

**Town of Nelson**  
**Selectmen's Meeting**  
**3:00 PM**

January 8, 2025

Executive Board Attending: Brenna Kucinski, Mike Blaudschun, Don Carlisle, Edie Drinkwater, Admin. Assist.

Others attending: Rich Popovic, Lisa Sieverts, Mike Tarr

*Absent:*

Brenna called the January 8, 2025 meeting of the Nelson Select Board to order at 3:00 PM.

● Rich Popovic came before the Board to review the school budget and to give the Board a better understanding of the cost formula as it relates to the Sullivan tuition. The sharp rise in the School portion of the tax rate for 2024 has drawn questions and concern from the community. Rich explained that much of the school cost is driven by items such as Special Ed. and healthcare that can't be controlled, and with a dramatic trend downward in State funding the burden falls to the tax payers. While the State has a formula for determining cost, the reality is that the actual cost is many times higher than the State recognizes. Brenna asked if Building costs are included in the tuition for Sullivan. Rich assured the Board that building costs are included but the cost per student may go up or down due to higher or lower enrollment per town in any given year. Rich reported that School Principal, Nicole Gordon has had good success in applying for grants when they become available but it is just not enough. All agreed that they would like to see the State do more to recognize the extreme burden to tax payers and increase financial support to all NH communities.

Rich further reported that the School may be used under some circumstances as an Emergency Shelter. This will require a detailed Memorandum of Understanding with the Town. This would be in addition to the Town Hall as the primary Emergency Shelter. The school would not be able to offer overnight use or use when the children are there and school is in session. Details will be worked out with the Emergency Management Director and will be added to the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

● Lisa Sieverts came before the Board to discuss the possibility of a fund-raising effort to offset the matching cost of an Eversource grant the town has been approved for. The project would provide solar backup batteries for the Town Hall/Library, Town Office, and the Safety Building. The total project cost would be approximately \$218,000 with a grant award of \$109,000 which would leave \$109,000 to be paid by the town. With approximately \$26,000 in the "Renewable/Green Energy "Capital Reserve fund and an anticipated additional \$25,000 deposit for 2025 there would be approximately \$59,000 to be covered. Lisa agreed to bring this before the local clean energy group for consideration, however she felt there was not enough time before the warrant needs to be finalized and there may be some opposition to the project. Lisa will report back to the Selectmen. Edie will contact Eversource to see if the 50% grant would still be awarded if just the Town Hall/Library is done.

● M. Tarr came in to report that the Highway chipper caught fire and has burned beyond repair. He presented 3 advertised used chippers for sale. The Board agreed he should consider a used purchase contingent on all safety features being included and in working order. Mike then made a motion to increase the Chainsaw/chipper line item of the Highway budget to \$10,000.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

●Mike made a motion to approve the minutes for December 18, 2024 as recorded.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● Mike made a motion to approve the Manifest for December 25, 2024 as presented.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● Mike made a motion to approve the Manifest for December 31, 2024 as presented.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● Mike made a motion to approve the Manifest for January 28, 2024 as presented.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

●The Board happily read a letter from Bert Wingerson agreeing to keep the position and title of Town Archivist.

● Mike made a motion to approve a request for 2025 funding in the amount of \$1,000 from CASA. This is the same as requested and approved in 2024.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

●Mike made a motion to approve a request for 2025 funding in the amount of \$350 from American Red Cross. This is the same as requested and approved in 2024.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

●Following a review of the requested 2025 Cemetery Budget, Brenna made a motion to approve the requested budget totaling \$32,315.

Mike seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● Mike made a motion to approve the Annual Selectmen's Certificate for inclusion in the Town Report.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● Mike made a motion to approve the Conservation Commission 2025 Budget at the same amount as last year (\$1,350).

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

Edie reported that Duane and Kathy Schillemat cancelled their meeting with the Select Board until they can meet with the Assessor concerning the Land Use Change Tax levied against their Current Use property. The Board reviewed the pictures taken of the improvements to the property and Don noted that trucks working in the area had been seen using the new parking lot. Edie noted that Duane indicated to her that he also allowed his neighbor to use the parking area to dump gravel for improvements to his property across the street. Mike made a motion to approve and sign a letter to the Schillemats denying their appeal at this time and to review again if the Assessor's recommendation changes.

Brenna seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

● An intent to cut was submitted by logger Christopher Hinz on behalf of Richard and Emily Hartshorne. Emily had previously brought in an Intent to Cut from a different logger but said not to act until she could check on restrictions to the property and report back. She has not reported back at this time. It was noted that a Conservation Easement Deed has been granted to the Harris Center for Conservation Education and such a logging operation may require written permission from the Harris Center before this logging operation begins. Edie will contact the Hartshornes for further information before the Board approves the Intent to Cut.

● With nothing further, Brenna made a motion to adjourn.

Mike seconded.

The motion carried 3-0.

Meeting Adjourned 5:08 PM

Next regular meeting January 15, 2024 at 3:00 PM

Minutes for January 8, 2025

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Brenna Kucinski, Chair

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Michael Blaudschun, Selectman

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Don Carlisle, Selectman