

REPORT OF THE
GORHAM TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Burleigh Loveitt Council Chambers
April 2, 2024

Chairperson Phillips opened the meeting. There were over 20 members of the public in attendance.

Roll Call: Chairperson Phillips, Councilors Pratt, Simms, Lavoie, Siegel, Wilder Cross and Gagnon. Also in attendance were Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak and Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors.

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and VOTED to accept the minutes of the March 12, 2024 Regular Town Council Meeting. **7 yeas**

Open Public Communications

Michael King, Smiling Hill Farm, addressed his concerns with the MTA Regional Connector Road project that will be going through his property. He noted that in 2022, Gorham and surrounding towns signed an agreement stating that the MTA will design the Gorham Connector to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to cultural and natural resources, including wetlands, the Red Brook watershed, farmlands, historic areas and structures and wildlife corridors and habitat. He feels that this agreement is not being followed.

Greg Labonte, Narragansett Street stated that he is deeply troubled by the Gorham Connector project and thinks that it will do nothing but harm the towns in which it runs through. He reflected that highway expansion is not an answer to traffic congestion, transportation safety or for decreasing CO2 emissions. He urges the Council to voice their opposition to this project as it is sure to destroy our heritage, natural resources and sense of community.

Sadie Donnell, Narragansett Street; Jason Plummer, Running Hill Road; Sam Purinton, South Street; David Mahoney, Gateway Common; Laura Mailander, Crockett Road and Maddi King, Wintergreen Drive all expressed their concerns with the MTA Regional Connector Road project, and hopes that the Council will explore other options to help alleviate traffic and growth in a smart way.

Councilor Communications

Councilor Siegel reported that the Ordinance Committee met on March 26th, where they discussed road standards, new school impact fees and a complete street policy. They will be continuing their discussion at the next meeting on April 23rd.

Councilor Lavoie reminded residents that the 5th annual Gorham Cleans Up will be held on April 21st from 8:30-11:00. For more information on this event, you can contact the Gorham Village Alliance or the Conservation Commission.

Councilor Simms announced that April 30th is National Therapy Animal Day. He also reminded business owners that the Office of Business Development's Domestic Trade has announced that a second round

of grant funding is now available for Maine based businesses. Applications for the grant are open until Thursday, April 11th.

Councilor Pratt affirmed that the Jetport Noise Abatement Committee will be meeting soon. He also revealed that he is working on getting a blood drive going in Gorham and will have more information available soon. As always, Councilor Pratt urged residents to give blood if able.

Councilor Wilder Cross shared that the Gorham and Falmouth High School FIRST Robotics team was the winner of the 2024 UNH District competition. She pointed out that FIRST is an acronym: *For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology*. This team has been competing in FIRST Robotics since 1996 and has never won an event until now. In addition, the team also received the prestigious IMPACT award that honors the team that best represents a model for other teams to emulate and best embodies the mission of FIRST. Councilor Wilder Cross noted that the team will be competing against other IMPACT winners for a chance to represent New England at the FIRST World Championship event in Houston in two weeks.

Councilor Gagnon attended last month's CIPS meeting, where they discussed different master plans for economic development and also for the Town and Schools. Councilor Gagnon also attended the Gorham Connector Project meeting last week and fully supports it, stating that there are many benefits to the Town of Gorham from the project.

Town Manager Report

Town Manager Paraschak reported that he will be presenting to the Council this week a responsible and efficient budget. He also reminded residents to be prepared for the upcoming snow storm and to be patient with Public Works as they work to keep the Town safe during the storm.

School Committee Report

Sara Perkins, Chair reported the following:

Video Series "Understanding Public Schools": Thank you to GoCat and our three community champions who've helped create our "Understanding Public Schools" video series. The three videos in the series are:

- School Funding with Shawn Moody
- School Governance with Kathy Garrard
- Understanding the Challenges of 21st Century Schools with Dr. Jackie Edmondson

These videos are on the GoCAT site as well as the Gorham School website. The Fourth video will be focused on understanding the future of public schools with Dr. Andrew Dolloff, current Superintendent of Schools in Yarmouth ME and veteran school leader in Maine. Stay tuned!

State Capital Projects Update: After considering 5 architectural firms in our RFQ process, we've selected LaValle Brensinger Architects. For background, they're also working through the current RSU 14 Middle School Project and completed the Sanford High School Project. We'll be working with them to put together THREE Capital applications to the MDOE - one for Village Elementary School, one for

Narragansett Elementary School and one for Gorham High School. Applications will be due to the state by August 30, 2024. It typically takes a little over a year to then review all applications to determine the scores for each and rank them.

Budget: The School Committee had its 4th and final FY 25 Budget Workshop meeting on Monday, March 25. The focus of this meeting was on the revenue side of the budget. At this meeting, it was agreed that we would utilize \$600,000.00 in fund balance to offset taxpayer expense. We left the meeting with the following numbers for our draft proposed FY 25 school budget. Operating cost increases of 6.9% and an overall expenditure increase of 7.7% increase (this includes CIPS, Debt Service and Adult Education). We're looking forward to our budget workshop meeting with the Town Council scheduled for April 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the downstairs conference room.

Schedule Change: A reminder that we've moved the scheduled Early Release Day on April 3 to a new date of April 8 so that we will have an early release day on the day of the eclipse. This change was made primarily for safety reasons, as the eclipse will take place during elementary school dismissal and transportation time.

Eat and Learn: On March 12 the Gorham Schools Anti-Racism & Equity Committee hosted an "Eat and Learn" event for the community. The theme of the evening was on advocacy and what it feels like to need an advocate and what it feels like to be an advocate. Student artwork was displayed and the 75 community members who attended were invited to do a gallery walk and speak with many of the artists. We hope to make this an annual event.

Band and Chorus: Tonight is the Gorham Schools ALL BAND night at GHS. ALL CHORUS night will take place at GHS on April 9 at 6:00 p.m. The shows are open to the public.

Public hearing #1

On Item #2023-3-11

Public hearing to hear comments on a proposal to amend the shoreland zoning map to increase the stream protection sub-district to 100' for streams that have native brook trout as identified on the amended shoreland map. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairperson Phillips opened public hearing #1. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

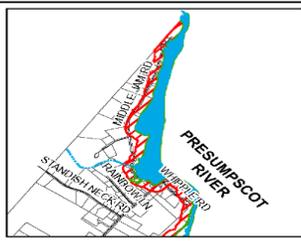
Order #24-50

Moved by Councilor Lavoie, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and Ordered, that the Town Council amend the shoreland zoning map to increase the stream protection sub-district to 100' for streams that have native brook trout as identified on the amended shoreland map as follows:

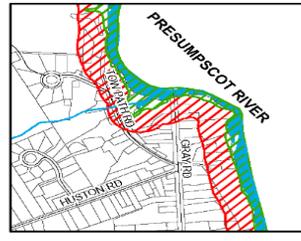
Town of Gorham Shoreland Zoning

EFFECTIVE:

I CERTIFY THIS TO BE A TRUE COPY OF THE OFFICIAL SHORELAND ZONING MAP AS APPROVED BY VOTE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL.



0 1,500 3,000 Feet
1 inch = 3,000 feet



0 250 500 1,000 Feet
1 inch = 1,000 feet

Legend

- Roads
- ▭ Parcel Boundary
- ▭ Shoreland River & Stream
- ▭ Wetland

Shoreland Zoning

- ▨ Resource Protection Sub District
- ▨ Shoreland Overlay District
- ▨ Stream Protection Sub District
- Shoreland Stream
- Non-Shoreland Stream

Note: The depictions of the Shoreland Overlay District, Resource Protection Sub-district, and Stream Protection Sub-district boundaries on this GIS Shoreland Map, are merely illustrative of their approximate boundaries. The exact boundaries shall be determined by on-site inspections and measurement from the normal high water line or upland edge of a wetland.

0 0.5 1 2 Miles
1 in = 1 miles

Order #24-50 was VOTED 7 yeas.

Item #2024-4-1 Action to consider appointing election workers for a two-year term 2024-2026. (Admin. Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-51 Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Lavoie and Ordered, that the Town Council appoint the following people as election workers per Title 21-A MRSA Section 503, with terms to expire April 1, 2026:

Moved by Councilor Gagnon, seconded by Councilor Simms and VOTED to waive the reading of Order #24-51 due to length. 7 yeas.

Democrat Workers:

Peter Allen, Sherrie Benner, Julie Carmichael, Brenda Caron, Pamela Castrucci, Diane Caswell, Patricia Clay, Katharine Corbett, Laurie Corbett, Thomas Corbett, Nancy Craig, Geraldine Day, Melissa Deering, Renee Deering, Sharon Deering, Chris Denison, Teresa Delorey, Karen Dodd, Patricia Donovan, Anne Dunbar, Margaret Evans, Sheri Faber, Patrick Flynn, Rachel Flynn, Mary Franklin, Charles Frolio, Katherine Garrard, Sharon Geer, Barbara Guimond, Marge Hodgkin, Elizabeth Hooper, Diane Hoyt, Michael Hoyt, Meagan Irish, Brent Johnston, Roxie Johnston, David Kurz, Jennifer Laflin, Kandy Lefebvre, Charlotte Maclean, Linda Maclean, Keith Lynds, Carlie Marsters, Michelle McCaffrey, Joseph McCarthy, Elizabeth McDonagh, Janet McKenney, Sarah Melanson-Spevak, Janet Miliano, Rhonda Millett, Mark Munson, Anne Murphy, Erin Murphy, Patrick Norman, Kenneth O'Brine, Kristy Parke, Frances Perry, Beth Richards, Judith Ringo, Kathy Robbins, Kimberly Ross, Tina Ruel, Robin Sanford, Susan Sato, Camille Seo, Kelly Schneck, Paula Smeltzer, Craig Stirling, Deb Stirling, Judith Stevens, Kathleen Walsh, Amber Wilson, Debra Winch, Lynn Wight, Barry Wight, Daniel Willett

Republican Workers:

Marilyn Amoroso, Mark Andrews, Sandra Bailey, Meredith Bickford, Kathy Bruni, Donna Carll, Nancy Connolly, Judith Corbeau-Hassenflu, Barbara Corliss, Rebecca Curtis, George Deering, Susan Donaldson, Jane Dube, Lucinda Drown, Susan Emerson, Christine Fleury, Mary Gallant, Bert Gilman, Nina Hill, Carolyn Hodgkins, Thomas Hodgkins, Darlene Junkins, Marjory Macleod, Joann Means, John Miliano, Pam Milliken-Garza, Jennifer Parsons, Carlene Petersen, John Petersen, Rebecca Phinney, Sheila Phinney-Levine, Jennifer McCullough, Rosamond Phinney, Michele Plourde, Heidi Pratt, Suzanne Roberge, Marlene Scholl, Laurel Smith, John Stamaris, Rebecca Stamaris, David Towle, Marth Towle, Kimberly Toye, Liesl Turner, George Vercelli, James Walker, Jeff Webber, Janice Weed, Norman Weed, Carol Wyman

Moved by Chairperson Phillips, seconded by Councilor Gagnon and VOTED to add Judith Falk, Alan Livingston, Kathryn Olson, Deb Strout and Laura Lossie to the Republican Workers list. 7 yeas

Order #24-51 was VOTED as amended 7 yeas

Item #2023-9-16

Action to consider amending the Land Use & Development Code with regards to Private Way Standards. (Ordinance Committee Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-52

Moved by Councilor Siegel, seconded by Councilor Pratt and Ordered, that the Town Council forwards to the Planning Board, for recommendation and public hearing, amendments to the Land Use and Development Code as follows:

H. STANDARDS FOR ACCESS MANAGEMENT

- 5) Private ways shall be designed to meet the following requirements:
 - a) Private Ways shall meet the standards presented in Tables 2 and 3 and the typical cross sections depicted in Figures 9 and 10 unless otherwise agreed to and permitted in writing by the Planning Board. The Planning Board may require design modifications if it finds special provisions to be necessary to protect the public health and safety as a result of a specific development proposal.

Standards and dimensions contained herein shall be considered as minimum and modifications may be recommended to the Planning Board by the Town Engineer to meet specific site conditions.
 - b) Private Ways will not cause congestion or unsafe conditions with respect to use of the highways or public roads, existing or proposed on or off site.

Order #24-52 was VOTED 6 yeas, 1 nay (Gagnon)

Item #2024-4-2

Action to consider instructing the Finance Committee to provide recommendations on new sewer rates. (Councilor Philips Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-53

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and Ordered, that the Town Council instructs the Finance Committee to review sewer rates and provide recommendations to the Town Council for adoption.

Order #24-53 was VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2024-4-3

Action to consider adopting Hessian Drive as a public way. (Councilor Gagnon Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-54

Moved by Councilor Gagnon and Ordered, that the Town Council adopts Hessian Drive as a public way; and

Be It Further Ordered, that Hessian Drive is designated a rural collector roadway.

Prior to the meeting, we received two e-mailed public comments on the item.

From Nathan Veilleux, 7 Hessian Drive:

I have exchanged numerous emails with several councilors over the past few months and have provided great detail into the reasons why Hessian should be accepted as a public way. I have pointed out that Hessian predates the latest written guidelines for road acceptance and that were a few hundred yards from Horseman, which is public and has fewer houses. I have provided numerous examples of roads that have been accepted as public since the latest revision of the road acceptance guidelines, and have shown that per the recorded meeting minutes the current sitting councilors have all voted in favor of accepting at least one dead-end road.

We, the Hessian Dr homeowners, are simply asking to be accepted as public because if we are private we will be forced to form a HOA. At face value, this would be fine. However, we are the last road in a development in which all other roads have been accepted as public (including dead ends). It is understood that current town councilors are not beholden to previous council decisions, however previous town councils set the precedent for the entire development which we are in. This precedent has led to the poor management of the documentation governing the potential for an HOA, and the Homeowners of Hessian unfairly shouldered with the burden of sorting out the deeded documentation under the expense of legal council if Hessian is not made a public way. So, again, we are simply asking for the councils help and empathy when we ask to be accepted as a public way.

Per the Gorham Town Council website,

"The Town Charter grants the Town Council all powers to create, change and enact, amend, or repeal rules, ordinances, and resolutions relating to the Town's property, affairs and government, to preserve the public peace, health and safety, to establish personnel policies..."

Its clear from recent voting records and the town councils own website that they have the power to accept Hessian as a public way. It is only 600 ft of road and will have negligible impact on any budgeting for the town, but would conversely mean a great deal to the 9 families on the road, many of which have young children in the Gorham schools. Who knows, perhaps there would be a public benefit by adding access to the expansive trail system that runs through our road. As a board that is dedicated to public service, please take this opportunity to help us members of the public, who live on Hessian Dr, by voting to make our street a public way.

Best regards, Nate

From Robert Cook, 24 Hessian Drive:

Good Afternoon,

Please support acceptance of Item #24-54, 24 Hessian drive as a public way. There are many residents who feel this is the correct course of action based upon justifications raised by several residents, and supported by everyone living on the street.

Best Regards,

Robert Cook

Order #24-54 did not have a second and the Item failed.

Item #2024-4-4 Action to consider dissolving a contract zone on Map 6, Lot 43-1 and Map 6, Lot 19-1 at the request of the property owner. (Councilor Philips Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-55

Moved by Councilor Pratt, seconded by Councilor Lavoie and Ordered, that the Town Council forwards to the Planning Board, for public hearing and review, dissolving the contract zone on Map 6, Lot 43-1 and Map 6, Lot 19-1, owned by Barry King in South Gorham; and

Be It Further Ordered, that administrative costs be paid prior to work commencing on removal of the contract zone.

Order #24-55 was VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2024-4-5 Action to consider instructing the Finance Committee to review programs available to assist working farms. (Councilor Philips Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-56

Moved by Councilor Lavoie, seconded by Councilor Siegel and Ordered, that the Town Council forwards to the Finance Committee, for review and recommendation, the feasibility of implementing available financial programs available to help Gorham's working farms.

Order #24-56 was VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2024-4-6

Action to consider adopting a Smart Growth Policy. (Councilor Simms Spon.)

Proposed

Order #24-57

Moved by Councilor Simms, seconded by Councilor Siegel and Ordered, that the Town Council forwards to the Ordinance Committee, to create with staff, a Smart Growth Policy to provide guidance on the modification and adoption of ordinances promoting smart growth for the Town of Gorham wherever possible.

Order #24-57 was VOTED 7 yeas

Moved by Councilor Gagnon, seconded by Councilor Pratt and VOTED to adjourn. 7 yeas

Time of adjournment: 7:45pm.

A True Record of Meeting

04/02/2024



ATTEST

Laurie Nordfors, Town Clerk

04/03/2024

