



# **TOWN OF SUNAPEE**

## **AGENDA**

### **"SUMMER TOWN MEETING"**

**August 7, 2018-7:00PM**

**23 Edgemont Road**

**Sunapee Town Offices/Lower Meeting Room**

**Introduction-Joshua Trow, Chairman Board of Selectmen**

**Fire Chief-Dan Ruggles**

**Police-Lt. Neill Cobb**

**Library-Mindy Atwood**

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector-Betty Ramspott**

**Water & Sewer-David Bailey**

**Highway Dept., Transfer Station & Buildings & Grounds-**

**Scott Hazelton**

**Sunapee Schools-Jesse Tyler, Chairman School Board**

**Recreation-Scott Blewitt**

**Tri-Town Assessor-Norm Bernaiche**



## SUMMER TOWN MEETING QUESTIONS

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN QUESTIONS

a.) Is it true that the Board of Selectmen does not intend to set any percentage guidelines or limits on spending for Town Departments when they develop their 2019 budget proposal?

Yes, there is no official number or percentage guidelines being applied to the 2019 budget proposal.

b.) Can you explain why this approach is in the taxpayers' best interest?

It's because the Board is asking the Department Heads to provide the services for the town that they have been and whatever they think is a reasonable expansion upon it where necessary. The Board is not asking them to do their same tasks within a 0% or 1% increase.

The Board is asking them what they feel they need to provide what the residents have anticipated or become accustomed to.

### SCHOOL QUESTIONS

a.) Why does the Sunapee School Board meet so infrequently? The Hopkinton School Board, for example, meets every two weeks as do Sunapee's Selectmen. The school board meets once a month and has the ability to meet more often if needed, as an example, during the budget months they have budget meeting before regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The board also has sub-committees that meet as needed: facilities, policy, negotiations, CIP. They report back to the board at monthly meetings.

b.) Is it true that the School Board has not met since early June and has no plans to meet until sometime in September? The Board meets the first Wednesday of each month. In the past based on vacation we pushed the August meeting off to the third or fourth Wednesday in August. This year due to schedules the Board opted to forego the late August meeting and start in September.

c.) If so, did the board grant power to the Superintendent to make decisions on behalf of the Board during this 3-month period? The Board gives the Superintendent the ability to hire over the summer as they do each year. Outside of that we have not been faced with any decision that the Superintendent is not able to make. If needed the Superintendent can reach out to the Board.

d.) Do Board members receive a flat annual fee for serving on the Board, or is it based on the number of meetings they each attend. If not

the latter, how is that in taxpayers' and the children's best interest? Board members receive \$1200 flat stipend regardless of number of meetings attended.

e.) In light of voters' 433-233 (65% majority) mandate last March, does the School Board plan to hold contract negotiations with the teachers union in public session this year or will it ignore the voters' wishes?

That answer would have to come from the Board, I will say that the question was not binding, and with the advice from the School Board's attorney was to not head in that direction. Also, legally the Board could not force the STA to negotiate in that format.

f.) Have these negotiations for the next contract renewal already begun in private?

Not officially, they are scheduled for October. The Board's negotiation subcommittee members and STA members have listened to a presentation from Health Trust regarding health insurance plans earlier in June.

## WATER & SEWER QUESTIONS

a.) Why are Sunapee residents not metered for sewer usage and wouldn't usage-based fees be fair for all consumers? -Pay by the gallon-

The Water & Sewer Commission has investigated the possible use of metered sewer charges and has determined that the large cost of installing meters on everyone's wells (over \$200,000) that are not on the Town Water system would not be advantageous because very similar to the water usage fees Sunapee would still need to maintain a flat fee for sewer because such a large percentage of the users (approximately 70%) are seasonal.

b.) Is it true the original scope of the Perkins Pond Sewer project was completed for nearly \$1 million under budget but the Town chose to spend all or most of that savings rather than returning it to America's taxpayers because the additional spending was funded by federal money?

Any remaining Perkins Pond Grant money was utilized to either purchase equipment to maintain the sewer system or upgrade aging existing sewer pump stations.

c.) If so, does the Sewer department make decisions like that under the guidance of the Selectmen or Tow Manager? How was it possible to spend so much of taxpayers' money without consulting taxpayers via a warrant article?

The Perkins Pond Sewer Project was presented to the taxpayers via 2012 warrant article #3 which passed with the required 3/5 majority.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT QUESTION

a.) "I admire all the innovative programs and devices that Sunapee PD has embraced – e-ticketing, plate readers, coffee with the Chief – Bravo! It's interesting that we are the only town with e-ticketing and second town in the state with plate reading. Why haven't other towns and cities kept up with this technology. It sounds inexpensive – what's the catch?"  
Thank you for the question and I appreciate the kind words and recognition of our constant effort to keep up with evolving technology.

Regarding e-ticketing, and to set a bit of the foundation as to why we have e-ticketing, the Sunapee Police Department was a pilot agency connecting to the State of NH's SPOTS (State Police On-Line Telecommunications System), through which we connect to the FBI's NCIC's (National Crime Information Center), database. This required internet security via a VPN connection. Previously, this connection could only be provided by a T1 direct line to a dispatch center. Having this connection allows us to run criminal histories and other NCIC information. Previous requests for Criminal Histories came at an expense as we were charged for them through our dispatch center, as well as, travel to the dispatch center to retrieve them. They are now run in house. Having successfully been a part of their pilot program provided us with secure internet connections that not all agencies have. The e-ticketing program has been discussed for several years as becoming available for local agencies. Chief Cahill's tenacity in obtaining the program and already having the security to transmit the data here in Sunapee, led to us being first in line. The NH State Police's IT personnel worked long and hard on making sure all of the connections were working as they should. We then tested the program for months, having every officer produce samples warning and citations that would then be routed to the DMV and the courts. Fortunately, NHSP IT personnel were with us every step and made the program successful. Regarding cost, there was substantial time involved in developing the

program. It does run on computers that were already in the vehicles. Specialized printers did have to be installed in the cruiser for printing the warning and citations.

Now the system proves to be a time saver. Time on motor vehicles stops is reduced as we scan license and registrations instead of typing them in and print the complaint instead of handwriting it. Also, at the end of a shift, officers transmit their warning and citations electronically which saves additional paper handling and postage for the Town of Sunapee, NH DMV and the Courts. Since the Summer Town Meeting I have followed up with NHSP and found there are 4 other agencies in the state that are transmitting tickets electronically but not through the same software. They are expecting a new release of that software next month that will fix a lot of the problems they've encountered, and, in turn, they expect more agencies to start transmitting tickets electronically. Regarding the license plate readers (LPRs). They are a result of the hard work of the NH Association Chiefs of Police and again, the tenacity of Chief Cahill. Over the past several years there have been bills introduced and discussed regarding the use of the readers. The first bill was not passed by the NH Legislature. A bill has now been passed and made into law, NH RSA 261:75-b, which allows the use of license plate readers with certain restrictions, some of which are to protect the privacy of motorists. The bill also includes a "sunset" stipulation in which the law expires in 10 years from its passing if not revisited. The license plate readers are expensive, at a cost of approximately \$12,000. Additional equipment is also required such as the computers and internet connections that, due to our other technological efforts, were already in place. Fortunately, with the assistance of the Sunapee Police Benevolent Association and private donations, as well as tax payer funds, the Sunapee Police Department was able to purchase the license plate readers. Chief Cahill has been involved in the legislation throughout the process of bringing this technology to New Hampshire for the safety and security of our citizens and officers. Lincoln Police currently hold the server on which the license plate readers communicate. I believe other agencies will be adopting the technology in New Hampshire. Please feel free to contact me at the station at 763-5555 or email me at [e.neill.cobb@sunapeepd.com](mailto:e.neill.cobb@sunapeepd.com) if you have further questions or if you'd like to see a demonstration of e-ticketing or the LPRs. I'm also at most of the Coffee with the Chief events and would be happy to discuss or demonstrate them.