

Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2026

Present: Iris Campbell – Chairman, James Bailey – Selectman, Richard Pelletier – Selectman, and Laura Buono, Town Administrator

At the opening of the meeting the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Others present: James Clough, Cathy Houle, Chris Parsons, Keith Cobbett, Florence Steven, Riche' Colcombe, William Bannister, Christopher Dustin, Mark McSweeney, Shelley Sheehan, Alber Sheehan, Susanne Palmer, Creighton Demarest, Lindsey Boyle, Lori Mitchell, Heidi Welch, Nicole Carmen, Joshua Gallant, Jonathan Barry

1. OATH OF OFFICE

Kirk Smith newly hired full-time police officer met with the Selectmen to take his oath of office. Colleagues and family members were present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lindsey Boyle - Lindsey Boyle said she understands the Selectmen's responsibilities on managing the town budget, she is respectfully asking the Selectmen consider waiving the usage fee for Butler Park for the Farmers Market. It's a way to support the local vendors and a way of gathering locally. Jonathan Barry expressed his agreement toward waiving the usage fee, he asked who came up with this idea for charging the Farmers Market. Further discussion will take place later in this meeting.

Keith Cobbett - Keith Cobbett from Granite State Computers presented the Board with a laptop his business is donating for the purpose of livestreaming meetings.

Riche' Colcombe – Riche' Colcombe said she listened to the last Selectmen's meeting regarding the Woods Woolen site. Ms. Colcombe said there is \$60,000 in the Dana Crain fund for town beautification, she is here to ask the Selectmen to consider other alternatives rather than using the bulk of the money (\$45,000) from the Crain fund so that money can be used for other things. Ms. Colcombe believes the project may qualify under the Land Water and Conservation Fund that the NH Parks puts out (Colcombe is not aware of the criteria and how to apply). Ms. Colcombe also recommended contacting UNH Extension for available funds or Central Regional Planning to see if there are other resources.

Riche' Colcombe asked if the Selectmen could put upload the audit reports onto the website. Ms. Colcombe talked about a repeated unfavorable finding in the audit reports regarding the town's capital assets and how they are not depreciating. Ms. Colcombe asked if there is a policy that addresses "unfavorable findings" from the auditor.

Ms. Colcombe recommended and asked the Selectmen to review the revenue projections and expenses on a monthly or quarterly basis in a public meeting.

Riche' Colcombe thanked the Board for looking at the contract with the Town of Windsor and starting the process for renewing it. Ms. Colcombe said she has offered her assistance with drafting the renewal if a committee is formed.

Ms. Colcombe said she wants to have a conversation about the property assessments and the huge disparity and potential errors made. Ms. Colcombe said there is a property in Emerald Lake that was taken by the town for taxes, it has been sold and that person has not paid taxes because the property still has a municipal tax exemption on it. Ms. Colcombe also said on Jones Road, there is only one property that shows an overall decrease in taxes and that one property happens to belong to a town employee. Ms. Colcombe then said that she does not believe the employee had anything to do with their own assessment. Ms. Buono asked Ms. Colcombe what the purpose of mentioning it in that manner was if the employee doesn't have anything to do with their own assessment. Ms. Colcombe said because it is noteworthy. She said out of the entire street there was a 60 to 90% increase, one property increased only 44% and one property got a 9% decrease in their taxes while everyone else saw an increase in their taxes. Ms. Buono said the employee is not the Assessor, and for Ms. Colcombe to point it out in that manner isn't appropriate. Ms. Colcombe said she is not accusing, it's just not a good look, and it shows the disparity. Chairman Campbell asked Ms. Colcombe if she made an appointment with the Assessor regarding Jones Road. Ms. Colcombe did meet with the Assessor but did not discuss all of Jones Road. Chairman Campbell said the Assessor is who she needs to speak with, if there are any errors the Assessor is the one that can fix them. Ms. Colcombe said based on NH law and before she can take her concerns to the Board of Tax and Land Appeals with her complaints, she needs to first take it to the Selectboard with her abatement, which she has. Chairman Campbell said any property owner can appeal their tax assessment by going through the abatement process. Ms. Colcombe said she is looking to having the whole town reassessed again like Hampton did. Ms. Colcombe then asked why the tax bills are rounded up instead of the actual amount. Chairman Campbell said the Tax Collector will have to be asked that question. Ms. Colcombe also asked if the codes used could be defined for the taxpayers, so they know what the codes mean on the property cards. Ms. Buono said she would look into whether there is a list that can be printed from the system and posted.

3. FARMERS MARKET – USAGE OF BUTLER PARK

Amanda McDonald is asking the Selectmen to waive the usage fee for the Farmers Market at Butler Park. The fee is for the electricity and upkeep of the park. The vendors at the market are charged \$10.00, the farmers are not charged. The money that is generated is used to pay for the entertainment and stocking the bathroom, adding an additional usage fee would be a strain on the weekly event. Selectman Bailey asked if the Market is aware of the sprinkler system at the park. The Market is aware and takes precautions to protect the sprinkler heads.

Selectman Pelletier made a motion to waive the usage fee for Butler Park Farmers Market. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed. (Selectman Pelletier suggested making the waiver permanent. Ms. Buono cautioned against doing so in case there is a major change) The Farmers Market will still need to file for the usage of Butler Park yearly and the request for waiver will be brought to the Board on an annual basis.

Someone asked if the fee could be also waived for Haunted Hillsborough, an event that has been held yearly since the 250th anniversary of Hillsborough, no profit is made from the event. The person was instructed to do the same as the Farmers Market, apply to the Board for consideration.

4. PARKS/RECREATION UPDATE

Director James Clough is before the Selectmen to discuss fees for Hillsborough Youth Association (HYA). The Town of Deering did not resign their contract for recreation because it was felt it was not financially worthwhile.

The cost for HYA to reserve the fields amounts to \$28,350 for the Spring and \$22,500 for the Fall (Monday – Friday practice only). In the Spring it costs about 60 to 70 man hours to take care of the fields (12 weeks, \$16,200 to \$18,960 in man hours). In the Fall the cost is less, 25 to 30 man hours amounting to \$7,900 to \$9,500. Grass seed, fertilizers, and wetting agent are also purchased, this year the cost is \$5,500. At this time HYA has not been charged a usage fee.

Selectman Pelletier said the issue is Hillsborough is paying for everything from the town's tax dollars and Deering are no longer contributing to this effort. HYA charges low fees, \$30 for soccer and about \$60 for softball for all that join, there is no different fee for out-of-towners.

Selectman Bailey recommends meeting with the Deering Selectmen; he feels Deering is hurting the kids. Selectman Bailey has worked on the parks for over 20 years and always had an issue with Deering and he once told Deering to build their own fields. Deering can't because they don't have the space nor do they want to spend the money. In fairness to the Hillsborough taxpayers Deering should be paying something.

Ms. Buono said HYA is the primary user of the fields and the town is maintaining the fields so HYA can run their programs. She feels HYA should want to work with the Town to have that understanding the money to maintain the fields has to come from somewhere now that the agreement with Deering is not being honored.

Chairman Campbell recommends the Board take some time to think about this and would like HYA to attend a meeting when the Board finally decides. Mr. Clough said HYA ends its current program July 1st.

Mr. Clough then gave the update for the following parks:

- Kemp Park: Hedges will be planted as a barrier; planter boxes will be situated to stop people from driving into the park.
- Fieldstone provided their first rendition of the layout for Manahan and Grimes, revisions were provided.
- Manahan: There is \$298,515 in the trust, Mr. Clough feels it's important to start looking at some improvements to the park. There are two phases, the first would be a new bathhouse with changing stalls and storage. Second phase is to remove and relocate the locker room and offices to above the bath house.
- Encroachments that have been found at Manahan, certified letters have gone out to those property owners giving a May 1 deadline to remedy any situation. Manahan cannot have anything on the property that is not related to outdoor recreation.

A meeting will need to be arranged with the Trustees of the Trust Funds regarding the money needed for the new bathhouse.

Recreation Van: Mr. Clough has an opportunity to purchase a used 15-seater van for \$30,000. The current van cannot move all the kids at once. The van would be used for all the recreation programs. The money would not come from taxation; the money would come from raised money and fees. The Selectmen recommend finding a van and having it looked at first by the town mechanic. Currently there is \$30,000 available in the revolving fund, and \$30,000 from fund raising.

5. REPRESENTATIVE ON SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

Chairman Campbell made a motion to appoint May Egner as the representative on the School Scholarship Funds on behalf of the Selectmen. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY – WOODS WOOLEN MILL

The grant process needs updated delegation of authority; the last one is dated 2023.

Chairman Campbell made a motion to grant authority to the Town Administrator to sign and execute any and all documentation necessary to implement activity on behalf of the Town of Hillsborough's business with NH Department of Environmental Services for the purpose of ARM Funds for the Woods Woolen Mill site. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion carried.

7. WINDSOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

Selectman Pelletier strongly feels another formula needs to be used other than population for determining the cost of providing services to Windsor. Hillsborough population is growing and Windsor's is not, that's why he wants to form a committee, Selectman Pelletier said he has a few ideas but is not ready to share them right now. Chairman Campbell said she needs to see the numbers and feels the discussion should be between the Selectmen, not a committee. Selectman Pelletier said the Board agreed a few weeks ago to form a 5-member committee. Chairman Campbell did her own research and doesn't feel a committee is needed, this can be worked on by the Selectmen. This item will be placed on a future agenda.

8. DEERING – POLICE DEPARTMENT

Selectman Bailey asked about the status of the Deering town vote regarding Hillsborough police covering Deering. Ms. Buono said Deering approved of it. Selectman Pelletier asked to see the actual cost of the coverage for the first 4 months. Ms. Buono will schedule the Chief to attend one of the May meetings to review.

9. ASSOCIATED ELECTRIC

There are a couple of barrels left (nontoxic) that need to be removed. The steel crane is still onsite which the Town owns, and Ms. Buono will talk to the Highway Department to see if they are still interested in using it and if not, it will be sold. A Brownsfield Grant was submitted this past January for the remainder of the clean-up, and the status of that grant should be known later this summer.

10. SIDEWALK PROJECT – START DATE

Ms. Buono said the construction engineer is waiting to hear from the construction company, then there will be a pre-construction meeting where the project schedule will be revealed.

11. PERMISSION TO PARK ON TOWN PROPERTY

Ms. Buono was contacted by a representative from Newcom who is running wire for Comcast in the Antrim area, the workers are staying in Hillsborough and asked if they can park their trucks on the Associated Electric site. The Board agreed to allow Newcom to park their trucks on town property, Ms. Buono will create a Memo of Understanding regarding no liability to the town.

12. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMISSIONS

Chairman Campbell made a motion to appoint Doug Lischke, Richard Head and Jim Riddle as full members to the Conservation Commission and John Segedy as an Alternate member to the Conservation Commission for a 3-year term for all. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Chairman Campbell made a motion to appoint Keith Cobbette and Riche' Colcombe as members of the Economic Development Commission for a 3-year term. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

13. MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Campbell made a motion to accept the meeting minutes dated March 10, 2026. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Chairman Campbell made a motion to accept the meeting minutes dated March 23, 2026, as amended. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

14. MANIFEST

Chairman Campbell made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign Payroll Check numbers 20948 – 20981 a/k/a Voucher 13, 14 & 15 in the amount of \$380,094.14 (includes 327 direct deposit stubs) and Accounts Payable Check number 035541 - 035726 a/k/a Voucher 17, 18, 19 & 20 in the amount of \$491,686.76. Selectman Pelletier seconded the motion, the motion passed.

15. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve the consent agenda for April 8, 2026. Selectman Bailey seconded the motion, the motion passed.

- DRA Form 232
- 2025 Tax Refunds – Map 12 Lot 328 \$381.00; Map 6 Lot 44-3 \$5.00; Map 15 Lot 48 \$360.00; Map 12 Lot 158-111 \$154.00; Map 14 Lot 593-15 \$22.00; Map 11B Lot 425 \$1,294.00
- 2025 Approved Abatements & Tax Refunds – Map 12 Lot 90 \$19.42; Map 3 Lot 8 \$2,769.00; Map 18 Lot 20 \$233.76; Map 11F Lot 5 \$2,238.88; Map 11F Lot 22 \$373.63; Map 14 Lot 631 \$134.05; Map 23 Lot 26 \$205.13; Map 7 Lot 196-2 \$339.00
- Tax Levy – Map 10 Lot 44 \$112.68
- Intent to Excavate – Map 7 Lot 196; Map 10 Lot 44
- Veterans Tax Credit _ Map 20 Lot 36; Map 8 Lot 19; Map 11O Lot 338; Map 16 Lot 300; Map 14 Lot 546
- Elderly Exemption – Map 8 Lot 42; Map 23 Lot 26
- 2025 Municipal Assessment Date Certificate

16. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Selectman Pelletier reviewed some of the suggestions made this evening such as:
 - Identifying the abbreviations on the tax cards and placing those identifications on the website. Ms. Buono will talk with the Assessor.
 - Placing the audits on the website, it was agreed to do so.
2. Selectman Pelletier would like to review a report that shows property tax dollars in arrears; he mainly wants a total amount by year and would like to see a report on a quarterly basis moving forward.

17. REVALUATION DISCUSSION

Selectman Pelletier talked about the revaluation and how he is still receiving concerns and comments from residents and asked if the town has any recourse or does the town accept it as it is. Ms. Buono explained the revaluation results are sent to the Department of Revenue and they tested the information that was been used to come up with the values before approving it and noted that sales are used. She said that even with the revaluation, the Town's ratio isn't at 100% and said it's at 94%. Ms. Buono asked Selectman Pelletier if those who had talked with him came in to speak with the Assessor about their concerns. She said to have another revaluation done, there must be solid proof that the current revaluation is inaccurate especially since you're talking about money being spent again. Selectman Pelletier said if people are disgruntled it's the Selectmen's responsibility to fix it. Chairman Campbell said it is also the property owner's responsibility to make sure they are being taxed on what they have and the solution for a property owner is to file for an abatement if they don't agree with their assessment. Ms. Buono suggested the Board meet with the assessor to gain a better understanding if they have questions. She said it makes it difficult when things are thrown out in a public meeting by individuals which are not verified. Selectman Pelletier said he will meet with the assessor to address all his questions once he is able to. Ms.

Colcombe suggested it may make sense for her to meet with the Assessor at the same time as well. Ms. Buono said once they are ready, she will arrange the meeting.

18. JOHN PENNY – BARN REMOVAL

Ms. Buono stated the demolition of Mr. Penny’s barn is scheduled for the week of April 20th and mobilization of equipment will begin next week.

19. DEERING SCHOOL DECISION

Selectman Pelletier informed the Selectmen that the committee for Deering withdrawing from the school district has been disbanded. Ms. Buono asked what the final outcome was to the recommendation that Deering not withdraw. Selectman Pelletier said that Deering agreed to stay in the district if two warrant articles passed and they both did. Once was that the Deering representative to the school would be voted on by Deering residents only, and the second was changing the formula to apply the State Aide before the split in the fees rather than after the split as is done now. Now, Hillsborough will have to make up a \$750,000 difference in the amount they are charged.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm

A true record
Mary Whalen
Recording Secretary

Date: _____

Approved by:
Hillsborough Selectboard

Iris Campbell, Chairman

James C. Bailey, III, Selectman

Richard Pelletier, Selectman