



APPROVED

## Board of Selectmen Town of Gilmanton, New Hampshire

Meeting  
April 25, 2016  
5:30 p.m. – Gilmanton Academy

(Audio part 1)

**Present:** Chairman Michael Jean, Selectman Steve McWhinnie, Selectman Marshall Bishop, Town Administrator Paul Branscombe and Recording Secretary Heather Carpenter.  
Also present please see attached sign in sheet.

**5:30 pm Chairman Jean** opened the meeting, took attendance of those present and voting (**Selectman McWhinnie, Chairman Jean** and Selectman Bishop) and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Nonpublic meetings were scheduled at the beginning of the meeting but due to late arrival of participants of those meetings they needed to be placed at a later time on the schedule.

### **Approval of Minutes –**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 18, 2016 as amended. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**-yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

### **Signature File**

#### **CCS-**

This is the service contract for the computers in the Selectmen's Office for \$11,146. Last year's price was \$19,000 this is a different price from this year's contract because the budgets have been broken down by department.

The Chairman asks the other Select Board members if they will allow him to be the sole signature for this contract, Selectman Bishop and **Selectman McWhinnie** agree.

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to have **Chairman Jean** be the sole signature on the contract for CCS. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

#### **Front Step-**

An estimate has been received from Harry Gordon Stonework for the front step at the Academy Building. There have been several contractors in town that have been spoken with about the job. Harry Gordon has spoken with Mickey Daigle. Mr. Daigle has not submitted a bid on this job for the step. This is the only actual proposal that has been received. Ms. Jackson-Rhine has not heard back from one of the contractors and the other contractor has stated that he will not be available for the job. Mr. Gordon's proposal also notes that a decision needs to be made within the next couple of weeks or he will also be unavailable for this job due to the busy season. This job was not anticipated to exceed \$5,000.

Discussion about the conversation that **Chairman Jean** and **Selectman McWhinnie** had with Mr. Daigle about the wall and the step.

The Board would like to keep Mr. Gordon's proposal alive but have Ms. Jackson- Rhine speak to Mr. Daigle about the step and the wall project being done at the same time. Selectman McWhinnie would also like Mr. Daigle to look at the brick work issue and the railings to see what options there are for fixing those problems.

**COLA'S-** The Financial Officer has requested signature from the Board of Selectmen for the cost of living adjustments for the part time employees and Animal Control Officer.

**Chairman Jean** had thought these had been signed already. The Town Administrator- **Paul Branscombe** stated the fact that the Board members signed Personal Action forms establishing their pay for the Police Department but not the cost of living adjustments.

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to sign the Cost of Living Adjustment for three part time Police Officers and the Animal Control Officer. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** - yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

#### **Purchase Order-**

The purchase order for the rental equipment/sweeper from NITCO from Mr. Perkins at the Highway Department for the total of \$3,250.00.

The Select Board has a discussion on the rental cost vs the cost of purchasing one for the equipment that Gilmanton already has. This sweeper that is being rented does not collect the sand, rather pushes debris over. **Chairman Jean** directs the Town Administrator to clarify that information with the Highway Department.

Town Administrator speaks to the three bids from Wolcott, GMI and Pike that have been received for paving prices. Wolcott's proposal was the cheapest per ton, GMI came in second and Pike came in third for pricing. The pricing is done by the tonnage.

**Chairman Jean** thinks they should go with Wolcott, they are a local company and came in with the best price. He would like to know which roads are being done before the process starts.

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to approve the bid from Wolcott Construction for the paving project in the Town of Gilmanton. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

**Chairman Jean** states again the request that the Board gets notified about which roads are being worked on beforehand and the details of the project. The Town Administrator agrees to notify the Board with those details and after giving Mr. Perkins the authority to sign off on the agreement.

**Assessing Documents-** the Select Board members sign the documents placed before them.

#### **Metrocast Agreement-**

The Town Administrator explains that there are two places that need signatures, one is the effective date (today's date) and there needs to be a motion to allow the Chairman to be the sole signature on it.

**Chairman Jean** asks if the Town should go back to the franchise fees. Mr. Branscombe explains his feeling is that the Town should not go back to the fee at this time because it is another cost to the Tax Payer.

**Chairman Jean** and **Selectman McWhinnie** ask if Mr. Branscombe has reviewed the document thoroughly. Mr. Branscombe states yes and that is exactly the same as Alton's agreement, except that it says Town of Gilmanton.

**MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman Bishop and seconded by **Selectman McWhinnie** it was voted unanimously to approve the Metrocast Agreement.-Amended and allow **Chairman Jean** to be the sole signature on the agreement. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

Discussion on the acceptance of the TDS agreement and the Metrocast agreement allows citizens of Gilmanton options of companies to choose from.

### **Claimlinx Agreement**

Town Administrator is not recommending the move to Claimlinx for the healthcare coverage. The main reason for not recommending the agreement is that the information on how to handle the retirees is still unclear. Claimlinx is not like HealthTrust or Intercostal-Harvard Pilgrim, or School Care- Cigna. Claimlinx does not have the capability to take care of the retirees for us just yet, like the other companies already do. As of this moment to make the move to Claimlinx would be labor intensive, cost prohibitive exercise for us to do it here in Gilmanton. Mr. Branscombe also didn't like the fact that he could not get firm numbers from them as of this date which gives him cause for concern. New Durham Board of Selectmen put their account every three years and they have been with Claimlinx for a year and they are putting out to bid because they have concerns internally with Claimlinx people in the Mid-West.

Mr. Branscombe states that they should stay with School Care and continue a dialog with Claimlinx. There is no doubt about it, that you control your own destiny as a municipality if you take care of your health coverage yourself through self-insurance. Due to the date that we must notify retirees about the change, if we go in blind then the Town and the Board of Selectmen could be criticized. He believes it would be a disservice to the Town and the employees. Discussion of coverage that we have now, the increase that has already been budgeted for and the timing of firm numbers in reference to the budgeting process. The Finance Officer doesn't feel good about the move at this point.

[There is a disruption of the Selectmen's meeting that needed to be addressed before the meeting could continue]

### **(A) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

Property Issue

### **(B) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

Property Issue

**(C) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

Property Issue

**(D) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

Property Issue

**(E) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

Property Issue

The meeting room was closed to the public. Present during the Non-Public Session were Chairman Jean, Selectman McWhinnie, Selectman Bishop. Town Administrator Paul Branscombe, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Debra Cornett, Heidi Jackson-Rhine and Recording Secretary- Heather Carpenter and the individuals/owners that are the subject of the meetings taking place.

**MOTION:** On a Motion by Selectman McWhinnie and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to come out of Non-Public Session. (3-0 Voice Vote – Chairman Jean-yes, Selectman McWhinnie -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

The meeting room was opened to the public. The Board noted the Non-Public Session minutes were sealed.

**New Business**

(Audio part 2)

Board of Selectmen Minutes- Brenda Currier- Please see attached document for exactly what Mrs. Currier read from. Below are her questions that she stated. Some of these questions had a response some did not.

Questions about Department Head pay-

1) Why the change of heart?

A: They have the COLA raise in 2016. They got their raises this year but we are freezing them for the following year.

Brenda asked to look at the minutes of the April 13 meeting. She reads the motion; “a motion by Selectman McWhinnie and Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to freeze the Fire Department Chief, Police Department Chief and Road Agent pay including COLA for two years for the year 2016 and 2017.”

**Brenda Currier Q:** So does that mean that you have not yet given the Department Heads or the employees their raises for this year?

A: **Chairman Jean**- They have already got them this year, we signed the paper work for it. They all have them, right Paul?

**Paul Branscombe A:** They have them but they are retroactive back to January is being done now by Brenda (Finance Officer).

**Chairman Jean A:** They got it but they have it going back to January 1<sup>st</sup>, they haven't made that payment yet.

**Brenda Currier- Q:** So, they've gotten it in this week's paycheck or...

**Chairman Jean- A:** What week did it go into Paul?

**Paul Branscombe-A:** It should've been last week but Brenda's working on the retro back to January.

**Brenda Currier-Q:** I am just wondering why you voted to put these through but then you reneged?

**Chairman Jean- Q:** We voted and signed that they got their raises and then we froze them at that time. On the 18<sup>th</sup> I believe we rescinded it.

**Brenda Currier: Q:** Are they entitled to get interest on that money because they have been waiting for the retroactive back to January?

**Chairman Jean- Q:** How has the Town done that in the past, Paul?

**Paul Branscombe- A:** The holdup is because Brenda has this new BMSI software now. So she has to go back and look at these employees' hours and then she is working on the time sheets.

**Brenda Currier- Q:** So you didn't have anyone qualified after the March vote to make that happen before a month and a half later?

**Paul Branscombe- A:** No and we switched software.

**Chairman Jean- A:** We switched bookkeepers and software programs because the other one was...

**Brenda Currier- Q:** So you didn't have access to like PLGC provide you with someone that could come in and make that happen for these employees?

**Chairman Jean A:** I believe they got a notice in their pay that they would be receiving that check.

**Paul Branscombe- A:** That is correct. From my understanding Mr. Chairman that is how it has worked, they get the pay then and then it is retroactively paid in the next month back to January.

**Chairman Jean A:** It takes time to go through all the pay stubs/pay sheets.

**Brenda Currier Q:** What prompted you to want to freeze the budgets of those three and not include the Town Clerk?

**Chairman Jean- We** have been looking at pay scales around the Town and we decided to put a freeze on it, Steve made the motion to put the freeze on so we can get pay scales in line and what not. We are changing a lot of stuff in the office over there. We are looking at all the pay scales.

**Brenda Currier Q:** Did you rescind that because it was not legal or what was your thinking on rescinding...

**Chairman Jean A:** No, we rescinded so we could get stuff in line before we did it. We did it that night and then we looked at the options with the pay scales and surrounding towns for pay scales Alton, Gilford...

**Paul Branscombe- A:** Lakes Region.

**Chairman Jean- and** we got the statewide pay scales. We are trying to get a pay scale, so the employees will go through a pay scale instead of raises. We are looking at the whole thing, job descriptions. People need a good job description and I have been talking about job descriptions for about a year now and pay scales. You bring someone in and they go up the scale so they put more years in they get incentives.

**Brenda Currier Q:** For these three Department Heads that have been here over a decade. Would you, as I go on, would you just reflect in the minutes the questions I ask and there answers to them.

**Heather Carpenter Q:** You want exact?

**Chairman Jean A:** We are recording it.

**Brenda Currier A:** That would be great. Moving on.

Question about the Audio vs the Transcribed Minutes-

- 2) Can you tell me if the audio is correct or if the transcribed minutes are correct?

**Heather Carpenter Q:** Can I speak to that?

**Chairman Jean- A:** I will let Heather speak to that because she wrote the minutes.

**Heather Carpenter A:** With the audio there have been some meetings that have been really quick in reference to, I am opening the door, I am going to get multiple things and we do a nonpublic but the recording doesn't come back on and in order not to cut and copy the file. I don't want to have to interject on another point. In order to keep a clean copy for the public I put the recorder back on as soon as I am aware of it. It is just an inconsistency of that meeting. I am desperately trying to slow the meeting down so that those don't happen as much, that way you can hear it and the times are in there. There have been times on the audio that you don't get the adjournment time and you will hear me at the end say it. I am really trying to get a more consistent layout for the meeting. So the minutes do reflect what happened but it's my ability to come back and turn the recorder on when necessary.

**Daryl Hoitt-** I don't understand that.

**Richard Bakos-** That didn't make any sense.

**Brenda Currier-** You can't ask questions.

**Heather Carpenter- Q:** Do you need clarification?

**Daryl Hoitt-** Well, ask your question again.

**Brenda Currier-** I was just asking if the audio is correct or the transcribed minutes are correct? I didn't hear on the audio were you came back into a public meeting.

**Heather Carpenter-** So, the audio is correct in the sense that I turned it on when I was available to turn it on, so the minutes reflect the technicalities of what happened in the meeting but my ability to literally hit the record button was not in line with what I was hearing. If I am opening the door and they are making the motion my recording is on because people are leaving or things are still being said and then I come back and turn the audio on. The minutes are correct and the audio is correct in the effect that I wasn't fast enough to put it back on.

- 3) Asking for clarification because the agenda did not state that you would be having a public meeting after your last non-public. Can anyone clarify this for me?

**Chairman Jean-** I haven't listened to the recording, I am just going by the minutes. I can listen to the recording and get back to you. I don't remember back on April 4.

**Brenda Currier-** Generally speaking, if what I am saying is correct and you did say there was no more public that night, wouldn't that mean that you would not discuss more public information that night, when the answer from the Board was no more public. In general I'm just saying. What would that mean to you guys?

**Chairman Jean- Q:** I don't remember back to April 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Brenda Currier-** No, I 'm just saying Mike, if you stated in a meeting, guys do we have any more public...

**Chairman Jean A-** I would take it that we are done with public for that night. Was it public input?

**Brenda Currier-** A: Yes public input and you said it before Don left the meeting.

**Chairman Jean A:** I haven't listened to it and I won't comment on it until I listen to it.

**Brenda Currier A:** You know me I probably wouldn't be bringing it up if you didn't say it.

- 4) The approved and transcribed minutes clearly state that you came out of non-public session at 8:49 p.m. is that correct?

Selectman Bishop- Yes on here.

- 5) So my question to you is- How could you come out of non-public session at 8:49 as stated in these minutes at 8:50?

**Heather Carpenter A:** So, I will go back and check the times. The conversation was extremely brief. I will go back to the audio because and listen to when because that could have been an error on my part. I will look at it in more detail but like I said the first several meetings have been very fast paced and I will go check that again. You are saying a minute time difference, I would also raise an eyebrow to that but I want to check.

Selectman Bishop- A: Brenda, I would like to just say this because I remember the conversation. We were in a hurry, it had been a bad meeting and we just briefly said these are the things we need to talk about...no

**Brenda Currier-** Marshall it was twenty-five minutes of talking that said happened during a minute.

- 6) So, did you all discuss all of the information in public or non-public?

Selectman Bishop A:- It would have to be done in public because we went out of nonpublic.

- 7) And at the end of this 25 minutes you can clearly be heard Mr. Branscombe saying, "is there anything else on this list that we need to discuss?"

- 8) If there was a list, why weren't these things discussed before Mr. Guarino left and the public portion of the meeting over for the night?"

**Brenda Currier-** That question was directed at you Paul? If you had a list why didn't you discuss it in public?

**Paul Branscombe-** I didn't have a list.

**Brenda Currier –** Well in the tape I says...

**Paul Branscombe-** I haven't listened to the tape Brenda, I don't have a list.

**Brenda Currier-** I can only say what I heard.

**Paul Branscombe-** Right, in many instances, of course, in municipal government you don't have to put anything on an agenda, we could just put Board of Selectmen meeting.

**Brenda Currier-** But you did...

**Paul Branscombe-** I know, I know and we do that as a courtesy to the public.

**Brenda Currier-** mmmm

**Paul Branscombe-** We were in nonpublic, we came out and the Board of Selectmen continued talking. It wasn't on the main agenda because sometimes you don't think about things earlier in the evening and those are things that can be brought up in Select Board items.

**Brenda Currier-** That really isn't a great answer. When you clearly have Mike ask a question is there anything more for public and everyone says no. You clearly state on the

tape, "do you have anything else on the list that you want to talk about", you didn't pull the word list out of the air.

**Paul Branscombe-** I think it was a list from the Selectmen's agenda if I remember correctly. It wasn't my list, it was list that the Board had.

**Brenda Currier-** Okay

**Chairman Jean-** It was a list that we had but I would have to listen to it.

- 9) Furthermore, didn't the former board just give you a \$15,000 dollar raise?

**Brenda Currier-** That is a question.

**Paul Branscombe-** No

**Brenda Currier-** They gave you a three year, \$5,000 a year raise.

**Paul Branscombe-** You just said a \$15,000 raise.

**Brenda Currier-** Well, it adds up to \$15,000.

**Paul Branscombe-** I have a \$5,000 raise in 2017, and 2018, and 2019.

**Brenda Currier-** Well do the math that its \$15,000.

**Paul Branscombe-** yeah

**Brenda Currier-** Thank you.

- 10) How much do you think you're worth to this Town Mr. Branscombe?

- 11) Since when does the Town Administrator make suggestions of that nature?

- 12) What building are you referring to?

**Brenda Currier-** Mike would you like to elaborate on that?

**Chairman Jean-** Different buildings, you drive by the landfill, you drive by the Highway Department, drive by any of them. I drive by and check if people are there. I look at every time sheet every week and what they are filling in. I believe that is my duty to check on it. I should check on if the Highway Department is out there working when they say they are working. I am trying to help out the tax payer and help the tax rate in this town. It went up last year, I want it to go down.

**Brenda Currier-** You should bring those things up and if you do see, when you are out and about and you see someone not working the time they claimed, then you probably should have addressed it.

**Chairman Jean-** That's what we are trying to do, trying to set hours, we have a lot on our plates right now.

- 13) Aren't you a call person in the Fire Department?

**Chairman Jean-A:** Yeah but I'm not active right now.

**Brenda Currier-Q:** Are you a call person?

**Chairman Jean- A:** Yes

- 14) Is it really appropriate as a Selectman for you to be asking for a raise for yourself?

**Chairman Jean- A:** I didn't say it for myself.

**Brenda Currier- Q:** Well, if you're a call person wouldn't that effect your money?

**Chairman Jean- A:** If I don't go on calls, it doesn't affect my money.

**Brenda Currier- Q:** If the call people are given more pay are you getting a raise as well?

**Chairman Jean- A:** If I decide to go on calls. I am inactive right now.

- 15) How come you are no longer doing that?

**Chairman Jean- A:** Because I am not active with the Fire Department right now.

**Brenda Currier-** So you don't attend their meetings?

**Chairman Jean-** No, I am here every week. You can check with the Fire Department.



- 16) Were these minutes altered because someone realized the non-public information portion of the meeting was inadvertently taped and then given to me?

**Brenda Currier-** I think we have already determined it was a public meeting.

- 17) IMAGINE where they were found?

- 18) Why would you do that?

- 19) Why would you want to prevent me from talking about the minutes from that particular meeting?

- 20) Was it because the minutes from the meeting had been altered?

**Chairman Jean-** I will let Heather speak to that.

**Heather Carpenter-** Like I said before I am not a scheduled employee so that back and forth conversation, it wasn't Paul on the phone it was Stephanie who called my home to find out the minutes.

**Brenda Currier-** That happened earlier in the day.

**Heather Carpenter-** Regardless. Second, there is no time line between the draft and approved to go in. The draft was set and I believe those minutes, I will double check, the draft was going to be as correct as it was going to be on the approved. I was not in the building to be able to speak to where my exact location was for the papers or which ones were approved.

**Brenda Currier-** Do you normally, when the Selectmen approve them and sign them, don't you normally email them to be posted on line? There was a week lapse from the approval minutes by the Selectmen to them being posted on line. I had no way of knowing the draft and the approved minutes were the same.

**Heather Carpenter-** Understood but again, I am not a regularly scheduled employee. So for the lag time, my consideration was the draft that is what I have to put in the book to be legally correct. As far as the approved, I literally come in on Monday nights, go home and do the minutes, my consideration is to get them in by Friday that week if I can't I will have them in by Monday. There was a miscommunication on the online posting but again online posting is a courtesy. We should post them here in the binder at the office and on the board out in the hallway, the Post Office are also courtesy. We only have to technically post them two places.

**Brenda Currier-** But between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> which is the Monday that you are referring to they were not posted on line or in the book.

**Heather Carpenter-** The draft was posted and that's all I have to be legally...

**Chairman Jean-** Time out, we are just beating the horse here. We are coming up with a policy for the minutes for all departments. Because what has happened in the past is they take the tape recording and they type it up and they erase it. We want that kept for seven years.

**Brenda Currier-** That's all well and good Mike but that is not I am speaking about. The minutes being withheld from me when I specifically asked for the approved minutes I was told that they were not available. I was told by two people they weren't available and they were available on Heather's desk. They weren't in the book and I had no way of knowing the difference between the draft and the approved minutes would be to be prepared for my meeting.

**Chairman Jean-** On Monday night when we get our draft, it says draft on it.

**Brenda Currier-** I don't care about the draft.

**Chairman Jean-** She redoes it and then we come in Tuesday or Wednesday we sign off on it.

**Brenda Currier-** Well this Monday the following week and they still weren't there. It seems to me there is a problem with minutes being taken and posted on time.

**Heather Carpenter-** Actually there is not, there...

**Brenda Currier-** I just want to move on because we are beating this to death.

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I would like to hear what she has to say.

**Selectman Bishop-** So would I.

**Chairman Jean-** Yes

**Brenda Currier-** Well there is a problem.

**Heather Carpenter-** There has been problem in the past with the minutes not being available to the public you are correct. As far as my minutes they are legally drafted and placed in the book for public consumption correctly. I have 72 hours from the meeting time to place a draft in the book. If you would like, these are minutes that I put in there.

**Brenda Currier-** I am not disputing that.

**Heather Carpenter-** You are saying there is too much lag time. There is not a date time

...

**Brenda Currier-** The draft minutes were in the book.

**Heather Carpenter-** I just want to get this for the record. The draft vs the approval, there is no deadline for the approval to get in the book, only the draft based on RSA statute, that's it.

**Daryl Hoitt-** So it could be a year?

**Heather Carpenter-** It could be.

**Brenda Currier-** They were ready, they were signed and I was told they were not.

**Chairman Jean-** When did you get approved to get on the website?

**Heather Carpenter-** I would have to double check but that was over that weekend.

**Chairman Jean-** She wasn't approved to put them on the website, she had to send them to someone else so they could post them on the website. She just finally got approved and I thought she had been approved along to post on the website but she was only approved for the Budget Committee.

**Brenda Currier-** You just said you had no idea what I was talking about cause you have listened to the tape. So how can you say...?

**Chairman Jean-** I am just saying about the minutes being posted. I know she wasn't approved to put them on the website. There was another person approved for that but she wasn't approved so she sends them to someone else to post.

**Brenda Currier-** They had not been sent as of Monday.

**Chairman Jean-** We are correcting that with our policies.

21) Or did you not want me to question you about the Department Head Salary freeze and you wanted time to undo the motion on salaries?

22) Why did you bring that up and not the Selectmen?

**Paul Branscombe-** I asked the Selectmen to rescind their motion because we are waiting to review the personnel policy and salary and labor grade scale which I would ask them to look at all in one go. I believe we jumped the gun a little bit there.

**Brenda Currier-** Mr. Branscombe, it all seems very premeditated to me that you would prevent me from having those minutes so you would have a chance to undo your dirty little deed before it was discussed. Very deceptive, in my opinion.

**Paul Branscombe-** I can assure you Mrs. Currier that is not the way I do business.

**Brenda Currier-** That is my opinion.

**Selectman Bishop-** The draft was out there wasn't it?

**Heather Carpenter-** Yes

**Selectman Bishop-** Within 72 hours you can get the draft, so what is the problem?

**Brenda Currier-** A draft is not an approved minute.

**Selectman Bishop-** It doesn't get approved until the following week.

**Brenda Currier-** It did.

**Heather Carpenter-** There is no time line to get the approved minutes.

23) Was removing Stephanie Fogg from the minute taker position part of that clean slate?

**Brenda Currier-** You wanted to start with a clean slate, what does that mean?

**Selectman Bishop-** That was a part of my conversation...you want to talk to him?

**Brenda Currier-** Yeah because he is the one that said it. Steve don't sit there like a mute. What does a clean slate mean when you wanted to start with one? You have nothing to say?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I have nothing to say.

**Brenda Currier-** You throw out that I want to start with a clean slate and it means nothing to you?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** You are going to read into it whatever it is into any ways so...

**Brenda Currier-** I don't want to read anything into it...

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I have nothing to say.

**Selectman Bishop-** You want to ask me?

**Brenda Currier-** Yeah, you know what Steve meant by a clean slate.

**Selectman Bishop-** I know what I meant by clean slate. Before I took office here there was a lot of stuff going on. Stephanie, I went to her and said look there is nothing personal but I personally want to keep you out of harm's way? She is related to Don and her sister and I didn't want her to be put in a compromising position and that's what I meant. I didn't want her being put in harm's way.

**Brenda Currier-** Don and Sandi are private citizens...

**Brett Currier-** Let him talk, let him talk.

**Selectman Bishop-** I understand that I personally didn't want to put her in a compromising position.

**Brenda Currier-** What were you worried about that would put her in a compromising position?

**Selectman Bishop-** Well lots of times when we are talking I just don't want what we are saying to go anyplace else then in here. I just didn't want her to be put in that position but that was my decision to talk to her. I just didn't want to put her in that position.

**Brenda Currier-** Okay. So removing Stephanie Fogg from her position from the minute taking position part of that clean slate? You have already explained your feeling, you are no comment and you are I don't know...

**Chairman Jean-** You are just beating this right to a horse here, say you wrap this up shortly.

**Brenda Currier-** No, when I am finished reading.

24) Mr. McWhinnie did you not want Stephanie because you are holding a grudge against her sister and brother-in-law Don Guarino. A grudge pertaining to the hotly debated sludge issue that your family is a proponent of?

25) When Stephanie asked to speak with you to "clear the air" you told her that her sister had said vile things but you had "taken care of that"?

26) Is that what you meant by "starting with a clean slate" and getting rid of Stephanie?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** No.

- 27) Are you insinuating that Mrs. Fogg was “not a part of the team”? Were you again referring to Stephanie?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** No

**Brenda Currier-** What does that mean exactly, part of the team

**Selectman McWhinnie-** Everyone is part of the team, all of the employees are a part of the team, we need to unify.

- 28) Someone also mentioned something about the minutes taking so long to be posted, and Steve sarcastically says, “but that isn’t going to happen anymore is it?” Were you again referring to Stephanie?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** Probably not.

- 29) Was this meant to be some kind of joke in reference to you cutting Mrs. Fogg’s pay and making her part time?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I would have to listen to the tape.

**Brenda Currier-** You probably should.

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I probably will.

- 30) Is that what you meant by being a part of the team? Writing the minutes the way the board wants them, rather than how they are actually stated in the meeting?

**Chairman Jean-** Heather would like to speak to that.

**Heather Carpenter-** So Brenda due to the new policy in reference to, if you look back on the Budget Committees minutes they have been very detailed. Over the budget season the minutes have been very arduous, very long. It had been brought down to me when I took the job that they could be synopsized. In order to synopsize everything and not do them verbatim. I wanted to know how they were going to be written, that meant not taking anything out of context necessarily, what did they want in there, how elaborate did they want it, how brief did they want it because technically minutes can be very brief with brief descriptions. So I just wanted to know the direction on how elaborate. That’s it and the “spin” that was an incorrect usage and not necessarily the way I would have put it. With synopsized minutes it is very hard to get in everything and stay true to the content. That’s all I was asking for was direction.

**Brenda Currier-** Okay.

- 31) How do you think Mr. McBride is going to feel about those words being said in a public meeting?

**Chairman Jean-** The work he did was illegal. He tied into the septic pump without a trap and the fumes were coming up into the building.

**Brenda Currier-** So you think it’s appropriate to discuss the water conditioner guy in a public meeting and saying he did illegal work? You also said you weren’t going to pay him for his work.

**Chairman Jean-** He came back and corrected it.

- 32) Is that really the way you should be discussing a community member in a public meeting?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** that is the way you handle public input, you do not respond, it is not a question and answer.

**Brenda Currier-** When a tax payer comes in with a question, you just say no comment, and you don’t answer them?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** The way public input, that's all it is. All they are to address is the Chair. It is not a question and answer...

**Brenda Currier-** Is that something new that you guys have started?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** That is something I learned when I went to the NHMA class.

**Chairman Jean-** We all went to the class, I forget what date it was.

**Brenda Currier-** So how does the public get any of their questions answered? They have to be put on the agenda like I was?

**Chairman Jean-** That is the way it is should be done.

**Brenda Currier-** Wow, you guys are going to be here until midnight.

**Chairman Jean-** We have been here every week from 5:30, until nine, ten.

You go on to discuss road department employees and their pay raises and why one was excluded from a raise? Should all these things be discussed in a public meeting?

**Chairman Jean-** I will have to listen to that tape, I don't remember.

**Brenda Currier-** Yeah it talked about Eric having a cdl and the other guy not or vice versa.

**Chairman Jean-** Eric does not have a cdl.

Brenda is reading from her copy and mentions she thinks the Board seems to be very dishonest.

**Selectman Bishop-** You think I am dishonest?

**Brenda Currier-** Actually you know what, I think you might be the one that's not.

**Selectman Bishop-** Oh okay.

**Brenda Currier-** You have been very forth coming with Stephanie but just bear with me I am just finishing this paragraph.

The Board asks for a copy of the document that Mrs. Currier read from.

**Brenda Currier-** Can you see that my questions and the answers are reflected in the minutes.

**Heather Carpenter-** Yes your public interest will be exact.

**Brenda Currier-** And that this will be attached.

**Heather Carpenter-** Yes.

### Select Board Items

Bridge Engineering Study-

NH DOT has approved the engineering study numbers. Selectman McWhinnie wanted to have a work shop and I suggest that Matt Lowe and Shawn James come in.

**Chairman Jean** would like the Fire Chief, Police Chief and ...cause that is a big project. It will be a work shop just for the bridge.

Code Enforcement-

**Selectman Bishop** asks Mr. Branscombe if he has gotten a hold of the Code Enforcement Officer about the chickens and the dogs.

**Paul Branscombe** states that we have and I have copied you in on that.

Encumbered Funds-

**Chairman Jean** asks about the information on the funds that we encumbered. The Town Administrator states that Brenda is still working on that.

### Public Comment

**Brett Currier-** Marshall I will address it to you because you are the one that responded, as far as protecting Stephanie because you were afraid that stuff was going to get out of this meeting out into the public. So does that mean there was a paranoia that the minute taker wasn't loyal to this

board? Are you making an accusation that she was releasing nonpublic minutes that weren't supposed to be discussed?

Do you realize what happened to her now, instead of protecting her you booted her to the curb and took her benefits and her whole job away? A woman, who has lived in this town her whole life and did a good job of the town of Gilmanton, gets booted by this Board and Mr.

Branscombe. That is a poor thing to do gentleman a poor thing to do. I'm sorry but you are going to pay for it and probably me as a tax payer is too. You need to pay attention to what is going on, you guys are the bosses that man right there is not isn't but he is acts like it and you are allowing it to happen. Not a good thing because you guys are going to pay.

**Sandi Guarino-** I guess I would like to know the reason why Stephanie went from a full time to a part time, minutes taken away, because you are better that she was? She didn't do her job, is her job not done well, and is that the reason why? So the minutes being taken away because she wasn't doing her job? Can someone answer that? She went from full time to part time and everyone got her jobs because she was overloaded with jobs that **Paul Branscombe's** jobs that he gave her.

**Chairman Jean-** At this time I am not going to make a comment on it.

**Brenda Currier-** I would just like to add to what Sandi said. It wasn't too many months ago that Paul was advocating for, and practically begging for Stephanie to be full time.

**Chairman Jean-** I think I made that motion about six months ago.

**Brenda Currier-** you gave her benefits and now six months later out she goes because Steve wants a clean slate. Cause Marshall wants to protect her, cause you don't want a leak, cause Paul wants to give someone else a job. Taking someone full time benefits away, a full time salary and a benefit package, despicable. Paul begged for her.

**Chairman Jean-** I made the motion five or six months ago.

**Brenda Currier-** You probably made the motion to kick her to the curb too.

**Chairman Jean-** I didn't make that motion. I voted on it.

**Sandi Guarino-** Who made the motion? Steve, can't remember that?

**Richard Bakos-** No one remembers who made the motion?

**Chairman Jean-** I would have to look at the minutes, I am not going to guess on it.

**Richard Bakos-** Well you said you didn't make the motion, Marshall did you make the motion?

**Selectman Bishop-** I didn't make the motion.

**Richard Bakos-** There is only one of you left.

**Selectman McWhinnie-** I don't recall.

**Don Guarino-** So from your meeting and this is just input, you're saying to get any answers from tax payers concerning questions that we need to place ourselves on the agenda, so input is just for input. So a simple thing like I was just asking what the cost were between making the transition from MuniSmart to BMSI and you can hear in the minutes that you can hear that you guys actually had some numbers. The Town Administrator was sharing the numbers, he said that the software was free but the maintenance was a certain amount of money and then I was asking you about if there was going to cost in terms for data entry. Do you want these questions to come in writing to you or do you want all the public to have to place themselves on the agenda for simple items? That's my input.

**Chairman Jean-** All of us went to the class, all of us are scheduled to go to the Right to Know Class on May 4<sup>th</sup> in Meredith, so we are going to that next month. According to the workshop they said public input is public input and it shouldn't be a question and answer period. That was according to Margaret.

**Brenda Currier-** So can the minutes reflect that you are saying that we need to be put on the agenda to ask questions in nonpublic?

**Sandi Guarino-** In public.

**Brenda Currier-** In public, I'm sorry in public.

**Chairman Jean-** Public Input

**Brenda Currier-** So we have to be on the agenda to, we can't ask questions during public input.

**Chairman Jean-** That is what they recommend.

**Brenda Currier-** Is that what you are going to be doing?

**Chairman Jean-** We are going to have to looking at it.

**Brenda Currier-** We can still come to public input and ask a question?

**Chairman Jean-** You are asking them right now.

**Brenda Currier-** You are no longer using your stop watch in public comment?

**Selectman McWhinnie-** No, everybody has been pretty good about it. If it has to get back to someone dragging it out it then it's five minutes.

**Brenda Currier-** Yeah, I just don't want you to pick and choose who speaks.

**Selectman McWhinnie-** It's actually been pretty good.

**Chairman Jean -** We had Joe in here and he went on for a half an hour about taxes.

**Brett Currier-** A comment. We have a lot of history in this town. I have sat in your seat and got my rear-ended handed to me for a long time by unhappy people. I didn't shut them up, I listened to them and they had every right to vent at me. When you shut them off you create a pressure cooker and when the pressure cooker blows you guys are in the... (Inaudible) The best thing you can do is let people vent, when they vent they feel better, you hear, you're in the spot to hear it. You ran to be a Selectman. You didn't run to be everybody's buddy, you didn't run to give your friend a raise, and hammer the guy that ran against you in politics, that's not what you guys do. You guys are entrusted to do the Towns business and watch out for the tax dollars and do what the tax payer has told you he wants you to do. I might agree with paying X amount or I might not agree with somebody getting cut but the tax payer is the one who guides you. Don't go rogue, don't because you don't like somebody so you are going to make it hard on them. That's not what you do, that's not what you can do, legally. That's why this Board is really in a tough spot. Don't go by what they should do or shouldn't do, Gilmanton has done this for years. Gilmanton has let the people talk and have a dialog between Selectmen and the tax payer and says yeah this is my answer, you might not like it my answer but this is my answer. Don't shut the Town off, don't shut this public off because when you shut it off you guys are really in trouble. So, Steve you standing there saying nothing, that's not a good Selectman. When someone asks you a question, answer them, don't I don't know, that's a mushroom. You are sitting in the seat because you won the election fair and square. So do your job and do it right but don't pick on people that's not your spot, that is bullying and there are laws against it and you are going to find out the hard way.

**Chairman Jean-** I have question for the public here tonight. Would you rather have public input at the beginning?

**Brett Currier-** No, 7 o'clock like it's always been.

**Chairman Jean-** Like tonight everybody had to stay because we had a lot of non-publics

**Brett Currier-** Right, that's understandable.

**Chairman Jean-** I was thinking about having it earlier.

**Brett Currier-** Here is what happens when it is earlier, in my opinion, I am just one person. You guys talk about a whole bunch of stuff that we get keyed up on and we would like to ask you a couple of questions, we don't want to wait until the next week or the week after that to get an

answer. If guys are discussing something from six to seven and it peaks someone's interest enough at 7 o'clock they can ask the question.

**Chairman Jean-** I had Don ask a question to the woman who was going to do the audio because he knew about it before hand.

**Brett Currier-** Right. It gives a citizen the time if they didn't know you were going to talk about it tonight and then you have time to answer, instead of getting all the public done and then you shut the public off and talk about stuff they're interested in and they can't respond any more, they're done.

**Chairman Jean-** We just know that you guys sat out there for a few hours.

**Brett Currier-** We understood what was going on as far as tax stuff, we were patient.

(Inaudible)

**Daryl Hoitt-** I have a comment on the legal issue of letting Stephanie go so that's something that if you are going to meetings on with the State counseling you, like asking questions on that. Because it is really important that as a Board and as a Town that we follow proper procedures all the time. Sometimes we have to re-learn those things when you haven't been at your job for a while.

**Heather Carpenter-** Excuse me Ma'am what is your name?

**Daryl Hoitt-** Daryl Hoitt

**Brett Currier-** Aka red fox.

Selectman Bishop- Brett part of the stuff you said was right, I must admit but what I learned being a public works guy for two towns and it actually came from an old, black foreman that I had and he said "Marshall, if you can't take an ass whopping than you are in the wrong damn business." He is right.

**Brett Currier-** He is absolutely right.

Selectman Bishop- People want to know whether you can help them or not that somebody is looking is listening. It is hard to do everything and its tough because you're not going to make everyone happy but the tax payer has to be first though because that is our whole purpose of being in here.

**Brett Currier-** That's right and the tax payer has spoke. It is scrutinized by you, by guys like Mickey and Rich; they are in the Budget Committee. These guys, it doesn't just come on a whim. You have Department Heads bringing their budget to you and you say yea or nay, they go to the Budget Committee they say yea or nay and then it goes to the people. The people decide, the tax payer decides. They decided on a 2016 pay for the three people that Branscombe says No, let freeze their money. That is not up to him, don't allow him to do that. That's your job but don't take the voters vote away. They said give them the money, it's a month and a half. You're telling me, I'm to believe that Paul Branscombe does not have the talent to get those guys paid? The whole town from March 8<sup>th</sup> till April 25<sup>th</sup>, you can't count the hours backwards? You guys have real big problems; you have more problems than you know because anyone can do that job. That job is just not getting done. That money should be paid to the employees that the tax payer voted to give it to them. I don't believe anyone got a nickel back pay from January until...

**Chairman Jean-** They should've got the new increase.

**Brett Currier-** Yeah, well where is the rest of the money sitting in your account? Sitting in the Town of Gilmannton savings account? It's ain't supposed to be there. It is supposed to be in these guys' checks and a month and a half is way too long and it still ain't happened yet. You can blame everybody else, you can hear that "Oh the minutes weren't getting posted" but you know who gets off the hook every time is the big fish right there, cause you let him. He is leading you, you are his boss, he's not yours but that's what happening here.



**Chairman Jean-** We put the pressure on and got the partial payment from the insurance company. We have another \$54,000 coming by the end of the month. So the \$90,000 that we have been hanging on to for a year we finally got back for the Town because we put insurance on a deadline by April 15.

**Brenda Currier-** You didn't have the money to pay them?

**Chairman Jean-** No they had to reimburse use around \$90,000.00, last year from the flood.

**Brett Currier-** You are still spreading the narrative why the tax rate went up, that's false and you put it in the book. The reason the tax rate went up is because your Town Administrator, Mr. Branscombe did not put the correct DRA anticipated revenue in the right spot, he didn't put enough in there. That is a fact, you guys are spreading rumors all over here, saying that is the previous Board, no it isn't. It is the Board last year and Mr. Branscombe not doing a correct job. It's never his fault, he can never take blame. It's his fault guys.

**Selectman Bishop-** He is not in charge, we are in charge here and I will be the first to admit. This past month and a half have not been a fun time at all and I have made a hell of a lot of mistakes.

**Brenda Currier-** But you will sit here and say you made a mistake, instead of passing the blame on other people like your Town Administrator and not taking ownership of his fault in our tax rate.

**Selectman Bishop-** That's not what I'm saying though. I am saying I personally have made a lot of mistakes.

**Brett Currier-** We all have but say why the tax rate went up, just say why. The people in this room know why it went up.

**Chairman Jean-** Why?

**Brett Currier-** The reason why it went up because the anticipated revenue was low balled, instead of putting \$600,000 in there was \$300,000, go ask. Mr. Branscombe is 100% responsible for that, not the previous Town Administrator, this one.

**Chairman Jean-** Who put that in?

**Brett Currier-** He did.

**Paul Branscombe-** Mr. Currier, it was there in July when I came in.

**Chairman Jean-** It was submitted by Arthur before that.

**Brett Currier-** You filed the paper work in September. Did you not file the paper work?

**Paul Branscombe-** No I didn't file the paper work, no.

**Brett Currier-** Who did?

**Paul Branscombe-** Our previous Finance Officer filed the paper work.

**Brett Currier-** Fine, the past Town Administrator did not file the paper work.

**Chairman Jean-** he filed it back in...

**Brett Currier-** It doesn't matter that did not affect this year's tax rate.

**Paul Branscombe-** Can I ask you a question? Did you know the things voted on in March of last year are what affect the tax rate?

**Brett Currier-** I do know that.

**Paul Branscombe-** So the voters voting on a default budget that is higher than the operating budget is the reason why the taxes went up.

**Brett Currier-** That's absolutely not true. The anticipated revenue did not get filed properly, under his direction, improperly, not enough money. Then what happened is, the Board before, which was you Mr. Jean, Don Guarino and maybe Rachel at the direction, I was at the meeting. The Town Administrator recommended not to use any of the Towns undesignated fund balance, 1.2 to 1.3 million dollars of the tax payer's money. That's our money, that's not yours, that's not a slush fund in case something catastrophic happens always. You need an amount in there, 7-

\$800,000 you could probably cover just about anything you might need with 700-800,000 in this Town. Instead you leave the money in there and you know what they do? You know why it took so long in here tonight because the taxes are unaffordable for those people that waited and you know why they are because people screwed up and won't admit it. So Michael Jean puts in the book the same lie that was told before that I came to the other Selectmen and tried to correct. I tried to correct it, I wanted the right deal. You know what is in the book, in 2014 the Town of Gilmanton's assessed value went down, and that is absolutely correct. Therefore the tax rate should have gone up according to his logic, it didn't because I was a Selectmen at the time and we did buy the rate down and the town portion went down. That's pretty good, isn't it? However you guys throw that out there had nothing to do with 2015 because in 2015 the Town of Gilmanton's assessed value happened to go up.

**Chairman Jean-** A little bit.

**Brett Currier-** It doesn't matter it went up. So the rate should've come down instead the town portion of the rate went through the roof and they let it happen. Tell your tax payers really what happened. That's what happened, ask this man, he knows.

**Paul Branscombe-** Mr. Currier can I ask you a question?

**Brett Currier-** Sure you can.

**Paul Branscombe-** Who do you think recommended to me that I recommend that to the Board?

**Brett Currier-** I have no clue.

**Paul Branscombe-** It was the Department of Revenue and the reason they gave us five models, which I believe I did send one of them to you in an email, I believe I did. Just to show you that the money wasn't there in those five models, taking that money out of the unassigned fund balance.

**Brett Currier-** The reason the money wasn't there was because you or Marie failed to put the proper amount of unanticipated revenue in the correct column because that's why a half a million dollars wouldn't buy that rate down enough. That's why. Hey Paul I was here you aren't talking to someone that wasn't here. I've been at more meetings, probably more than anybody in this Town. I know what goes on in this Town, people don't like that I know but I do know and I care about this Town and I hate it when I've been lied to. Don't lie to me, I know why the rate went up and I want people to know it and that guy writing the report it should be written. That's why it went up, you asked that's my answer. Look at it, prove me wrong, you can't do it. That's why your tax rate is through the roof.

Selectman Bishop- Thank you.

**Brett Currier-** Your welcome.

**Chairman Jean-** Any other comments? Can I have a motion for the non-public?

### 9:20 Time

**(F) Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c)**

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie**, and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c). (3-0 Voice Vote –

**Chairman Jean-**yes, **Selectman McWhinnie**– yes, Selectman Bishop– yes).

The meeting room was closed to the public. Present during the Non-Public Session were **Chairman Jean**, **Selectman McWhinnie**, Selectman Bishop. Town Administrator **Paul Branscombe**, Recording Secretary- **Heather Carpenter**.

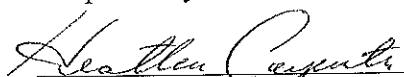
**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to come out of Non-Public Session. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

**MOTION:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to seal the minutes of Non-Public Session. (3-0 Voice Vote – **Chairman Jean**-yes, **Selectman McWhinnie** -yes, Selectman Bishop – yes).

The meeting room was opened to the public. The Board noted the Non-Public Session minutes were sealed.

**Adjournment:** On a Motion by **Selectman McWhinnie** and seconded by Selectman Bishop it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:40 p.m. (3-0).

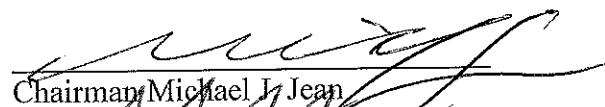
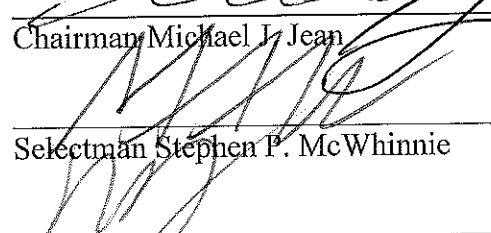
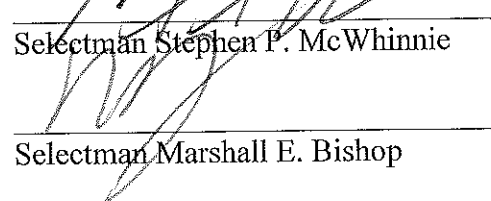
Respectfully Submitted,



**Heather Carpenter**

Recording Secretary

**Approved by the Board of Selectmen**

  
Chairman Michael J. Jean  
Selectman Stephen P. McWhinnie  
Selectman Marshall E. Bishop

{Detailed audio for this meeting is available at the Selectmen's office.}



Board of Selectmen  
Town of Gilmanton, New Hampshire  
503 Province Road  
PO BOX 550  
Gilmanton, New Hampshire 03237

Attendance Signature Sheet

Time & Date:

April 25, 2016 5:30 p.m.

Signature	Print name	Time & Date
Jim Clark	Jim Clark - The Citizen	4/25 5:30 p.m.
Brett Carrier	Brett Carrier	4/25 6:00
D. GUARINO	D. GUARINO	4/25 7:50
RICHARD BAKOS	RICHARD BAKOS	4/25 7:51
GLENN LINKS	GLENN LINKS	4/25/2016
JACK FARRING	JACK FARRING	4/25 7:51
MIKE WILLETTE	MIKE WILLETTE	4-25 7:52
Ralph Lavin	Ralph Lavin	4-25 7:55
Sandra Guarino	Sandra Guarino	4-25 7:55
René L. Canezin	René L. Canezin	4/25 7:55
DARYL HOUTT	DARYL HOUTT	4/25 7:55
Brenda Carrier	Brenda Carrier	4/25 7:55
Ray Daulte	Ray Daulte	4/25 7:55
KRISTI LAURENDEAU	KRISTI LAURENDEAU	4/25 7:55
Matthew Carrier	Matthew Carrier	4/25/2016

*H. Caputo Minutes of Apr. 25, 2016*

Under the Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A, I requested on April 18<sup>th</sup> copies of all non-public meeting minutes from all meetings held by the current sitting Board of Selectmen. I was told all non-public minutes had been sealed with the exception of the April 13<sup>th</sup> non-public meeting. According to the Agenda for April 13<sup>th</sup>, a non-public meeting was the only meeting scheduled for that night. However, it appears that even though a public meeting was not on the agenda the Selectmen did go into public session and did make motions and vote on a rather important topic. The Selectmen voted to freeze the Salary increases of three Town Department Heads; those being Fire Chief Joe Hempel, Police Chief Matt Currier and Road Agent Paul Perkins. I am very curious to know why this item was not put on the agenda and allow the Towns people to hear the reasoning behind such a ridiculous Motion. I would also like to know how come the Town Clerk, Debra Cornett was not included in their Salary freeze. Seems to me that you are either playing favorites or you are discriminating -- but definitely one or the other. The motion you made and voted on included freezing their salaries and COLA raises for 2016 and 2017. First of all Michael, you were on the Board that voted to approve these salaries and raises. Mr. Branscombe is the one who brought forward the Cola raises. Why the change of heart? This is 2016 and the raises and salaries have already been approved by a vote of the residents. Does this vote mean that you are withholding the approved raises of these 3 Department Heads? Have they received their raises yet? If not, is that legal? Secondly, I don't think it is legal for you to even take such a vote of this nature as it is up to the Voters to decide, not you three Selectmen. Makes me question whether any of you including Mr. Branscombe know what you are doing.

Last year I began purchasing audio minutes from the Selectmen's meetings. I can say, without hesitation, that I've never heard any board behave in the manner that this board did at the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

While I was listening to the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting I heard the board vote to go into non-public session and I heard Mr. Guarino leave the meeting. I also heard the door close and someone ask if the sign was put up. However, my concern is, I never heard the board come back into a public meeting. I also never heard them open the door to the public or mention changing the sign. What the audio tells me is that you stayed in non-public until you adjourned, however the minutes clearly contradict what I heard/or didn't hear on the tape. Can you tell me if the audio is correct or if the transcribed minutes are correct? I am also asking for clarification because the agenda did not state you would be having a public meeting after your last non-public, and I heard Michael Jean clearly ask, "do we have anything else for public AND the answer was NO. For this reason the public did not stick around to hear what else you might have to say in public session. Can anyone clarify this for me?

The approved and transcribed minutes clearly state that you came out of non-public session at 8:49 pm, is that correct?

The transcribed minutes also state "The meeting room was opened to the public. The board noted the non-public meeting minutes were sealed" (yet none of that can be heard on the tape). The transcribed minutes say the Board discussed a multitude of things (yet this portion of the meeting was not listed on the agenda as being open to the public). But even though the public was not privy to this part of the meeting the transcribed minutes state; The Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator discuss the monthly reports, employee work schedules, rates of pay, department head pay, special detail rates at \$40. per hour and adding an additional \$20. Per hour for the cruiser. Conversation on a plumbing issue that needs to be done properly by a licensed plumber, police presence when the office is open late on Monday and Thursday evenings, if the research on the minutes for the encumbered funds has been done and the fact that budgets seem to be overspent and/or having excess in their budgets. The Board

would like to get these budget items figured out in order to move forward and have proper policy and procedures continually followed. And then you adjourned at 8:50.

So my question to you is- How could you come out of non-public session at 8:49 as stated in the minutes and adjourn at 8:50? You discussed ALL of the above mentioned items in 1 minute? You all signed these minutes and approved them, but clearly this meeting did not happen the way you are claiming. The audio tape and the transcribed minutes do not match.

So, did you discuss all of this information in public or non-public??? After you voted to go into non-public session Mr. Guarino left because he was of the opinion you were done talking about public business. However, after you left your non-public session you then discussed 25 minutes of what public information. It seems very deceitful to me to have mislead the public and given them the opportunity to be present. You held this so called public portion of the meeting without it even being posted on the agenda. And at the end of this 25 minutes you can clearly be heard Mr. Branscombe saying, "is there anything else on this list that we need to discuss"? If there was a list, why weren't these things discussed before Mr. Guarino left and the public portion of the meeting was over for the night? Did you not want the public to hear Mr. McWhinnie say he wanted to cut all department budgets by 10%, and Mr. Jean immediately agreeing with him, or later hearing you joke about cutting it 20 or 25% instead. Steve you have been a sitting Selectmen for a little over a month and you expect us to believe that you have thoroughly scrutinized the budgets in this Town and can recommend ways to cut it 10%. I think not. Mr. Branscombe is also heard offering up his own suggestion of freezing department head salary lines, you say the grunts are doing all the work and not getting paid for it. You say that you've done a survey and our department heads are handsomely paid. You say that since the "answer to the Town Administrator, that the Administrator, meaning you, should be paid more. I hate to burst your big bubble, but the department heads DO NOT ANSWER TO YOU. Furthermore, didn't the former board just give you a \$15,000 dollar raise? How much do you think you're worth to this Town Mr. Branscombe? Since when does the Town Administrator make suggestions of that nature?

Mike you can be heard saying that employees are not working until 4:00 even though they claim they are. You clearly state it isn't "in this building" but in another. What building are you referring to? Mr. Jean you also talk about the Call people in the FD needing to be paid more money. Aren't you a call person in the Fire Department? Is it really appropriate as a Selectmen for you to be asking for a raise for yourself? When you were part of the last sitting board you recused yourself from any votes pertaining to the fire department. How come you are no longer doing that? Were these minutes altered because someone realized the non-public portion of the meeting was inadvertently taped and then given to me? I just want to remind you again that you all signed these minutes as being factual.

There was definitely some questionable things going on with these minutes. I requested the approved minutes on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> and was told they weren't available. I was told this by both Heather Carpenter and Paul Branscombe. Under the Right to Know Law the minutes must be available within 72 hours, which had long passed. I left the Selectmen's office and went home to type letter referencing the Right to Know Law and returned to the Selectmen's office and presented it to Paul Branscombe. He still claimed the approved minutes were not available. I then showed Paul the minutes from the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting showing him where the Selectmen had approved them a week ago. Paul called Heather and I'm not sure how that conversation went. Paul did tell me he would call me when they were found. I told him I wasn't leaving and would wait right there until they were located. Paul then proceeded to look around the office. IMAGINE where they were found? Right on Heather's desk. They were found in the basket on her desk buried beneath other papers, yet both Paul and Heather said they were unavailable.

You both knew I was on the agenda for the Selectmen's meeting that evening, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and I needed those minutes for my meeting. But by you preventing me from having those approved minutes I had to cancel my meeting as they were not made available to me until after 4:30 that afternoon leaving me no time to prepare. In my opinion these minutes were purposely kept from me to prevent me from the meeting that night. The minutes WERE signed by all three Selectmen and were ready to be posted online but for some reason you kept them and mislead me.

Why would you do that? Why would you want to prevent me from talking about the minutes from that particular meeting? Was it because the minutes from the meeting had been altered? Or did you not want me to question you about the Department Head Salary freeze and you wanted time to undo the motion freeze salaries? Turns out that's exactly what you did do Mr. Branscombe. At the meeting April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting you advised the Board to reconsider their motion to freeze the salaries. Why did you bring that up and not the Selectmen? Mr. Branscombe, it all seems very premeditated to me that you would prevent me from having those minutes so you would have a chance to undo your dirty little deed before it was discussed. Very deceptive, in my opinion.

This board hired Heather Carpenter to be the new minute taker. I've heard that Mr. Branscombe has said Mr. McWhinnie wanted to start with a "clean slate". Was removing Stephanie Fogg from the minute taker position part of that clean slate? Mr. McWhinnie did you not want Stephanie because you are holding a grudge against her sister and brother-in-law Don Guarino. A grudge pertaining to the hotly debated sludge issue that your family is a proponent of? When Stephanie asked to speak with you to "clear the air" you told her that her sister had said vile things but you had "taken care of that"? Is that what you meant by "starting with a clean slate" and getting rid of Stephanie? On the audio tape I heard you refer to the new minute taker as "part of the team" and that "now minutes will be taken correctly". Are you insinuating that Mrs. Fogg was not "part of the team"? What does that mean exactly? Someone also mentioned something about the minutes taking so long to be posted, and Steve sarcastically says, "but that isn't going to happen anymore is it?" Were you again referring to Stephanie? Another sarcastic remark is said in regards to cutting your pay and making you part time, then someone laughing. Was this meant to be some kind of joke in reference to you cutting Mrs. Fogg's pay and making her part time? I also heard the new minute taker ask, "how do you want me to write this? Something about not putting her spin on it and someone from the board answered with, "we like your spin better than ours". Is that what you meant by being part of the team? Writing minutes the way the board wants them, rather than how they are actually stated in the meeting?

In my opinion, the Bullying, the discrimination, the corruption, the bad faith, the hostile work environment, the retaliation, etc. etc. surrounding this Board and Town Administrator is despicable. The unjustified taking away of Stephanie's fulltime job and benefits is something that will likely end in a lawsuit and I for one hope it does. This Board is running rogue and what was talked about on the audio tape of the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting is a glaring example. You three Selectmen ran on the promise of transparency and have done the exact opposite since being elected. The transparent waters are pretty murky from where I'm sitting.

Not too many months ago another issue arose about non-public meetings. The Police Chief, Joe Collins, requested an investigation be done. The Board agreed, but to my knowledge no investigation was conducted. This is the same Police Chief who you Mr. Branscombe were heard to be maligning in this audio tape. You stated that he was "playing tricks" with his department's money. This man is still a part time employee with this Town and I really don't think you should be discussing him in a slanderous way during a public meeting. You are heard saying these things when you were discussing \$38,000 in the police budget. You say something cryptically about "What you're going to take care of and to see what

happens after that. It seems as though you are referring to freezing salaries. Steve says, "Let it Marinate Matt". In the tape I also heard a discussion about Mr. McBride's work on the plumbing, stating the work he did was illegal. How do you think Mr. McBride is going to feel about those words being said in a public meeting? You also said you were not going to be paying him for his work. In the audio the board can also be heard discussing Don Guarino, I believe it was Steve who said, "We've got one person here, the killer, and he's going to stir stuff up." Steve also said to Marshall, "The less you tell him the better off we'll be, say no comment, or we'll take it under advisement". Is that really the way you should be discussing a community member in a public meeting? You also discuss hourly pay for employees. That information IS public knowledge but I don't believe it should be talked about in public, especially with the four of you debating whether Annette is overpaid, and saying that she keeps making mistakes. You can be heard agreeing that she is overpaid. I'm sure Annette will be thrilled to hear you are publically saying she's making mistakes and is over paid. You go on to discuss road department employees and their pay raises and why one was excluded from a raise? Should all these things be discussed in a public meeting?

All of these concerns that I have mentioned to you are my opinions of what was being said on the tape and how I interpreted them. I think there were a lot of very questionable things being discussed that could wind up being a problem for this Town and this sitting Board of Selectmen. Go back and listen to this tape, I have listened to it many times and have tried to be very accurate in quoting what I heard.

The Right to Know Law has been put in place for a reason and it keeps Boards such as this one accountable rather than allowing them to cover up things they are doing. I truly feel an investigation is warranted into the goings on since this Board was seated in March. I'm not quite sure how to proceed with making it happen but you can be assured I will be looking into it right away. I am very disturbed by you purposely withholding approved meeting minutes from me and question the integrity of this Board and Town Administrator. You all appear to be very dishonest and act as though you can do whatever you want without having to answer to anyone. You have created a hostile work environment in the Selectmen's office, you are discriminating against an employee, you have acted maliciously toward her, and that employee appears to have been retaliated against because of who her family is. These things should not have happened, and in my opinion you can clearly be heard on the audio making jokes and it appears to be about this situation. Mr. Branscombe, you should seriously consider handing in your resignation after the things you done and the things you have allowed to happen. If you three Selectmen were smart you might ask for his resignation and try to prevent even more damage. Otherwise, members of this Board should seriously consider resigning because you are the ones who will be held accountable. It seems as though you have put the Town at risk of being sued by what you've said on this tape. This Board and the Town Administrator have run rogue and I think there may be serious repercussions because of it. So, not to make a long story even longer, these are my opinions.