

Town of Gilsum
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2025

Board Present: Vicki Ayer, Chair; Heidi Bukoski, Member; Bill Whyte, Member; Brian Bazarnicki, *Ex Officio*; and Carol Ogilvie, Alternate Member

Present Over Zoom: Tom Julius, Member

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

I. Minutes

Vicki distributed the minutes of December 12, 2024 and asked if anyone had comments or changes.

Motion by Brian Bazarnicki/seconded by Heidi Bukoski to approve the December 12, 2024 minutes as presented, with all in favor.

II. Recommendation for Sale of Town-Owned Land

Brian distributed an updated list of properties that the Select Board intends to sell. These are all tax-deeded properties, not specifically Town-owned. The list was sent to the auctioneer (Real Estate lawyer), who provided the assessed value for each property, indicating what the total revenue would be if each property sold at its assessed value. Brian said that the properties may not sell for the amount listed. He also said the Select Board cannot keep all of the proceeds; it can only take what it is owed. The auctioneer will receive 10% of the proceeds and the rest of the money will go to the previous owners.

Vicki stated that the Board had reviewed the list, and her opinion is to just sell. She pointed out that the total land acreage in Gilsum is just under 11,000 acres; of these, 7800 acres are in current use and 1,484 acres are in conservation. This means that full taxes are being raised from only just under 1,700 acres.

Brian clarified the difference between Town-owned property and tax deeded properties. Town-owned properties are those on which a Town function is located, such as the Town offices, Library, Highway Garage, etc. Tax deeded properties are privately owned but are in default on their taxes, so the Select Board has "taken" them for unpaid taxes and can sell them.

Bill's opinion is that he is inclined to keep the properties, since the Town can't keep all of the money, it may not be worth it, and the land might be of some value to the Town later. Brian stated that even if the sale doesn't bring in that much, it puts lots back on the tax rolls. Tom said that, thinking like a planning board member, he does not have any concerns about these lots being sold. Heidi would have concerns about the lots that abut the river; but there are rules that would need to be followed if they were to be developed.

The Board continued to discuss the process and procedures involved and the pros and cons of selling any or all of the lots. Vicki reiterated her opinion that the Select Board needs to hold public hearings before any sale. She had asked last meeting for an official list from the Select Board, which Brian has not provided, and she objects to that. Brian said this list came from the auctioneer, not from the Select Board.

Tom pointed out that the Planning Board needs a list from the Select Board what properties they have voted to recommend for sale. Brian said the list is of the properties that are eligible for sale, and this is the list. Vicki read the statute that requires the Select Board to give the Planning Board the list that they

have voted on. Bill and Vicki still have questions. Bill thinks the Planning Board could give the Select Board an opinion without having an official list. The Board's opinion is not binding. Brian said that the Select Board will review the recommendations from the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. Brian's recommendation is that all the lots on the list, except for the two with cemeteries, should be sold.

Brian will take the list he presented tonight to the Select Board and have them confirm whether there are any other lots to be added to the list. Whatever is decided, Brian will come back with the list, as approved by the Select Board.

Bill Whyte made a motion/seconded by Heidi Bukoski to recommend the sale of all lots on the list to the Select Board. The motion passed with four (4) in favor and two (2) opposed.

III. Planning Board Secretary/Minute Taker

Vicki reported that she and Tom had reviewed job descriptions and concluded that assistance for the Planning Board should be a paid position and not done by a volunteer.

Tom stated that their research led them to support the reinstatement of a paid position for the planning board. The budget that the Planning Board approved that went to the Budget Committee included money for a paid assistant. Vicki distributed a summary of their research, including talking points for the Budget Committee. Members should go to the Budget Meeting to offer support for this.

IV. Site Plan Regulations Update

Vicki stated that she has been posting notices for public hearing on the website and not in the newspaper. But the Town's regulations say that the posting should be in the newspaper, so that needs to be changed in the regulations. Carol will review the regulations to see if there are other changes needed, and then a public hearing will be scheduled to make the changes.

V. Planning Board Membership

Carol drafted a warrant article for Town Meeting that will reduce the number of planning board members from seven to five.

VI. Agenda for Next Meeting – February 13, 2025

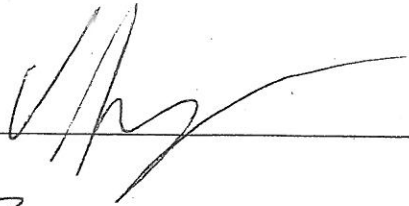
- A. Minutes of January 9, 2025
- B. Sale of Town-Owned Properties

Motion by Brian Bazarnicki/seconded by Heidi Bukoski to adjourn at 8:22 P.M. with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by:

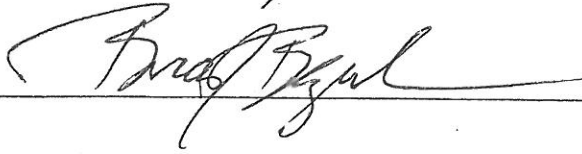
Carol Ogilvie

Approved February 13, 2025



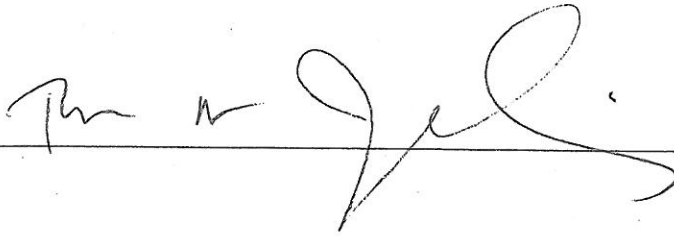
3/13/25

Victoria Ayers. Chair



3/13/25

Brian Bazarnicki



Heidi Bukoski

03-13-25

Tom Julius

Bill Whyte

Carol Ogilvie