

1 **TOWN OF SUNAPEE**

2 **PLANNING BOARD**

3 **MAY 18, 2023**

4 **Chairman White called the meeting to order and conducted a roll call at 7:11 PM.**

5 **MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO:** Jeff Claus

6 **MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE MEETING ROOM:** Suzanne Gottling, Richard Osborne, Chairman Peter
7 White, Joseph Butler, Randy Clark, Robin Saunders, Gregory Swick.

8 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

9 **ALSO PRESENT IN THE MEETING ROOM:** Michael Marquise - Town Planner.

10 **ALSO PRESENT BY VIDEO:** None

11 Appointments:

12 7:12 PM: Master Plan Meeting- Discussions with Department Heads

13 **Police Department – Neil Cobb**

14 Chief Cobb started his speech with a brief intro and of the police department personnel which now has
15 five full-time officers (including himself), a chief of police, a lieutenant, a sergeant, and two patrol
16 positions, with one of them currently vacant. In addition, he pointed out that there are about five part-
17 time positions, which are determined by the budget and have ranged from four to six in the past.

18 Regarding the vehicles, it was also said that the department releases cars for lease for three years but
19 keeps them for six, which helps to flatline their budget and line items. This means they pay for two cars
20 for three years even though they can't keep them for six, and there's always a line item in the lease for
21 the cruisers for the four. Additionally, they have an electric car and a boat that they maintain.

22 Compared to previous years, in 2022, the police department received 6,223 calls for service, and officers
23 are always available to respond to these calls, even if they are off-duty and have taken a cruiser home
24 with them. Despite this, ten years ago the Department had around 4700 calls for service, which is lower
25 than last year, and this is the main reason the Department has the need for vehicles.

26 The Police Department's current records management system has 20 years of data, which has been used
27 to pull a lot of information for the crime analysis data available on their webpage and Facebook page.

28 Chief Cobb also spoke about the process of recruiting and training a police officer which takes about 10
29 months from the point of advertising the position to the time when the officer can go out on the road in
30 their own cruiser. This includes a 16-week field training program and a month-long background check
31 process.

32 In terms of the recent recruiting process, the department is currently down one position, which
33 represents 20% of the team, leaving a significant gap. The new hire will take at least 10 months to be
34 fully trained, and there is no sick time available. Additionally, the mandated ongoing training for police

officers has increased from 6 to 24 hours by 2025, which will significantly increase the training requirements for the 10 officers in the department.

Chief Cobb also brought along books on criminal and motor vehicle codes, including the 2022-2023 edition and an edition from nine years ago, which are primarily the statutes responsible for enforcing.

It was also emphasized that the team is working on an accreditation process for the state of Hampshire, and there will be a meeting next month to gather more information on the process, which is a very time-consuming task.

Ms. Saunders here pointed out that accreditation processes usually take a lot of money too and the budget will have to change.

Chief Cobb continued with the staff issues as the center has about six full-time equivalent officers and an admin assistant and equates the overtime and part-time staff to another full-time position. They also want to be involved with the schools, as part of the LEEDS program. He also compared the national average for a town under 10,000 people would have 14 officers, but the size of New England would only have 9.35 officers based on the 2021-2021 numbers. However, he notes that national averages don't always equate to the department and that it's reflective of where they are.

Mr. Butler asked where they see themselves 10 years from now, in terms of calls and work.

Chief Cobb was uncertain about the number of calls, but he emphasized that those 20% of the vacant positions surely are something that's been going on for a long time and may be a problem in the next years as well along with the increased workload. He mentioned that the time-consuming calls are the ones that fluctuate and there doesn't seem to be a pattern to it. They also clarify that accidents are reported differently and are separate from these calls, which take up officers' time. He was also asked if they have seen an increase in crime in the last 10 years.

Chairman White mentioned that it may be a seasonal effect in terms of increase of crimes they do see in summer.

Chief Cobb replied that those records are already there, and that they are planning to switch to a new records management system, which will be determined by the dispatch center. They believe that this change will lead to improvements and the software will provide more data that can be extracted. In terms of facilities, space-wise they are in good condition, they did an upgrade in the access control system, and did some changes for the supervisors and the sharing office upstairs, and cameras were replaced due to the cost of replacing all the equipment in the 2020 Tahoe, one cruiser will be decommissioned and repurposed as an administrative vehicle, while the new Tahoe will be used for frontline service. This is a simpler project and will hopefully happen sooner.

The fact that all the full-time officers live in town is very important for the beyond-call that they take, allowing them to staff in midnight and have a minimum of two additional officers to be able to handle it.

The mutual aid agreement between police departments grants full jurisdiction to the assisting department, allowing them to work in the other town as if it were their own like New London and Newbury, Wilmet, Sutton. This was mentioned in response to a question about the cooperation between adjacent police departments and Mr. Cobb also mentioned that none of them could work without mutual aid.

74 He also emphasized the importance of collaboration between agencies and mentioned that they listen
75 to each other and provide help when needed. They believe that this is the only way for it to work, not
76 just for the city but also for other towns. He was asked if this collaboration extends to state-owned
77 areas like the lake and Mount Sunapee, and if they work with everyone in those programs.

78 Mr. Marquise asked if they have any areas of concern for future development, on which Chief Cobb said
79 that having a divider that looks like an area where you should be driving would have a big impact on
80 slowing down traffic. They are concerned about the amount of traffic going in and out of Mount Royal,
81 especially with the school not being on Route 11, which means the speed limit won't be reduced during
82 school hours.

83 During the meeting, there were discussions about implementing a transitional speed zone down to 45 or
84 other options to lower the speed limit through the area where Mount Royal school is located, as it is not
85 considered a school zone and the speed limit remains at 50 miles per hour, despite concerns for public
86 safety with children coming and going from the school.

87 Chairman White expressed uncertainty about whether there is enough space in the area, but mentioned
88 a plan that included a rotary and referred to a study that was done there previously. The process for
89 determining speed limits in the States involves looking at the 85th percentile of drivers' average speed
90 and setting the limit to what feels like a safe speed, although this may be oversimplified according to the
91 speaker. Exceptions to this are residential or business areas, which have lower speed limits. Additionally,
92 driving in the town is easy and allows for passing other vehicles.

93 According to the plan, the original plan for transportation to school was to have school buses or vans,
94 but it was not planned for many people to drive their personal cars to bring the kids, which is what has
95 happened.

96 Chief Cobb also emphasized the importance of collecting data off the signs that are moved around, as
97 they are typically used to address problem areas. They also mentioned that they must pay for licensing
98 for the two horrible signs and that it's easy to collect data off the signs that are moved around.
99 Additionally, they mentioned that Curl did some trial and that it had a common effect, but if it's left
100 there too long, it loses that effect. Chief Cobb was hesitant about including signage in the master plan,
101 as they don't believe it will have a long-term impact on secondary roads and people will eventually tune
102 them out, despite the police department's efforts to make them visually appealing with red flashing
103 lights.

104 Chief Cobb expressed his concern about the approach of leaving parking spots out, stating that it is not
105 enough for everybody. They believe that this approach does work well but needs a little tweaking over
106 the years to improve it and make it more effective for everyone.

107 He also mentioned that the boat they use has received a lot of funding over the years, including a
108 second donation and a dock from the Benevolent Association, but it is getting tired and should be
109 replaced within the next 10 years. This could be done through a capital reserve or with the help of the
110 association.

111 He also expressed skepticism about the current state of electric cars and their viability for the fleet but
112 suggested that adding a charging station at the safety services building could be a consideration in case

113 of emergencies. They also wondered about the possibility of a universal plug for electric cars and how it
114 would work.

115 **Recreation Department – Steve Bourque and Committee Members**

116 Mr. Bourque mentioned that they have done a lot of documentation and policies to ensure job
117 descriptions and policies are in place, and they view manuals and policies as living documents. Currently,
118 they are working on protocols for everything related to staffing and guests on the beach, including new
119 things like short-term rentals.

120 He also mentioned that they are contracting out a lot of their field space for mowing and mulching, but
121 the goal is to have their labor work more on field space and put back pride in how they display their
122 fields. This was mentioned in the context of discussing the success of having a better relationship with
123 the buildings and grounds, and he also mentioned a project to renovate a field to make it compatible for
124 all softball majors and minors, which now it is limited on 180 feet.

125 Due to the town's insufficient fields, the department is exploring options such as moveable mounds and
126 adjusting baselines to make their fields more flexible for use by their softball teams and veterans. The
127 department is also struggling with limited time to handle administrative tasks, field maintenance, and
128 program facilitation.

129 Mr. Bourque mentioned that they have received approval to file for a grant that offers matching funds
130 from the land and water conservation fund. They can also get matching funds from the federal
131 government for a project that was previously put on the ballot for half a million dollars. They plan to file
132 their intent for a \$250,000 grant by June 2nd and can use machinery and labor hours to contribute to
133 the matching calculation. This is encouraging news as raising money is always a struggle.

134 The grant obligation for the space is that it can only be used for recreation and there needs to be a
135 defined line between safety services and recreation, which will have to be mapped out.

136 The grant for the project has a three-year timeline to complete, and it was mentioned that following the
137 timeline is crucial. This was discussed by an unknown speaker who also shared that they received
138 valuable information from someone who wrote a similar grant for their community.

139 Mr. Bourque mentioned that phase one of the project is the parking area and they plan to revisit the
140 plan with community members now that they are going forward with the grant. The speaker also asked
141 if anyone remembers if the plan was changed three years ago.

142 Mr. Butler asked about the definition of the project, on which Mr. Bourque explained that the proposed
143 project includes revising the parking plan, a new basketball court that can also be used for pickleball, a
144 multi-use court, a concession stand, bathrooms, and storage space. The project aims to move the skate
145 park to where the green shed is currently located and create a centralized area for the new facilities.
146 This information was mentioned in the transcript as part of the application for the project.

147 Despite the potential for revitalization and recreation, there is still concern about a pipe running
148 through the parking lot and surrounding area, which could pose a problem even for a small amount of
149 time.

150 Chairman White points out that in the prior master plan 2010, two recommendations were called out:
151 created additional athletic field space and plan for a recreation building, so he asks if these
152 recommendations are still relevant and should be part of the current master plan.

153 The board discussed carving out land on the hillside for future expansion of 10 courts and finding a flat
154 spot for a field was difficult due to the undeveloped space in the area. It was also discussed about a
155 track around the town, not just for athletes, but for anyone.

156 According to the results of a master plan survey, outdoor recreation activities were highly graded by the
157 townspeople and considered an important element to have. However, there has been no discussion on
158 recreational activities or facilities for older people, except for the funding earmarked for seniors in the
159 budget, which Mr. Bourque tried to work with to provide more access to activities and planning
160 resources, like Broadway Show, etc.

161 The Conservation Commission has plans to add more hiking trails in the left pond areas in New Land, in
162 addition to the existing Dewey Trail and a trail from the high school to the elementary school, as
163 mentioned by Ms. Sanders who was asking if there was anyone responsible for taking care of the trails.

164 To avoid increasing the fee for special recreation programs, the town looked at putting more money in
165 scholarships from ticket shop money and had a successful sponsorship drive with 18 people sponsoring
166 shirts.

167 **Water/Sewer Department – Dave Bailey**

168 Mr. Bailey started with their human capacity, which is 5 people in the Department, and he expressed his
169 concern about the possibility of having to impose a water ban this year due to the drought, which they
170 were able to get through last year.

171 Coordination with the highway guys is necessary to ensure all manholes are adjusted before the favor
172 comes through, as it's very important for them to make that happen, but it's a challenge when roads get
173 paved and more than a week's notice would be appreciated, which hasn't really happened lately.

174 The town has 13 sewer pump stations, many of which are older and have had upgrades done to them.
175 The pumps in these stations are being changed and the electrical is being upgraded, which is expensive
176 and needs to be done gradually to avoid overdoing the budget. However, the town is committed to
177 keeping the pump stations operational. Mr. White asked about the lifespan of those stations, which was
178 answered that it's 20 years approximately.

179 Regarding the water meters, he points out that they're way over the lifespan of 10 years and new
180 software is needed for the new meters. During the meeting, it was mentioned that there is a need to
181 expand water quality protection, particularly in relation to concerns about wells in the mills. He also
182 mentioned that they don't foresee anything happening in the future as far as wastewater upgrades at
183 stake.

184 Mr. Bailey expressed the issue with the high volume of water sitting up there and not getting the
185 turnover it should, which leads to the formation of disinfection byproducts called cryo-melthems due to
186 the mixture of chlorine with natural organics in the water.

187 He also added a concern about the yearly loss of 300,000 gallons of water due to the need to fill the
188 tank to prevent it from heaving and cracking or getting pushed out of the ground. Since they are not
189 having an option, he suggested the possibility of filling the tank with raw water for fire events but note
190 that it may only be feasible if the fire is at Harbor Hill. The speaker also mentions uncertainty about
191 whether the fire department's expectations align with reality.

192 Customers who use a minimum of sixteen thousand gallons of water get billed for a minimum fee, which
193 is the same as everyone else, causing dissatisfaction among those who use much less water, such as four
194 or five hundred gallons.

195 It is also discussed that if the plant overflows, the responsible party will have to pay for 80% of the bill,
196 and the cost of the upgrade will also be shared between the parties involved, with the responsible party
197 paying 68% of the cost in the previous upgrade.

198 The commission was successful in obtaining the rights to use the wells located by the wastewater, which
199 was mentioned as an extensive and possibly gruesome process.

200 A readout system was installed to monitor the well pumps and water levels, which was important
201 information that was previously unavailable, and the system pumps water through a readout removal
202 unit and a clear tank in the floor.

203 The well pumps used to flood before pumping out, but now they shut off while the other pumps keep
204 going. It's unclear what will happen if the pumps are not changed, and there is a suggestion to do an
205 unseal-on irrigation.

206 **Chairman White recused himself from the continued case of Cell Tower, as he was a direct abutter.**
207 **Ms. Saunders was appointed as a voting member.**

208 **CONTINUED CASES**

209 **CASE #: SPR 23-01 PARCEL ID: 0138-0037 SITE PLAN REVIEW CELL TOWER 15 STAGECOACH LANE**
210 **DENNIS & LYNNE WIGGINS AMERICAN TOWER CORPORATION – AGENT. INSTALLATION OF**
211 **EQUIPMENT CABINETS ON A PROPOSED CONCRETE PAD INSIDE A 10'X15' GROUND SPACE WITHIN AN**
212 **EXISTING COMPOUND; INSTALLING NEW EQUIPMENT AND MOUNTS ON THE EXISTING CELL TOWER.**

213 Mr. Butler took over and said that on the last meeting the applicants were asked about 3D photos and
214 simulations, and the representative Garret explained the simulations they got for the presentation.
215 They were asked if there is a lighting on the tower which could add to the expense, but it was confirmed
216 that there is not. It was confirmed that the plan will be issued and agreed that it is correct, following a
217 discussion about the height that is below the required level and an evaluation that needs to be done.

218 **Mr. Claus made a motion to approve Case #: SPR 23-01 Parcel ID: 0138-0037 site plan review Cell**
219 **Tower 15 Stagecoach Lane Dennis & Lynne Wiggins American Tower Corporation – agent. Installation**
220 **of equipment cabinets on a proposed concrete pad inside a 10'x15' ground space within an existing**
221 **compound; installing new equipment and mounts on the existing cell tower, with condition that the**
222 **submitted drawings to be constructed as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Osborne. The motion passed**
223 **unanimously.**

224 Other Business:

225 At the end of the meeting, Lisa Hoekstra (Via ZOOM) commented that it is frustrating that people that
226 had access to the information were sharing it with other people, but not the public who wanted to know
227 that their voice was heard and what was said. She added that she hopes that there will be a discussion
228 at some point that people can participate in, and she thanked for the copy she had gotten.

229 The Board suggests doing a survey on Google Docs to sign up and attend these meetings.

230 Review of Minutes:

231 The Board reviewed the Minutes of February 16, 2023, meeting and Mr. Clark proposed amendment as
232 follows: line 29 and 30 Mr. Hazelton's use of the term 'poorly drained soils' may be the wrong word
233 continuous to be changed contiguous. Line 35-the acronym RCS should be changed to NRCS. Line 40-the
234 word is to be added before the word required.

235 **Mr. Claus made a motion to approve the Amended Minutes of February 16, 2023, Meeting as written.**
236 **Seconded by Ms. Osborne. The motion passed unanimously.**

237 Mr. Claus reviewed the Minutes of March 9, 2023, Meeting and proposed amendment as follows: line
238 105 there were two \$ signs instead of one.

239 **Mr. Osborne made a motion to change the Minutes of March 9, 2023, Meeting as written. Seconded**
240 **by Ms. Claus. The motion passed unanimously.**

241 Signing of Mylar's

242 Respectfully submitted: Rajmonda Selimi

243 Panning Board

244 _____

245 Peter White, Chairman Suzanne Gottling

246 _____

247 Gregory Swick Robin Saunders

248 _____

249 Randy Clark Joseph Butler

250 _____

251 Richard Osborne