

These minutes were approved at the March 17, 2025 meeting.

**DURHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025
DURHAM TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Sally Needell, Chair Pro Tem Joseph Friedman, Councilor Wayne Burton, Councilor Eric Lund, Councilor Darrell Ford, Councilor Heather Grant, Councilor Curtis Register

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor James Bubar, Councilor Emily Friedrichs (who uses the pronouns ze/zir/zirs/zirself and the title Mx. Friedrichs)

OTHERS PRESENT: Administrator Todd Selig, Town Planner Michael Behrendt, Planning Board Chairman Paul Rasmussen, Housing Task Force Chairman Sally Tobias, Department of Public Works Director Rich Reine, Tim Dunn and Dan Prehemo of the NH Department of Transportation, and Seth Hill, who works for GM2, project designer for the Madbury Road-Route 4 intersection roundabout.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Town Council grants permission for fewer than a majority of Councilors to participate remotely - Not needed.

III. Roll Call of Members

Councilor Darrell Ford, Councilor Eric Lund, Councilor Wayne Burton, Chair Pro Tem Joseph Friedman, Chair Sally Needell and Councilor Heather Grant. Chair Needell said there is a quorum. She announced Councilor Bubar and Councilor Friedrichs will not be in attendance at this meeting. Councilor Register joined the meeting in person at 7:06 PM.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Chair Needell MOVED to adopt the agenda as presented. Councilor Lund SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED on a unanimous 6-0 hand vote.

V. Special Announcements

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council adopt Resolution #2025-03 recognizing the following elected officials for their dedication and hard work on behalf of the town: Councilor James Bubar and three Library Board of Trustees members, Charlotte Ramsay, who served from 2016 to 2025; Andrew Sharp, who served from

2019 to 2025; and Erik Waddell, who served from 2019 to 2025. Councilor Eric Lund SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED in a unanimous roll call vote of 6-0.

Chair Needell read the resolution in full and presented official copies of it to those present at the meeting.

VI. Public Comments

Joshua Meyrowitz, 7 Chesley Drive, thanked the Town Council for its ceasefire resolution in support of Gaza that passed one year ago this week and for its August 12 resolution partnering with UNH in free speech and de-escalation efforts on campus. He said neither resolution has had the desired effect. He described the current situation in Gaza and the status of the ceasefire. He also described the failures of the UNH report about the May 1 protest. He asked the Town Council to take a stand based on its resolution and demand accountability of the university.

Councilor Curtis Register arrived at the meeting at 7:06 PM and apologized for his tardiness.

Susan Richman, 16 Cowell Drive, a member of New Hampshire Network, a 4-year-old group of 1,000 members with the goal of facilitating conversation about the environment, energy and climate in the Granite State. She said it receives assistance from Clean Energy NH and its Energy Working Group is the only place where energy committees can get together and share ideas. Someone from Lebanon, N.H., approached the group with a resolution objecting to the freezing of federal funds to towns and municipalities, and asking the state's Congressional deliberation, officials and state representatives demand that the city of Lebanon get the money promised to them. Ms. Richman asked the Town Council to use the document as a template for its own resolution and join cities and towns across the state and country in rejecting the freezing of federal funding.

She said she is also going to speak before the Town Council on March 17 about the danger of plastics proliferation and will call for a ban on plastic bags.

VII. Report from the UNH Student Senate External Affairs Chair or Designee

UNH student Abigail Bagley, the External Affairs Chair for the student body president at UNH, apologized for not being able to attend the meeting because of a mandatory meeting of the Student Senate. Administrator Selig read her written update.

She said the university is holding open interviews of candidates for provost, which students can attend. Her council is having a commuter student outreach event this week. The Student Body president, vice president and Student Trustee elections are starting. The signatures for nominations are due Thursday and the candidates will be announced

soon after. Once a new president and vice president are in place, she will introduce her successor as External Affairs Chair.

Chair Needell said Ms. Bagley has been a great, thorough representative to work with.

VIII. Unanimous Consent Agenda

- A. Shall the Town Council, upon recommendation of the Administrator, award the construction contract for the historic restoration of The Bickford Chesley Farmhouse at Wagon Hill Farm to Milestone Construction of Concord, N.H., for a value not to exceed \$1,849,416.77, subject to available funding and authorize the administrator to sign associated documents?

- B. Shall the Town Council, upon recommendation of the Assessor and Administrator, award the 2025 Statistical Update Bid to Whitney Consulting Group, LLC in the amount of \$36,750 and authorize the administrator to sign associated documents?

Chair Needell MOVED that the Durham Town Council approve both contracts. Council Register SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED on a unanimous roll call vote of 7-0.

IX. Committee Appointments

- A. Shall the Town Council, upon recommendation of the Administrator, appoint Paul Rasmussen, 5 Glassford Lane, to be a Durham Representative to an unexpired vacancy on the Strafford Regional Planning Commission with a term expiration of April 2029?

Chair Needell MOVED the Durham Town Council appoint Paul Rasmussen to be the Durham representative on the Strafford Regional Planning Commission. Councilor Burton SECONDED the motion.

Chair Pro Tem Joe Friedman thanked Mr. Rasmussen for his willingness to serve on the commission, which he said is an important asset to the town and region, and that it's good to have extra representation on the commission. Mr. Rasmussen said that most towns do have a Planning Board representative on the commission and that the town should try to keep that representation at all times. Councilor Burton said he is the representative leaving the SRPC after 12 years and that Mr. Rasmussen is an especially good choice to represent the town. Councilor Register thanked Mr. Rasmussen for serving the town and for giving so much time to the town volunteering in various capacities.

The motion PASSED on a unanimous roll call vote of 7-0.

Councilor Darrell Ford asked if all the town's seats on the SRPC are now filled. It was confirmed there is still one seat open. Councilor Register said he intends to attend one of the commission's meetings, but hasn't been able to yet.

X. Presentation Items

- A. Presentation by NH Department of Transportation on the changes to the proposed roundabout project at Route 4 and Madbury Road.

Administrator Selig said the NH DOT presented this new plan for the roundabout project to the Traffic Safety Committee, which felt comfortable with it, but thought it was important to have the Town Council review it again because the plan has been changed since the NH DOT presented it to the Town Council several years ago.

Tim Dunn, the new project manager for the Durham 42523 intersection safety improvement project, introduced Seth Hill of GM 2, the project design consultant, and Dan Prehemo from the state DOT, who were also present at the meeting.

He said the plan has changed to have single-lane approaches from Madbury Road into the intersection instead of two-lane approaches to increase safety and reduce vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian conflict points. Mr. Dunn said this will also reduce the project's cost and impact because no overhead signage would be needed and the project will have a smaller footprint.

In a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Dunn showed site drawings of the original plan and of the revised layout, comparing the changes to the single-lane approaches, the addition of the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons at the pedestrian crosswalks, and the elimination of overhead signage.

In response to concerns about traffic backups during busy periods, he said the NHDOT ran several models and it feels overall the roundabout will work better than the traffic light. He said it feels even 20 years from now with increased volume the roundabout will work better than if the stoplight were kept and the lines of traffic will be shorter than the ones that currently occur at the stoplight. He gave an explanation about how the RRFBs work better than the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons and are safer.

He noted the town would be responsible for maintaining the sidewalks, the pedestrian signage, pavement markings and any special landscaping at the roundabout. He said the DOT has the responsibility of maintaining traffic in the construction work zone.

Residents can look at the project and presentation online at dot.nh.gov/projects-plans-and-programs/project-center/durham-42523

Councilor Lund asked for safety data about the RRFBs over the other kinds of crosswalk beacons. Mr. Dunn said he would get that information from the Bureau of Traffic and send it to Administrator Selig. Councilor Lund also asked what amount of traffic growth is predicted in the 20-year projections. Mr. Hill said he would get that information. Mr. Dunn said there are traffic count sites all around the state that the projections are based on. Councilor Burton asked if the funding for the project is secure and Mr. Dunn confirmed it is. Councilor Burton noted how power goes out

often at those traffic lights, and wondered if a school bus would be able to get around the roundabout. Mr. Dunn said the roundabouts are designed with a semi-tractor trailer as the test vehicle. Chair Pro Tem Friedman asked if the connections with the sidewalks coming out of the roundabout will work with the town's Madbury Road project changes. Mr. Dunn confirmed that NHDOT is coordinating with that project. He asked if there are any other RRFBs on major routes like this where they stop traffic for pedestrians and they confirmed there are. They said the project will start and the bulk of the work will be done in 2027 and finished in 2028. Councilor Grant was dismayed at the timeframe because it is such a dangerous intersection. Mr. Dunn said the next step is to schedule the Public Hearing, which takes about seven months, then do the final design, then advertise bids, which is why they can't begin until 2027.

There was discussion about how the design of a roundabout forces drivers to slow down; how curb heights protect pedestrians; how the center will be a mounded center island of grass for easy maintenance.

Department of Public Works Director Rich Reine said work would continue on the Madbury Road improvement project in 2025 and 2026, and then it would be married up with the roundabout. Mr. Reine said there is a possibility that if the town gets a Transportation Alternatives Program grant for the Madbury Road project that the last phase may be delayed by one year and then it would sync up with the construction of the roundabout.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman asked about the Madbury Road and Emerson Road intersection and Mr. Reine said phase four of the project will build a left-turn lane and a crosswalk to Emerson Road for a potential sidewalk there when funding allows.

B. Presentation by Sally Tobias, Chair of the Housing Task Force, on four proposed initiatives to potentially revitalize downtown Durham.

Housing Task Force Chair Sally Tobias said there has long been concern about revitalizing the downtown, and that the COVID-19 pandemic made the situation dramatically worse for downtown and its business owners. When the Housing Task Force was asked to develop zoning changes that would promote housing and revitalization in downtown, it created a subcommittee, which talked to downtown property owners including Tom Toye, co-owner and principal broker of Arthur Thomas Properties, and Mark Henderson, owner of Henderson Family Properties.

Chair Tobias said many of the uses in the downtown are by conditional use, which requires a developer to prove to the town their project will qualify for the use and then still possibly be denied. This makes it difficult for developers in cost and time to pursue developments. Yet, she said, the town still doesn't want to just permit everything as a permitted use without review. She presented the Task Force's recommendations.

The Housing Task Force suggests splitting the current Central Business District into CB-1 and CB-2.

In CB-1, which would be the downtown blocks along Main Street, mixed use with residential would change from a conditional use to a permitted use, which would remove the fear of failure for projects, Chair Tobias said.

In CB-2, mixed use with residential would remain at conditional use. Chair Tobias said this area is distinctly different from the rest of the business district, and encompasses the Mill Plaza area, which serves as a transition zone to residential areas, and the UNH property across Mill Road where the Campus Crossing parking lot and university buildings are.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman asked if the Task Force considered rezoning properties along Mill Road up to McDaniel on the UNH side of the road or on the other side of Mill Road such as the Waysmeet property to CB-2, and Chair Tobias replied they didn't want to change anything that's already residential, and that area is a mix of different types of buildings and residential.

To address multi-unit residential, which is not permitted anywhere in Durham except as adaptive reuse in the Professional Office District as conditional use. The Task Force recommends making multi-unit residential permitted by right in the Professional Office, Church Hill and Courthouse districts - and continue to keep it as not allowed in Central Business District where the best choice is mixed use with residential, she said.

Councilor Lund asked if they considered mixed use in the Church Hill or Courthouse districts. As this is part of the Historic District, he said it would be historically acceptable to have a shop on the first floor and an owner living upstairs. Chair Tobias said they didn't consider it, but could see how it could be allowed there. Councilor Lund said he's not suggesting mixed use instead of multi-residential, and said it's a possibility the town should allow for, noting there's already Tideline Public House and Gasoline Alley in the Courthouse zone. Task Force members said there is limited space for more business but they would take a look at this issue. Mr. Behrendt added that if someone wanted to do mixed use in these districts, they could because the town already allows commercial and multi-family and a developer can combine those two that are allowed.

Chair Tobias gave the history of how the three-story limit came to be through a citizen petition in 2013 when the Madbury Road student apartments were being built. The three-story limit applies to Main Street and limited lots on Madbury Road. She said the Task Force feels it is time to address the height limit and go to four-story permitted, and five-story conditional use.

Discussion occurred about how going to four residential stories and one commercial story for a total of five stories would make projects more feasible financially; that a second level of commercial might be onerous for developers; about how there is no

desire to build more student housing because the market is saturated; how landlords can rent an apartment to a student but they can require certain behaviors that make it undesirable for a student to rent there; and how the cost of building is skyrocketing. Councilor Ford asked why five stories should be a conditional use. Chair Tobias said that putting conditional use on anything is open for debate.

Ms. Tobias presented about RSA-79E, which allows towns to freeze the assessment of a property for a specific number of years agreed upon by the developer and Town Council, as an incentive to developers the town could use more. The town gives up the immediate rise in assessment, but it could gain significant increases for decades. The town refined the statute so the developer has to prove the project wouldn't be viable without this incentive. Only one developer Xemed in 2012 has used this incentive. The Task Force recommends removing the proof requirement and adopting it as it is written in NH Land Code. She said in the recent years of growth, many towns including Newmarket have used it over and over again successfully.

Discussion took place regarding whether the UNH buildings in CB-2 fit the zoning requirements of CB-2 if someone wanted to imitate them elsewhere. Mr. Behrendt said the UNH land and buildings are being included in CB-2 to avoid an accusation of spot zoning after consulting with the town's attorney. He said given that UNH is exempt from zoning as a practical matter it's non-consequential. Councilors discussed if the UNH buildings included in CB-2 meet requirements, and how university buildings on UNH are not subject to the town's zoning. But if a university building is built on town land under a land lease agreement or sale, zoning would apply. Mr. Rasmussen said breaking up the Central Business District into two is just Step 1. Then, as time permitted, the Planning Board would look at modifying the table of uses in CB-2 to make it a true transitional zone, giving the examples of a different height limit and possibly allowing multi-unit residential by right as ways to do that.

Discussion about the properties along the west side of Mill Road, which back up to UNH land, and whether they should be added to the CB-2 zone occurred. Consensus was it is a small area with a lot of challenges, would create a lot of pre-existing, non-conforming uses, and that a buffer zone is needed.

Councilor Register complimented the Task Force and Mr. Behrendt's work on a good solution, a tangible course of action, and said the town is in a revenue crisis and needs to increase its income through property taxes by creating growth. Developing the Central Business District is one way to do that. He asked if any infrastructure rework would be needed, and Mr. Rasmussen replied the capacity is there.

Councilors asked that the Zoning Map be updated with more accurate detail, and Mr. Behrendt said GIS is working on it.

Mr. Behrendt said the 79-E is a Council policy so it would have to rule on that and he suggested bringing it back as an agenda item at a future Council meeting. He gave some of the history of its use in town and said the town needs to review it since it has

changed. Administrator Selig gave some history of the Council policy and a working group did look at the proof requirement in the past and felt it wasn't the right time. But over time, it's seemed a pediment, and he will bring it to the Town Council soon.

XI. Councilor and Town Administrator Roundtable

Councilor Friedrichs

Councilor Friedrichs could not be at the meeting, but gave Administrator Selig several updates. Ze reported ze and several other councilors signed a letter calling on the Governor and the State Legislature for fair state funding of education. If other Councilors or School Board members would like to join in the effort, they can sign at fairfundingnh.org.

Susan Richmond asked zir if Durham would join Lebanon, N.H., in demanding an end to the federal freeze of funding to municipalities. Ze gave the example of a Durham Energy Committee volunteer who put in lots of time getting the EV charger grant for the town and considers it a personal blow that it is now on hold. Ze wondered what everyone's opinion on the resolution is.

Councilor Grant - Planning Board

She reported the Planning Board met on Feb. 26. They opened a Public Hearing on the change in the Aquifer Protection Overlay District. The Conservation Commission asked the Planning Board to keep that Public Hearing open so they could do further review. There was no comment from the public during the hearing. The board put forth the change in the setback for Stone Quarry Drive to accommodate the Riverwoods expansion development. She said the Strafford Regional Planning Commission met with the Planning Board and reported on what it does. The board discussed a site plan change for invasive species and worked more on the Planned Unit Development ordinance.

Councilor Grant - Housing Task Force

The Housing Task Force met March 3, and set another meeting for March 17 to meet its deadline for completing its mission. They talked about Senate Bill 4, the C-PACER bill the Governor just signed. C-PACER or commercial property assigned clean energy or resiliency program reduces the burden on municipalities in making loans to improve a proposed development's energy efficiency. The town or city can provide a loan and the cost of loan would be recouped over time as part of a local property tax bill. Now the N.H. Business Finance Authority will administer the loans for towns. Administrator Selig said Durham was the first town to adopt this when it became available, but it was little used because it was complicated for towns and banks to recoup the loan, especially if a bankruptcy occurred. Administrator Selig said developer Steve Duprey realized it would make sense for this program to help create more housing the state needs so he worked on

legislation to allow a community to have the primary position in collecting the loan again if a bank agrees. Administrator Selig said the town needs to review the new law.

Chair Needell

Chair Needell read a note from outgoing Councilor Bubar thanking his fellow Councilors for their camaraderie, patience, persistence and diligence, and wished them all well.

Chair Needell reminded Councilors they'll be asked to cover hours at the Town Election on March 11. Councilors confirmed they received an email that day about it.

Chair Needell announced she will step down as chair of the Town Council at the next meeting on March 17, but will remain as a Councilor.

Chair Needell - Human Rights Commission

She said the Human Rights Commission won't meet until the middle of April so there is nothing to report.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman - Parks and Recreation Committee

He said Parks and Rec canceled their last meeting on Feb. 25, but they have been at work getting ready for spring and summer programs. He said they've done a good job promoting them on its website, in Friday Updates, and through its email mailing list. The Churchill Rink's season ends March 18 and advised residents until then to check its website at ChurchillRink.org for the schedule.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman - Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders

He said the Strafford Regional Planning Commission participates regularly in the Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders meetings and is developing the 2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region. He said the projects that are to be funded were presented and included the Madbury Road improvements, a number of Department of Public Works projects underway, and the wastewater treatment odor control project.

He said Great Bay Rowing had pulled out of the community boathouse on the Dover waterfront and might be a possibility for Durham if the town wants them at its Jackson's Landing facility.

He also said Epping continues to violate its EPA permits with 120 permit violations since April 2022 for discharges in the Lamprey River. The NH Department of Environmental Services is pressing the town to comply.

Councilor Burton asked Chair Pro Tem Friedman if he is interested in being chair of the Town Council and he replied that he is interested.

Councilor Burton - Conservation Commission

Councilor Burton said he missed the Conservation Commission meeting so didn't have a report.

He said he spent the day with the Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, Katherine Provencher, who gave a presentation to the House Finance Committee in the morning and to the Public Higher Education Study Committee in the afternoon. Her message was don't cut the USNH more than you already have.

He said the county is meeting Friday morning to set the budget and he doesn't believe there'll be any change from what has been proposed.

On March 4, he said there will be a committee vote on the education voucher bill, which the Democrats are fighting. There's been an intense public outcry on this, he said, as there was when cutting some classes from the state's required curriculum was proposed and 30,000 people opposed that bill online.

He said he thought the Conservation Commission talked about the property at the corner of Durham Point Road and Adams Point Road. Administrator Selig said the town's attorney has sent the property owner a letter, asking for documentation of why they believe the pond on the property is exempt from the wetlands conservation setback for an historic agricultural use. When the town receives that, it will reevaluate, but until that time, the town has told them they can't do any more work in that area.

Administrator Selig added State Rep. Al Howland told him the Housing Committee will talk again about HB 457 on March 4 and he is not sure how that will turn out. Councilor Burton apologized to the town staff that turned up for the hearing two weeks ago, had to sit through one of the worst hearings he said he's ever seen and was treated so badly.

Councilor Lund - Energy Committee

Councilor Lund said he attended an event sponsored by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission on Feb. 27 in Barrington about that town's Energy Committee's initiatives. Energy audits were done on multiple town-owned buildings, which resulted in substantial savings. They also have an initiative to put solar installations on all town buildings, but they haven't been successful in convincing Barrington's school district to do so. He said they gave the example of Durham's middle school as an example of how to do that. There was a brief discussion of the situation with CPCNH and its rate setting, and the

efforts to support HB 760, which prevents the legacy utility companies from off-loading their underestimated energy distribution costs onto their distribution network customers, which he described as an anti-competitive measure.

Councilor Ford - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

He reported he wasn't able to attend the subcommittee's last meeting. They mostly discussed invasive species particularly at Fitts Farm. Land Stewardship Coordinator Veronique Ludington gave the group an update. Next meeting is Wednesday at 8:30 p.m.

Councilor Register - School Board

He said the School Board met Feb. 19. He reported that the superintendent is updating the strategic plan for the schools and will be doing outreach to the community through a program he's calling World Cafe. He said there are 109 students registered at this point for kindergarten next school year. The board also discussed the renovations at the elementary schools to increase classroom space. Next meeting is Wednesday, March 5.

Councilor Register - Agricultural Commission

The commission last met on Feb. 10 and hasn't met since the last Town Council meeting. It released the Food Together Survey in the Feb. 21 Friday Update. He encouraged residents to take the survey. He said Farm Day is set for Aug. 16. He invited individuals and groups in town to bring their ideas for improving Farm Day to the commission as it wants to increase participation. There is a new Local Farms Locator on the Agricultural Commission's website to make it easier for residents to shop locally.

Councilor Register

He said he joins Councilor Friedrichs in supporting Susan Richman's request that the town join Lebanon, N.H., in its resolution demanding the federal government release funds promised to cities and towns. He said he dislikes it when, regardless of party, leaders play games with necessary funds and supports the Council approving a resolution.

He said he is looking forward to the re-election of Councilors Lund and Friedman in the upcoming Town Election and continuing to work with them. He said he continues to learn from them and appreciates their perspectives on town issues. He thanked Councilor Bubar for his service on the Council and that he's learned a lot from him. He thanked Chair Needell for creating a welcoming and positive atmosphere, which encourages communication. He said he supports Mr. Friedman's bid to chair the Town Council.

He encouraged residents to be engaged in town government and to exercise the hard-fought-for right to vote in next Tuesday's Town Election. He asked everyone to respect those working at the polls, who are mostly volunteers, and to be kind.

Chair Needell asked what the next step is for the federal funding resolution. Councilor Register said the deadline in the email from Lebanon is after the next Town Council meeting so they have time to write a resolution and approve it, which he supports.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman asked if Lebanon would support Durham in terms of HB 457, the proposed bill that regulates a town's zoning. There was discussion about Lebanon having a not-more-than-three unrelated rule also in the past. Mr. Friedman said Administrator Selig had written them about it and Administrator Selig confirmed he had not heard anything back from Lebanon about the zoning issue. Administrator Selig said the town should wait and see what happens at the committee vote on HB 457 on March 4 and, if needed, the town will mount an additional effort on the floor of the House and in the Senate.

Councilor Burton repeated the importance of a resolution rejecting the freezing of federal funds, giving the example of Maine's Sea Grant program being frozen by President Trump in what appears to be retaliation against Governor Janet Mills for confronting him in a news conference recently. It is uncertain how this affects New Hampshire's funding since it partners with Maine on many Sea Grant research projects, Councilor Burton said.

Administrator Selig

He asked Councilor Register how the testing of the voting machine in the Town Clerk's Office went. Councilor Register said there were no discrepancies or problems with the Accuvote machine he observed and everything was done transparently and legally. Administrator Selig reminded that the new voting machines the town has purchased will not be available for next week's Town Election.

He said in response to complaints he's heard this winter that some town roads are not cleared to bare pavement as quickly as they used to be that the Department of Public Works is working hard to carefully calibrate how much salt it needs to use to not impact the environment adversely and still clear the snow safely.

Administrator Selig said there'll be an orientation for newly elected councilors on Monday, March 17 at 6 p.m. and invited Councilors to attend.

He said he will ask Administrative Assistant Karen Edwards to pull together a draft of the Lebanon resolution which Ms. Richman proposed in Public Comments and share it with her to review and then include it in the next Council meeting's packet.

Seacoast Eat Local has been in touch about the Durham Farmers' Market returning this summer. He said an upcoming Friday Update will include a survey from SEL to gather information from residents about what they'd like to see at the market.

He said the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire has announced its executive director has stepped down and has appointed Henry Herndon as its interim executive director. He believes there will be no disruption in operations as Herndon has been with CPCNH from the beginning.

In trying to maximize the benefits of the town's environmental footprint, he said the town is going to contract with Freedom Energy, a company that offers virtual net metering that the town could enroll the wastewater treatment plant in and receive about \$2,000 a year. He said Freedom Energy would use the load from the plant to be able to use hydropower from Canada. He said the contract will be month-to-month basis instead of a long-term contract. He said in the long term CPCNH is looking at doing something similar and applying it to solar arrays in the state and the town may want to join that program in the future and perhaps earn at a greater rate.

The Edge at West End project is in the RFP process, he said, and he and Councilor Friedman are on the selection committee. They can't report specifics because they both had to sign an NDA, but the committee is reviewing RFPs. Chair Pro Tem Friedman added that because of discussions at the Council with UNH, the town-owned 66 Main Street is included in the proposals and developers are considering how to incorporate it.

Administrator Selig said he is working on an op-ed piece about HB 457 that recognizes the state has significant housing challenges, but urges the Legislature not to throw the baby - which in this case is zoning - out with the bath water, because it is an important local process and a lot of the zoning questions are best dealt with at the local level where people know their community, their neighborhoods and what the utility limits are for water, wastewater and stormwater. He said the op-ed will ask legislators to think very carefully about changes that could have unanticipated consequences. He said he's waiting to see what happens at the committee vote March 4 to complete the op-ed. Councilor Register added that if legislators get it wrong it will be the local towns that have to bear the burden of that mistake. Councilor Burton added that the legislative process for the bill is very long and it's not the town's last chance if the bill does get out of the committee.

XII. Unfinished Business

XIII. Approval of Minutes - February 17, 2025

Councilor Burton commented that there was a great deal of detail in the minutes and remembered a past direction to create more of a summary of notes about what happened

at a meeting, not a verbatim, play-by-play account. There was a discussion about how the minutes are for those not present at a meeting and for future use.

Chair Pro Tem Friedman MOVED that the Council approve the minutes from its February 17, 2025 meeting. Councilor Register SECONDED the motion. The motion PASSED on a unanimous hand vote of 6-0.

Councilor Ford abstained because he was not present at the February 17, 2025 meeting.

XIV. New Business - None

XV. Nonpublic Session - Not Required

XVI. Adjourn (NLT 10:30 PM)

Councilor Lund MOVED to adjourn the meeting. Councilors Register and Grant SECONDED the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous hand vote of 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM

- Jane Murphy, Minutes Taker