

These minutes were approved at the February 5, 2024 meeting.

**DURHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024
DURHAM TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Chair Sally Needell, Councilor Eric Lund, Councilor Emily Friedrichs (who uses the pronouns ze/zir/zirs/zirself and the title Mx. Friedrichs) (participating on Zoom), Councilor Carden Welsh, Councilor Charles (Chuck) Hotchkiss, Councilor Joseph (Joe) Friedman, Councilor Wayne Burton, Chair Pro Tem James (Jim) Lawson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Administrator Todd Selig

I. Call to Order

Chair Needell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. Town Council grants permission for fewer than a majority of Councilors to participate remotely

The Council granted permission unanimously, 8-0 by a show of hands, for Councilor Friedrichs to participate in the meeting via Zoom.

III. Roll Call of Members

Councilor Joe Friedman, Councilor Eric Lund, Chair Sally Needell, Chair Pro Tem Jim Lawson, Councilor Wayne Burton, Councilor Ellie Lonske, Councilor Carden Welsh, Councilor Chuck Hotchkiss, Councilor Emily Friedrichs (participating via Zoom).

IV. Approval of Agenda

Councilor Lund MOVED, at the request of Councilor Friedrichs, that item 14C. under New Business be moved to immediately follow Item VI. Public Comments. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hotchkiss and PASSED unanimously, as amended, 9-0 on a roll call vote: Councilor Hotchkiss—Aye, Councilor Welsh—Aye, Councilor Lonske—Aye, Councilor Burton—Aye, Chair Needell—Aye, Councilor Lund—Aye, Councilor Friedrichs—Aye, Councilor Friedman—Aye, Chair Pro Tem Lawson—Aye

V. Special Announcements – None

VI. Public Comments (*) – Please state your name and address before speaking

William (Bill) Hall, Smith Park Lane, spoke about the parking at Wagon Hill Farm. He said the Town needs to expand the parking at the farm to accommodate people bringing their

children to go sledding. Mr. Hall also spoke about large events held at the UNH Whittemore Center and cars parking in restricted areas.

XIV.C. Discussion of Walking Softer Grant YLA Prize with Councilor Emily Friedrich

On Wednesday, December 27, 2023, Councilor Emily Friedrichs emailed the other Council Members and Administrator Selig to let them know of an opportunity ze may have with Walking Softer YLA to receive a monetary prize to be applied to the REheat Durham project. This project was originally discussed by the Energy Committee at its July 11, 2023, meeting.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson said that in the Council packets there was grant language for the “Buildings Up” grant and not the REheat Durham program. He asked Councilor Friedrichs if ze would be updating the information for the Walking Softer YLA. Councilor Friedrichs replied that ze had not yet written the application for the YLA award, but the intention is to use basically the same program model that was used when the Energy Committee applied for the “Buildings Up” prize, with some adjustments specific to the YLA prize.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson said that in the grant description it had the requirement for an Administrator with a 20% cost addition for the Business Office. He asked if that item would be edited out or changed. Councilor Friedrichs replied that this application would separate the idea/concept of REheat Durham from the Town so it would be its own entity, thereby incurring no costs associated with the Town. Ze and Administrator Selig talked and thought it made sense to have an endorsement from the Town to be able to take advantage of some features such as posting links on the Town website, submissions in the Town’s weekly Friday Updates, and to share progress back to the Town so the Town can incorporate data into its Global Covenant of Mayors goals. The application is due January 15, 2024.

Councilor Friedrichs said ze would be comfortable putting together for submission the application without having more momentum on any sort of endorsement and coming back to the Council with a completed application. Ze said decision-making for the prize would not occur until April 2024. Interviews happen in March, so there would be time to rescind an application should the Council decide the application submitted was not something it was comfortable with.

Councilor Friedman said there should be an endorsement from the Energy Committee before the Council provides its endorsement. Also, he felt endorsement at this time is premature because the program is still in the startup stage with a lot of pieces still needing to be put in place. He would also like to know more about what REheat is and who the people are behind it as he felt it could be somewhat confusing with what the State of New Hampshire is trying to do on the same level with the same type of services and programs it offers. He also thought it could distract from the Community Power Energy Program that is being rolled out and being endorsed by the Town Council.

Chair Needell said she would like to see Councilor Friedrichs’ initiative as something that is under the scope of the Durham Energy Committee. She said like any other Town committee, the Energy Committee essentially has a level of endorsement from the Town already.

Councilor Hotchkiss said he was on the Young Leader’s Award website and it states that nominations are closed for 2024-25. He asked Councilor Friedrichs how that would work in

terms of application submission and whether ze had a placeholder waiting. Councilor Friedrichs said submission of applications is by invitation only and that ze had been invited to apply. Ze said the foundation pre-selected zir after having heard about the REheat program idea.

Councilor Hotchkiss said in the earlier application Councilor Friedrichs shared with the Council, it was not clear to him what the geographic scope of the project would be; whether it would only be Durham or if it would be broader. He asked Councilor Friedrichs if it was zir intention that REheat Durham would have that broader geographic scope, or in the new application are things really restricted to the Town of Durham. Councilor Friedrichs replied that the initial portion of the program, in terms of providing free assistance to people to help them navigate to find out different funding sources and weatherization and electrification, would be limited to Durham residents and property owners. The reason for that is the goal of the program is to determine if there can be progress made toward Durham's goal of lessening the carbon footprint of its built environment. Ze said the purpose would be for Durham proper to try and measure that and have a sense of whether a program such as REheat Durham helps people to make those improvements.

Councilor Friedrichs explained the reason for the connection with Strafford County Community Action Program (CAP) is because all of the weatherization assistance in New Hampshire is at the County level, not the Town level. Ze said by connecting with CAP, Durham may be able to direct donations so people who are interested in wanting to support the same kind of work for lower income residents could potentially be working through CAP to help households in the County. It would include Durham residents but would not be related strictly to Durham residents because of the way the County's system works. Ze said that perhaps combining resources to make the pot bigger may help more area residents.

Councilor Hotchkiss asked Councilor Friedrichs if ze intended to include a similar number of organizations that were noted in the first application, and if so, how many of those has ze already reached out to and spoken with. Councilor Friedrichs replied that the first year of the program would be focused on Durham residents and property owners and whether the Town can get movement on people who want to participate in the weatherization and electrification of their homes. Then, can movement occur in terms of donations and fundraising and perhaps share some of those funds with Strafford CAP to do that work as well with lower income residents.

Councilor Friedrichs said Clean Energy New Hampshire is still very supportive of this concept, as well as some of the other organizations that were listed. Ze said there were loans available through the Durham Credit Unions that Durham residents and property owners could apply for, but the intent would not be to go any larger than that initially; just trying to determine whether this experiment might work for Durham.

Councilor Welsh said he did have pause, since this could be seen as the Council doing something that gives a substantial financial benefit to someone else on the Council. He thought Chair Needell's suggestion to have the Energy Committee review and oversee the application and not the Council might be the best approach. He said he was confused by the financial information initially provided and asked Councilor Friedrichs if that information would be laid out more clearly in the final proposal. Councilor Friedrichs provided more detail and said that ze wanted to be very transparent with the Town Council and obtain guidance as to whether and what would be the appropriate way to evaluate the application process to maintain transparency and neutrality, first and foremost.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson listed three issues he identified with this concept:

- 1) How to negate the appearance of a Councilor receiving economic gain by action of the Town;
- 2) What to do if a resident is unsatisfied with the service and comes back to the Town because the Council endorsed it; and,
- 3) What position does this put the Administrator in if there are issues that need to be addressed.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson said he believed the way to navigate around these issues is not to have either the Durham Energy Committee or the Town Council endorse the application/program. Instead, he would have the Energy Committee look at what Councilor Friedrichs puts together and then state or make a motion that it is beneficial for the Durham community to have that service, or that there is a need for the service, but not go to the point of endorsing, because endorsement would bring the three issues above into play. He said even if the program is not endorsed, the Energy Committee can be actively engaged and provide updates and it can decide based on its conversations and updates what is appropriate to flow through the Administrator to start including in the weekly Friday Updates. In addition, independent of the Energy Committee, the Administrator has made it a regular practice to keep Durham residents updated on new services and businesses that are available in the Town. He recommended the Administrator continue doing that with REheat Durham, but from the context that REheat Durham is not just a business, it's something that is helping the community meet its climate change objectives. He said if the Council changes the conversation around from endorsement to recognizing there is a need and it is beneficial, then he believed it negates the three issues. Otherwise, those three issues make him a little uncomfortable.

Councilor Friedman said he agreed with Chair Pro Tem Lawson with respect to the Town being somewhat liable regarding endorsement where part of the program was to, for instance, recognize contractors. If someone is unhappy with a contractor, they could then come to the Town and say the Town endorsed the contractor. He said this changes regularly and there is no licensing of many contractors in the State of New Hampshire. Therefore, he said he had a real question about those within the program recommending contractors to Durham residents, as well as financing sources that the Town may or may not know about.

Administrator Selig said that from his perspective, the most important element at this stage was to have a public conversation around the concept of this program so there would be no element of wondering what was happening, what Councilor Friedrichs was doing, and how it fit in with the Town's goals and the Energy Committee's efforts. He said he was comfortable with tonight's conversation and the parameters Chair Pro Tem Lawson outlined and thought that was a very workable approach.

Councilor Friedrichs agreed with Administrator Selig.

Councilor Friedrichs excused zirsself and departed the meeting at this time.

VII. Report from the UNH Student Senate External Affairs Chair or Designee – None

VIII. Unanimous Consent Agenda (*Requires unanimous approval. Individual items may be removed by any councilor for separate discussion and vote*) - None

IX. Committee Appointments - None

X. Presentation Items

- A. Update on the Oyster River Cooperative School District's FY 2024/25 Budget Process – Dr. James Morse, Superintendent

Dr. Morse said the School Board was aggressive in its timeline for replacing him and has found a candidate. He thanked Administrator Selig for participating in the interview process. Dr. Robert Shaps will be the new Superintendent beginning July 1, 2024.

Dr. Morse highlighted some examples of the district's successes during the last decade:

- Oyster River middle and high school strings teacher Andrea von Oeyen was named as a New Hampshire Teacher of the Year semifinalist.
- The Oyster River School Board was named School Board of the year in 2023.
- The Robotics team won the Excellence in Engineering Award.
- "Mouth of the River" magazine received second place honor in a competition.
- 10 Oyster River High School students performed in the New Hampshire Music Educators Association Classical All-State Festival.

Regarding the ORCSD budget, Dr. Morse provided information and data related to the competitive nature of the district's students and its Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores.

Dr. Morse referred to the bar graph provided to the Council relative to longevity. He said when looking at years 2020 and 2021, those were the COVID years, but 2022 was not a COVID year. He said if one looks at the trajectory of student performance, it is quite amazing in terms of the academic comeback for the district's students and speaks volumes to the district's staff and their commitment to the students.

The district continues to have issues related to mental health. Last year's budget had funding for a drug and alcohol counselor. This year's new position is a position for mental health and the district continues to build that component of the organization because it continues to be concerned about its teenagers and their ability to function.

The other new position in the district's budget is the strings instructor, Ms. Von Oeyen, whose load is quite extreme with over 260 students and the School Board felt another position should be added to the proposed budget to take pressure off of her.

Dr. Morse provided enrollment information for each of the schools within the district, addressed the topic of projected enrollment and noted the enrollment by Town (Durham having the most students).

When starting the ORCSD budget process, the School Board was concerned about:

- The estimate for the 2024-25 school year budget is very close to a \$1,000,000 increase; significantly more than it has been in the past.
- The district is in its final year for teacher's negotiations, which will begin in 2024.
- The district is in its 3rd or 4th year of negotiations with the Respite group.

- Increases in utility costs.

Dr. Morse provided information on where the school district has been over the last 12 years during his tenure as Superintendent.

The complete presentation, along with comments, concerns, discussion, and responses to Council questions, may be viewed on DCAT on Demand at www.ci.durham.nh.us.

B. Report from the Energy Committee (DEC) – Matthias Dean-Carpentier, Chair

Chair Dean-Carpentier briefly touched upon the highlights that were included in his report, including:

- Current status of Durham’s participation in the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH).
- Electrical Vehicles. The recharging stations at Pettee Brook Road and the Durham Public Library have helped Durham residents to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 37,000 pounds of co2. He provided statistics as to the increase in charging sessions, the increase in unique drivers using the chargers, and the amount of revenue that was generated for the Town.
- Provided an update on the Earth Day Event the DEC coordinated with the Town’s Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee.
- Provided an update on the “Buildings Up” prize submission the DEC applied for but did not receive, and its plans to submit an application for the Walking Softer Young Leadership Award.

Chair Dean-Carpentier outlined the goals of the Durham Energy Committee:

Goal #1 – Based around providing residents with power through the CPCNH.

Goal #2 – Exploring and providing education and educational opportunities to Durham residents relative to renewable power, energy efficiency, etc. Also providing residents with the resources for personal and funding opportunities for those outside of what would be endorsed by the Town.

Goal #3 – REheat Durham effort relative to energy efficiency and reduction of the carbon footprint from the built-up environment, which includes ongoing efforts to research and apply for any grants or other funding sources to help with these efforts.

Goal #4 – Specifically focuses on supporting EV ownership (figuring out what the Town wants to do about charging stations, how to fund more charging stations, education about EV ownership, etc.).

Goal #5 – Expanding community outreach. Specifically, in terms of Durham’s Climate Action Plan goals. Plans to add energy information to the Town’s weekly Friday Updates. Will investigate how the work the Energy Committee does could be coordinated with the Oyster River High School and Middle School. Looking more at active and public transportation options in Town.

Chair Dean-Carpentier noted that the committee has been talking with the owners of the solar array on Packers Falls Road to determine what could be done to increase that site’s benefit and/or determine what else might be done in the Town in ways that are not visually or environmentally obstructive to possibly expand the renewable energy in Town.

The complete presentation, along with comments, concerns, discussion, and responses to Council questions, may be viewed on DCAT on Demand at www.ci.durham.nh.us.

C. Short Update by Steve Holmgren Regarding Durham Community Power RollOut.

Mr. Holmgren said the next two-three months would be spent educating the community about what is going to happen with CPCNH, how does one get questions answered, what to do in order to change a plan (opting in or opting out). He said the committee is doing some brainstorming sessions with a small working group and has already gone through some training with CPCNH. As part of the cutover as a CPCNH customer community, Durham will have a web page to direct its residents for further information and links to the CPCNH Opt-in, Opt-out, Customer Service, and FAQs features. The web page will be managed and edited by CPCNH on their site.

Mr. Holmgren provided a rate card to Councilors with details. In summary:

- CPCNH rates remain the lowest in NH for 3rd consecutive rate period.
- Durham customers will see a rate that is 2% below the Eversource rate.
- Durham's savings are smaller than usual because Eversource's rates are artificially low due to a refund of 1.5 cents/ kWh they are making due to over collection.

Critical dates coming up for the CPCNH roll-out

- January 3 – CPCNH Zoom call (5 PM) to kickoff public engagement activities for new communities. Open to all, if you want to see what support they are providing,
- January 10th (tentative) – working group to brainstorm about Durham outreach and activities – currently Nat Balch and Rob Sullivan have volunteered, more are welcome!
- Week of January 22 – Mailing of customer enrollment letters to Wave 2 communities
- January 30th – Public Information session, Town Hall, 7 PM

Opt-up campaign?

Other communities have mounted campaigns as part of their roll-out to encourage residents to consider “opting-up” to a higher level of green energy – 33, 50 or 100%. Would this be something the Energy Committee would like to support?

The complete presentation, along with comments, concerns, discussion, and responses to Council questions, may be viewed on DCAT on Demand at www.ci.durham.nh.us.

XI. Unfinished Business

- A. **PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON RESOLUTION #2024-01** Authorizing the Acceptance and Expenditure of Private Donation Funds from an Anonymous Donor in an Amount up to \$45,119 to be used for the purchase of a new Utility Task Vehicle with Medical Skid Package and authorizing the Administrator to Sign and Submit all Necessary Paperwork on behalf of the Town of Durham.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby OPEN the Public Hearing on Resolution #2024-01 Authorizing the Acceptance and Expenditure of Private Donation Funds from an Anonymous Donor in an Amount up to \$45,119 to be used for the purchase of a new Utility Task Vehicle with Medical Skid Package and authorizing the Administrator to Sign and Submit all Necessary Paperwork on behalf of the Town of Durham. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Lund and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

No members of the public came forward to speak or comment on this resolution.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby CLOSE the Public Hearing on Resolution #2024-01 Authorizing the Acceptance and Expenditure of Private Donation Funds from an Anonymous Donor in an Amount up to \$45,119 to be used for the purchase of a new Utility Task Vehicle with Medical Skid Package and authorizing the Administrator to Sign and Submit all Necessary Paperwork on behalf of the Town of Durham. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hotchkiss and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby ADOPT, as presented, Resolution #2024-01 Authorizing the Acceptance and Expenditure of Private Donation Funds from an Anonymous Donor in an Amount up to \$45,119 to be used for the purchase of a new Utility Task Vehicle with Medical Skid Package and authorizing the Administrator to Sign and Submit all Necessary Paperwork on behalf of the Town of Durham. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Friedman.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson asked Chief Emanuel to take a moment to explain how this donation will be used.

Fire Chief Emanuel said the department acquired its first task vehicle in 2013, which was a very similar donation from a very similar donor. He said this resource is deployed mostly for large gatherings such as football games and homecoming activities. This vehicle allows fire personnel to rapidly respond. He said it has been a very useful asset to the department and the department is glad to have it.

The motion ***PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a roll call vote: Councilor Hotchkiss—Aye, Councilor Welsh—Aye, Councilor Lonske—Aye, Councilor Burton—Aye, Chair Needell—Aye, Councilor Lund—Aye, Councilor Friedman—Aye, Chair Pro Tem Lawson—Aye***

B. PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON ORDINANCE #2023-08 regarding minor updates to the Town Code.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby OPEN the Public Hearing on Ordinance #2023-08 regarding minor updates to the Town Code. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hotchkiss and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

William Hall, Smith Park Lane, said he supported the Ordinance, but the devil is in the details, and if the work is not done properly there could be a lot of problems. He said where there is a project, the corners of the lot have to be marked. He noted past issues he has had with his property and his neighbor.

Councilor Hotchkiss MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby CLOSE the Public Hearing on Ordinance #2023-08 regarding minor updates to the Town Code. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Lund and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby ADOPT, as presented, Ordinance #2023-08 regarding minor updates to the Town Code. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Friedman and PASSED 8-0 by a roll call vote: Councilor

Hotchkiss—Aye, Councilor Welsh—Aye, Councilor Lonske—Aye, Councilor Burton—Aye, Chair Needell—Aye, Councilor Lund—Aye, Councilor Friedman—Aye, Chair Pro Tem Lawson—Aye

XII. Approval of Minutes

November 21, 2022

Minor edits were submitted to Administrative Assistant Karen Edwards for inclusion prior to the meeting.

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby APPROVE the Town Council minutes for November 21, 2022, as presented. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hotchkiss and PASSED unanimously 7-0-1 by a show of hands. Councilor Burton abstained as he was not on the Council at that time.

November 20, 2023

Minor edits were submitted to Administrative Assistant Karen Edwards for inclusion prior to the meeting.

Councilor Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council does hereby APPROVE the Town Council minutes for November 20, 2023, as presented. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Hotchkiss and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

XIII. Councilor and Town Administrator Roundtable

Councilor Friedman – Parks & Recreation Committee

- Committee met on December 19, 2023. Administrator Selig attended as well. Councilor Friedman deferred to Administrator Selig to provide an overview of the meeting.

Administrator Selig said conversation was held around fees and what might be charged to Lee and Madbury residents, as well as preferential enrollment for Durham residents in the different programs. Administrator Selig said he believed the consensus was that the Committee had already started a process of reaching out to the Towns of Madbury and Lee to talk about how the Town of Durham, Lee, and Madbury might be able to do more collaboratively together. Committee members wanted to spend more time pursuing that a little further because one of their ideas is to see whether Lee and/or Madbury would want to make some kind of contribution toward Durham's Parks and Recreation program with the knowledge that many of their residents are participating in those programs and in that way not try to offset the costs on to individual users because the programs are available to everybody, but to see instead if the communities themselves would be willing to support them in some way.

Chair Pro Tem said his expectation is that next budget season the Council will see contributions from both Madbury and Lee or be provided with a different fee schedule for non-residents, including Lee and Madbury.

Councilor Friedman - Seacoast Economic Developers Stakeholders (SEDS)

- The SEDS will be meeting on December 23, 2023.

Councilor Lund – Historic District/Heritage Commission

- The HDC/HC has met twice since the last Town Council meeting: December 14, 2023 and January 4, 2024.
- On December 14, 2023, the HDC/HC approved an application from Tideline Public House for a freestanding sign to be located in front of the building.
- The Commission also met on January 4, 2024, where a discussion was held about starting a program for adding plaques to buildings within the historic district. Consensus was that the first plaque would go on the old Courthouse building. Also looking at more prominent signage for when people are entering the historic district. Current signage exists on Main Street near Madbury Road that is located high enough that most drivers and pedestrians would miss it. There is also a sign on Newmarket Road which is difficult to see because of surrounding vegetation. Also looking into adding signage on Dover Road as none currently exists.
- Discussed the process regarding the roundtable conversations between various interested parties on the Oyster River Raid sign. The first of those discussions will occur on January 18, 2024, from 4-6PM. Also plan to have meetings on February 15th and March 21st, same times. The Commission is currently accepting written comments from the public, which can be sent to either Town Planner Michael Behrendt or Administrative Assistant Tracey Cutler. All meetings will be held in the Town Council chambers at Town Hall and are open to the public. However, the Commission is not anticipating taking oral comments from the public at the meetings.

Chair Needell – Durham Human Rights Commission (HRC)

- Discussed ideas for Indigenous Peoples' Day.
- Working on a letter to send to Town boards, commissions, and committees about what is the goal of the Durham HRC and ways in which to get other committees involved.
- Working on updating the commission's bylaws.
- Reviewed the Oyster River High School hate speech and vandalism incidents.
- Next meeting is Friday, January 19, 2024, 9AM in Town Council chambers.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson – Land Stewardship Subcommittee

- The subcommittee met in December.
- Continued discussion and had an update on the Doe Farm. The Thompson School surveyed 30 sampling sites and put the data into the GIS system, which will assist them in developing a foresting management plan for Doe Farm, which has been critical over the past two decades. The last plan was done 22 years ago.
- The Air Force ROTC program assisted with some trail re-routing across Durham lands. He said there was a small encroachment that was resolved, and it is nice when issues can be resolved through cordial discussions.
- Land Stewardship Coordinator Sarah Callaghan has reviewed and monitored all Town easements except for Capstone. Capstone has a requirement to hire a third party for its monitoring.
- The Stewarding our Lands Working Group is now focusing on the best way to summarize the Town's property data, including the data that came from the questionnaire's that residents responded to and ultimately the plan being developed is two types of documents: 1) A summary of Town lands so that people can look at one document that uses accepted symbols about what activities there are and then use that document to access links to more properties. 2) The second document is more substantive in terms of issues that have been resolved, plans, budgets, etc., looking out as far as five years.

Councilor Burton

- Reported on a meeting of the NH Association of Regional Planning Commission he attended via Zoom.
- Commented that he did not believe adding more asphalt paving for parking at Wagon Hill Farm was a good solution.

Councilor Lonske – Agricultural Commission

- Commented again on her inability to attend this evening's Agricultural Commission because it conflicted with a Town Council meeting. She suggested that perhaps a discussion could be held with the Agricultural Commission to determine if it could find another evening during the month to move its' meetings to if possible.

Councilor Welsh – Conservation Commission

- The meeting was cancelled in January because the Chair was concerned about the windstorm that was expected for that evening. He noted there was not anything pressing on the agenda.

Councilor Welsh – Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee

- The committee met on January 3rd. The focus was on how the committee was going to communicate more in terms of recycling and composting. The committee talked with DPW more about the new implementation plan for collections, which has hit a few "hiccups", so the department wants to be certain it will be 100% before bringing that out.
- The committee adopted a goal to try to get people in Durham to generate less trash per day than they currently do.

Councilor Hotchkiss – Planning Board

- Met on December 13, 2023.
- Approved Tideline Public House request to change terms of its hours of operation that were placed on its original approval. The board agreed to the request on a trial/experimental basis to allow those food trucks which chose to work with Uber Eats, Door Dash, and other food delivery services for after-hours food delivery from 10PM to 2AM, October through March.
- Continued review of definitions in the Zoning Ordinance. The board finished to the letter "O".

Councilor Hotchkiss – Housing Task Force

- Met this morning. Councilor Hotchkiss said he was unable to attend due to a conflict but noted the three agenda items: 1) Discussion about Potential Workforce Housing Project, 2) Concluding the Outreach Effort to Individuals and Organizations, 3) Starting Work on the General Housing Survey.

XIV. New Business

- A. Administrator's Progress Report (as of December 31, 2023) on the list of approved 2023/24 Town Council Goals adopted on May 15, 2023.

Administrator Selig noted that the final 2024 Budget was available in the Business Office for Councilors, and that the 2023 Year end Wrap Up was included in the Friday Updates, which he forwarded along to the Council.

- B. Begin the Administrator's Annual Performance Evaluation Process for 2023 in accordance with the Employment Agreement between the Administrator and the Town of Durham.

Chair Needell said her past experience with the Administrator's annual evaluation process is that the process that has been used is the most positive design to evaluate someone and encouraged that the Council stay with that process because it seems to work for the Administrator and Council.

Councilor Welsh agreed with Chair Needell and indicated his reasons why he liked the current process.

Chair Needell added that the information submitted by Councilors on the evaluation form and any attached comments are transparent and available to the public.

Chair Pro Tem Lawson said that Administrator Selig's contract will expire at the end of 2024 and thought he and Chair Needell should discuss with Mr. Selig whether he has any interest in entering into contract renewal discussions earlier. He said if they could come to some kind of framework it might be possible to bring the contract renewal forward to the currently seated Council before the March election.

Councilor Welsh said he would endorse Chair Pro Tem Lawson's suggestion.

No objections to using the current process were raised by other members of the Council.

XV. Nonpublic Session (if required)

XVI. Extended Councilor and Town Administrator Roundtable (if required)

XVII. Adjourn

Councilor Welsh MOVED to ADJOURN the meeting. The motion was SECONDED by Councilor Lund and PASSED unanimously 8-0 by a show of hands.

The meeting ADJOURNED at 9:37 PM.

Jennie Berry, Minutes Taker