Board members present: Chair LaCourse, Vice-Chair Hawthorne and Selectperson Rusteika
Others present: John and Anne Tappan, Deb Schanda, Tom Dronsfield, Town Administrator Andy Robertson and Asst. Town Administrator Denise Duval

I. Chair LaCourse calls the meeting to order at **6:00pm**.

II. Public Comment: None

III. a. Public Works Director Bullek says that he received from DES what the water filtration needs to be at the new well. The requirements from DES have changed 3 times over the last week. The filtration system needs to filter out the arsenic and excessive iron. It is scheduled to be installed on 9.16.26. Chair LaCourse moves to authorize the Public Works Director to purchase a Great White Sediment Filter System from Skillings & Sons, LLC to be installed in the Lee Library for an amount not to exceed $6,880.00. Funds to come from the Town Building Capital Reserve Fund. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

b. TA Robertson needs the Board to make a motion with regards to granting Chief Dronsfield paid vacation time above and beyond what the personnel policy allows for. Chair LaCourse is not in favor of this because there is a policy that indicates the maximum payout shall be for 240 hours of vacation time and he wants to stick to the policy. Vice-Chair Hawthorne wants to give this to the Chief because she thinks that there has been limitations in his ability to take these hours. She does not think that this is fair. Selectperson Rusteika asks the Chief to explain why he is asking for this again. Chief Dronsfield says that he has this amount of unused vacation time because they have been short-handed for years and he has been tasked with covering the shifts. He is asking for 40 hours, which is less than what he actually has left over. Chair LaCourse points out that once they go down this road it will open the gates for anybody else to ask for the same thing. Selectperson Rusteika asks how much money is in the Accrued Benefits Fund now. Mr. Tappan indicates that there is more than $36,400 in this CRF. Chair LaCourse reiterates that the policy says that the payout shall be 240 hours. Selectperson Rusteika asks the TA to ready the language in the policy to him. TA Roberson reads the section in question. Selectperson Rusteika asks the Chief if he can articulate why this circumstance isn't under the policy. Chief Dronsfield says no he can't. He adds that in the 20 some odd years that he has dedicated to this town and all the extra hours he has put in, he has never asked for anything extra or for anything close to what he has given back to this town. He says it is fine and sits down. Mr. Tappan speaks as a resident on his behalf and says that in his opinion, the Chief is one of the most dedicated employees that he has seen and he's not asking for all his unused time but something less than that. He says that the Board has the authority to grant something that is against the policy when there are extenuating circumstances. He thinks his service warrants it. Selectperson Rusteika would normally lean on the policy but thinks that the Board should give this to the Chief. He also does not think that the town employees are compensated adequately. Chair LaCourse is comfortable changing his mind. He just wanted to make a point that there is a policy and if don't follow our own policies than what is the sense of having a policy. Chair LaCourse points out that due to the default budget situation, the pay in lieu of has been frozen for the time being as well. Therefore, Chair LaCourse he agrees and moves to approve Tom Dronsfield's request for an exception to the Town's personnel policy rule pertaining to the accrued vacation leave payout and to add 40 additional hours to is accrued vacation leave payout. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

IV. a. TA Robertson presents Board with a motion to expend out of the Accrued Benefits CRF to pay for Tom's benefits. Chair LaCourse moves to authorize the withdrawal of an amount not to exceed $18,224 from the Accrued Benefits Capital Reserve Fund for accrued leave time payout. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

b. TA Robertson asks the Board to discuss the need for a Select Board Rep on the ABC. Chair LaCourse wants the ABC to be totally independent. He does not want a Select Board member on this committee. Same with the CIP. His opinion is that they should keep hands off. The other 2 members agree.

c. TA Robertson indicates that he met with Jim St. Jean regarding auctioning the house at 17 Calef Hwy. Jim thinks there is some value there. The locks have been changed and no trespassing signs have gone up. The RSA indicates that we need to give the individuals who have a legal interest in the property at least 90 days to respond before we can auction it. There is a brief discussion about what is there that can be reused or repurposed by the Town. TA Robertson will get a legal opinion on clearing out the house before the 90 days. The Board is ok with the cleanup.

d. TA Robertson presents a request to spend out of the Revaluation CRF. Chair LaCourse moves to authorize the withdrawal of an amount not to exceed $8731.25 from the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund in order to pay Municipal Resources, Inc. for the 6th installment due towards the 2026 Statistical Revaluation for the Town per the contract.

e. TA Robertson brings up the library siding issue. After a brief update and discussion the TA suggests getting the siding redone while the ground is ripped up and we've got the folks in there who can do it. The TA, Public Works Director and Deb Schanda will discuss this and come back to the next meeting with an update.

f. TA Robertson informs the Board that the town will be receiving the new fire truck tomorrow morning.

TA Robertson informs the Board that the ARPA account is closing.

V. Chair LaCourse moves to accept the consent agenda as presented. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

VI. There is no old business.

VII. a. Chair LaCourse moves to enter into a non-public session NH RSA 91-A:3-II (a) & (c) at **6:32pm**. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. Roll Call Vote. Chair LaCourse, yes. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, yes and Selectperson Rusteika, yes. **Motion Carries.**

The Select Board returns from non-public session at **7:00pm**.

b. Chair LaCourse moves to seal the nonpublic minutes. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, seconds. Roll Call Vote. Chair LaCourse, yes. Vice-Chair Hawthorne, yes. Selectperson Rusteika, yes. **Motion Carries.**

The Board decides that the Election coverage will be as follows:
Matt Rusteika – 7am – 11:30am
Rebecca Hawthorne – 11:30am – 4:00pm
John R. LaCourse – 4:00pm – close

VIII. Chair LaCourse adjourns at **7:02pm**.

Minutes transcribed by:

Denise Duval, Asst. Town Adm.

9/14/26
Date

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:

John R. LaCourse, Chair

Rebecca Hawthorne, Vice-Chair

Matt Rusteika, Selectperson