

LEE & MADBURY SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 4, 2024

Madbury Town Hall, 13 Town Hall Rd, Madbury, NH

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Board members present: Vice-Chair Hawthorne, Selectman Bugbee, Chair Janet Wall, Mark Avery, Tim Burt

Not present: Lee Chair Kasper

Others present: TA Eric Feigenbaum, Steve Bullek, David Benson and Town Administrator Andy Robertson

I. Chair Janet Wall calls the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

II. No Public Comment

Chairwoman Wall stated that she was recovering from illness and could not chair the meeting. Vice-chair Mark Avery took over as chairman. Chairman Avery welcomed the Lee Board members, explained that they had requested a joint meeting and turned the floor over to Scott Bugbee.

Scott Bugbee referenced an earlier joint meeting, possibly 3 years earlier, stated that the Lee Board was interested in determining if Madbury might have an interest in sharing some municipal services. Mr. Bugbee asked Mark Avery if Madbury had any challenges with regard to providing services?

Mr. Avery indicated that highway and public works projects were a concern, Madbury's part-time road agent has retired, they are trying to find a replacement. They have renewed an agreement they have with a contractor for road repair and maintenance but that is only through 2025 or possibly 2027. Fire coverage is also a big concern, Madbury has very few firefighters and no full time staff. Mr. Avery does not feel police coverage is a problem at the moment but the time is coming when it will be. Mr. Avery advises that Madbury has completed a DPW Assessment done by a community group, and they are in the midst of having MRI conduct a fire department assessment. Tim Burt discussed what Madbury hoped to get from the Fire Dept. assessment.

Mr. Bugbee suggested picking one thing to tackle jointly, see if the process worked out and go from there. Ms. Wall suggested starting with Fire Services. She has concerns about response time and coverage. Andy Robertson notes that Barrington may want to be part of a fire service conversation.

Mr. Avery explained that Madbury has trash pickup that is effectively offered at a discounted rate as the town pays the tipping fees. They have an arrangement with Dover for bulky waste items that works well and residents can use the transfer station.

Ms. Wall indicates that Madbury has no fulltime employees and inquires if Lee does? Andy Robertson replied that "yes" Lee does. Ms. Wall asks how many? Mr. Robertson said the number is presently 29. Mr. Avery noted that because Madbury doesn't have any fulltime employees they've never really had to deal with human resources and personnel type tasks, they don't offer insurance or benefits to any of the employees. He mentions that Madbury has approximately 1900 residents and 22 miles of road.

Steve Bullek tells the meeting that Lee has 60 miles of paved road and 8 miles of dirt road. Andy Robertson adds that Lee's population is just below 5,000 people. Mr. Bugbee noted that Mr. Bullek had been able to locate some grant funding for equipment and projects, Mr. Bullek said that his department had received \$800,000 in grants in the past year. Mark Avery noted that they had wanted to apply for the clean diesel grant but their truck didn't qualify.

Rebecca Hawthorne discusses Lee's capacity to provide service, Scott Bugbee feels that Lee presently has some additional capacity but would need to "bump up" depending on what services were required. Mr. Bugbee feels that both towns need to evolve as things change.

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Rebecca Hawthorne feels that the time may be right to look roads given that Madbury does not presently have a road agent. Janet Wall mentioned fire again and asked Eric Feigenbaum if he could share the DPW Assessment with the Lee Town Administrator as well as the Fire Report when it is complete. Ms. Wall wants to be collaborative.

Nate Bernitz from UNH Cooperative Extension gave an overview of work he is undertaking in his role as a Community and Economic Development specialist. Mr. Bernitz is working to foster partnerships that promote regional partnerships. Mr. Bernitz thinks that collaborating on fire service will be particularly difficult given the territorialism, despite historic ties and social connections found within local Fire Departments. He would recommend going after lower hanging fruit like DPW functions. He thinks that the key to moving forward will be inclusive public conversations. Achieving equity will be complicated, it would be helpful to have a model for success.


Scott Bugbee names some communities that have started regional fire districts. Andy Robertson has some town names he can provide as well. Mr. Bernitz has been in conversation with NHMA and Natch Greyes on the topic. Janet Wall says she really likes NHMA, she finds them incredibly valuable particularly with regard to legal advice. She doesn't understand why some communities don't utilize more of what NHMA has to offer.

Janet Wall discusses the importance of the master plan, she feels it's the only guide for the community. Madbury recently had a community meeting to discuss future plans, the majority of the people that participated want to keep the community as it is. Mark Avery mentions that the town can try and stay just like it is but it's probably going to be more expensive than change. He feels the fire coverage situation needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.

Scott Bugbee suggests getting back together in mid April, give both board's a chance to talk amongst themselves and let Eric and Andy share information.

The Lee contingent excuses itself from the meeting at approximately 7:50pm.

Minutes compiled by:


Andy Robertson, Town Administrator

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:


Katrin Kasper, Chair
Rebecca Hawthorne, Vice-Chair
Scott Bugbee, Selectman

3/11/24
Date