be the amount of people together in that small area. However, someone has the right to do that if they are not violating any of the laws. Traffic has always resolved one way or another in this Town. She spoke of having recently read an article that stated New Hampshire has 200,000 jobs that are going unfilled. We need skilled workers. These apartments might bring in a workforce. This parcel has been sitting empty for such a long period of time, and now all of a sudden it is desirable; because Merrimack is desirable.

Councilor Boyd stated the NRPC Executive Committee reconfigured their dues for FY19. There is a specific formula broken down by property valuation and population. Merrimack's dues are going down \$142. The Mayor of Nashua asked the NRPC to endorse his desire to pursue rail incrementally using City funds for them to be able to pursue the data collection needed to determine whether or not having rail come to Nashua would be viable. It is something the City of Nashua wants to take ownership of. The NRPC formally gave their blessing.

Adjourn

MOTION made by Councilor Dwyer and seconded by Councilor Boyd to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION** CARRIED 7-0-0

The June 22, 2017 meeting of the Town Council was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by Dawn MacMillan

MCC Land Purchase & Approval Merrimack River Waterfront Tax Map 3D-1, Lot 003

Presented by: Gage Perry and the Merrimack Conservation Commission

22 - June - 2017

CHAPTER 36-A CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS

36-A:4 Powers.

b. Said commission may receive gifts of money, personal property, real property, and water rights, either within or outside the boundaries of the municipality, by gift, grant, bequest, or devise, subject to the approval of the local governing body, such gifts to be managed and controlled by the commission for the purposes of this section. Said commission may acquire in the name of the city or town, subject to the approval of the local governing body, by purchase, the fee in such land or water rights within the boundaries of the municipality, or any lesser interest, development right, easement, covenant, or other contractual right including conveyances with conditions, limitations, or reversions, as may be necessary to acquire, maintain, improve, protect, or limit the future use of or otherwise conserve and property utilize open spaces and other land and water areas within their clay or town, and shall manage and control the same, but the city or town or commission shall not have the right to condemn property for these purposes.

II. No commission, its members, or designee shall enter private property to gather data about the property for use in a wetlands designation, prime wetlands designation, natural resource inventory report or map, or natural heritage map without first obtaining permission of the property owner or agent, or a lawfully issued warrant. Such permission may be oral or written, provided that record is made of oral authorization. If consent for entry is denied, the conservation commission, or designee, may obtain an administrative inspection warrant under RSA 595-6.

III. Prior to requesting permission, the commission, its members, or designee shall notify the landowner of the purpose of the data gathering, the specific features that will be evaluated, the manner in which the data collected will be recorded and distributed, and coastible known consequences of the data collection.

IV. No data gathered by entering property without the permission of the landowner or an administrative warrant shall be used for any purpose other than law enforcement purposes authorized by statute.

V. The conservation commission, in reviewing an application to provide input to any other municipal board, shall not require submission of an application for or receipt of a permit or permits from other state or federal governmental bodies prior to accepting a submission for its review or providing such input.

Searce, 1963, 358:1-1973, 558:5-1995, 139:2, wM-lu/y23, 1995, 2006, 517:2, wM-lem-1, 2009-2012, 202-2, wM-lum+13, 2012-2013, 270-4, wM-Sept. 22, 2013.

CHAPTER 36-A CONSERVATION COMMISSIONS

36-A:5 Appropriations Authorized.

- I. A town or city, having established a conservation commission as authorized by RSA 36-A:2, may appropriate money as deemed necessary for the purpose of this chapter. The whole or any part of money so appropriated in any year and any gifts of money received pursuant to RSA 36-A:4 may be placed in a conservation fund and allowed to accumulate from year to year. Money may be expended from said fund by the conservation commission for the purposes of this chapter without further approval of the time meeting.
- II. The form treasures, pursuant to RSA 41:29, shall have custody of all moneys in the conservation fund and shall pay out the same only upon order of the conservation commission. The disbursement of conservation funds shall be authorized by a majority of the conservation commission. Prior to the use of such funds for the purchase of any interest in real property or for a contribution to a qualified organization for the purchase of property interests under RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b), the conservation commission shall hold a public hearing with notice in accordance with RSA 675:7.
- III. In the municipality that has adopted the provisions of RSA 79-Ar25, III, the specified percentage of the revenues received pursuant to RSA 79-A shall be placed in the conservation fund.

Source, 1963-1681, 1973-5503, 1987-3182, 1988-1201, eff. June 18, 1988-2008-8173, eff. Jan. 1, 2009.

Public Notice Town of Merrimack Conservation Commission

Town of Merrimack Conservation Commission Legal Notice

The Merrimack Conservation Commission will conduct a public hearing on Monday June 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Memorial Conference Room located in the Merrimack Town Hall at 6 Baboosic Lake Road. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the acquisition of real property for conservation purposes pursuant to NH RSA 36-A. The parcel is located at an unnumbered location off Caron Street. Tax Map 3D-1, Lot 003. All interested parties are invited to attend.

About the Parcel



- Tax Map 3D-1 Lot 003
- 30.8 Acres of Merrimack River waterfront. Floodplain to bluff topography.
- Adjacent to the existing town owned boat ramp.
- Listed as a Key Shoreline Parcel to Obtain in the 2013 Town of Merrimack Master Plan.
- High likelihood of historical significance due to it's proximity to the Thornton's Ferry area.
- Deeded for conservation, low impact recreation and historical preservation.

Details of the Purchase

- The property underwent a Phase 1 Environmental Impact Assessment which returned with no concerns regarding soil contamination or other environmental matters.
- The Commission will utilize its Conservation Fund #53 to cover initial purchase, recording fees, staff support, and Town attorney costs.
- Property purchase is \$154,000. Plus associated fees and taxes creates a total expenditure expected to be \$156,074.47 once complete.
- Property will hold a deed with similar conservation restrictions to what we have used for our other donated and purchased parcels over the last 7 years.
- The Commission, in conjunction with the Sklar family have agreed to name this property the "Sklar Waterfront Park".
- The purchase was unanimously approved by the Commission during the public hearing, held during a regularly scheduled meeting, on 19 June 2017.
- Reference the signed Purchase & Sale agreement for further details.

Map of the Parcel's Location





Why is this important?

- Expands the Commission and the Town's protection of the Merrimack River uplands.
- Creates a large open space, contiguous with existing town property, for passive recreation activities.
- Potential for great historical significance dating back as far as the 1780s.
- They are not making any more riverfront property.

In Closing...

- Conservation Commission wishes to thank the Sklar family for their patience and their recognition of the conservation importance of this parcel.
- The Commission seeks the Councils approval of the purchase of Tax Map Parcel 3D-1, Lot 003 and to authorize the Town Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the Town which are necessary to complete the transfer and acceptance of this purchase.
- Any Questions?