

Selectboard Minutes  
September 6, 2022

Present: Andy Artimovich  
Jenn Jones  
Robert Mantegari  
Jon Morgan  
Russ Kelly

Artimovich called the meeting to order at 6pm.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to enter nonpublic for hiring. Artimovich – aye; Jones – aye; Mantegari – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye.

At 6:04, Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones to come out of nonpublic and seal the minutes. Artimovich – aye; Jones – aye; Mantegari – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye.

The Board reviewed payroll and AP. The manifest was signed.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to accept the consent agenda. All were in favor.

Artimovich shared that Chief Bird has found his final firefighter pending background check and training. This will bring the station to full staffing.

The next selectboard meeting will be September 13<sup>th</sup> at 4pm on the lower level of the Recreation Center.

Artimovich spoke about the air purifiers for the PD, town hall, and library. Artimovich asked Karen Clement, Town Administrator, to speak on the matter. Clement explained Kip Kaiser, building inspector, has researched the best options for the referenced spaces based on square footage. Clement explained Kaiser recommends three MA40 units for town hall and two MA40 units for the PD. The MA40 covers 800 square feet every thirty minutes and goes up to 1600 square feet according to Kaiser's research. These units also use HEPA13 filters which need replacing every three months Clement explained.

The cost for the air purifier units and 1 year of filters for the town office would be \$1,140 as outlined by Clement. The cost for 2 units and filters for the PD would be \$940 according to Clement. Kaiser recommended 2 larger units covering up to 5000 square feet and a small unit for the basement at the library. The cost of the three units and filters for a year would be \$2,170.

Morgan asked if anyone has spoken about energy star ratings or rebates on the units. He proceeded to explain there are discounts given on certain models through NH Energy Saves. Artimovich asked if that was available to municipalities as well. Morgan responded he was unsure. Jones suggested we check into it if there is a possibility the town could save money. Morgan believes the savings could be about \$200. Clement read from the site and was not able to find a definitive answer. Artimovich felt it was best to wait until it can be further researched.

Rebecca Dunham, historical society, asked if anyone had considered the grange building. She stated she could have as many as 30-40 people in the building at one time. Jones responded that the goal was for all town buildings to have air purifiers. Clement responded that the intent was to use impact fees for the air purifiers. She explained the historical society does not benefit from impact fees. Clement offered the suggestion of paying them out of the capital reserve fund. Artimovich stated he would like to wait until their needs are determined and then consider where the money would come from to cover the costs. Morgan asked if Dunham knew the rough square footage. Dunham responded she did not but could send a diagram drawing via email. Mantegari asked if the air purifiers were being tabled. Artimovich responded they would be until next week.

Mantegari explained the postal service is understaffed which is affecting the mail delivery. He further mentioned the Exeter location is still delivering 6 days a week. Mantegari explained there are many job openings which can be found at [usps.com/careers](https://usps.com/careers). The pay ranges from \$18.92 - \$27.52 per hour. Mantegari previously requested the library director, Janice Wiers, post the job opening information at their location and it has been posted at the town office. Artimovich added they have a program where you can get a scan of all your mail. Mantegari also shared you can always go to the post office to pick up your mail if you are unable to wait the delayed week.

Morgan shared that energy star rebates are residential only. Artimovich stated the board would wait to see what units the historical society

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needs and then order them all together.

Chief Ventura was present to speak on the K9 program. He explained he had previously been in front of the board for approval to raise funds for a K9 program. Ventura explained the plan was to start raising money at National Night Out. He announced officer Matt Kelly has raised the \$20,000 in funds from local donations of businesses and residents. Ventura explained he intends to keep this account open for anyone who wants to donate. He added that the account is running through the police association not the department budget. Ventura explained he needs the approval of the board to start the program now that the start up funds have been raised. He further added the cruiser will need to be outfitted to transport the dog and desires to order those items ahead of the dog's arrival. Ventura stated he understands the town has had prior K9 experience and recognizes some of the promises given under those circumstances might not have occurred as promised. He stated he fully intends to deliver as promised.

Ventura explained the training program is seven weeks long and officer Kelly's salary has already been budgeted and will be budgeted for 2023. Chief explained it might limit some of the double coverage he strives for but stated he and the Sergeant intend to pick up some of slack at the beginning or ending of the shifts. Ventura assures the board the town will not see an impact from the training. Mantegari asked if Kelly was going to sign a five-year contract. Ventura responded that Officer Kelly has agreed to the contract. Artimovich asked Ventura to explain to the board how much time he must give officer Kelly for the care of the dog and training. Ventura replied officer Kelly will be allotted 4 hours per week for care of the dog at home. He further added the dog will have adequate housing and will not be left outside in the frigid cold temperatures. Currently Kelly is working four 10-hour days. He will instead patrol four days a week for 9 hours each day. The remaining 4 hours will be for the care of the dog, according to Ventura.

Officer Kelly explained training for narcotics is eight hours per month. Ventura added that the police department has a training budget line allotted. He explained there is money remaining in his budget for the training. Ventura stated he would not be asking for additional money for that line item. Morgan asked if traveling is necessary for the training. Kelly responded there is minimal travel as the training is done in NH in the woods, buildings, and tow yards. Jones asked Clement if the cost Ventura is speaking about was similar to the amount of the previous K9 program. Clement responded it was.

Ventura spoke to those in the audience who might not have been aware of the details of the K9 program. He explained it is a black lab that will be used for community policing, and it would not be a bite dog. The dog will be for narcotics and search and rescue. Ventura expressed a hope that in the future, she can also be cross trained for bomb detection which will serve useful because of the racetrack. Resident Carol Belliveau, Mill Road, asked if the department currently had the dog. Ventura responded that the department does not yet have the dog, but that Maggie has been born. Ventura explained if the program gets board approval, the dog would most likely be in officer Kelly's possession sometime in March.

Artimovich asked if anyone has signed on to offer veterinarian services. Ventura responded that services have not yet been sought but stated there are a plethora of options. Mantegari asked if his budget was going to cover the cost of insurance for the dog. Ventura responded there would be insurance coverage as he understands this is an investment for the town. Kelly added that Tractor Supply is installing a dog bath station and has offered to donate those services to the police dog.

Jim Wiseman, Block Drive, questioned the budget of \$2,500. He asked if all the other expenses would come out of Officer Kelly's own pocket. Ventura asked for clarification on the expenses Wiseman was referencing. Ventura explained he started a similar program in Wakefield and while he relied heavily on food donations, the expenses were not into the \$10,000 - \$14,000 Wiseman was referencing.

Carol Belliveau, Mill Road, asked officer Kelly how much money he had in the trunk of the car on National Night Out. Kelly responded \$62 in cash.

Mantegari motioned to accept Ventura's request to begin a K9 program. Jones seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carries.

Ventura thanked the board for their vote and support of the program.

Chief Ventura next spoke about a body camera grant he was able to apply for that covers body cameras and in-cruiser cameras. He explained the awards varied throughout the state depending on the size of the department and the needs. They ranged from \$10,000 - \$100,000. Ventura explained the department was awarded a half match of \$35,000. He further explained that if the department spends \$70,000, they will get half of that money back. Ventura shared he is a firm believer in the body camera system because it serves to protect the officers and the public. He has already started getting bids from body camera suppliers. Ventura stated they have a pilot program

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which the department will be trying for 30 days. Ventura is requesting the board's approval to accept the grant so that the appropriate paperwork to be submitted. He explained the department has up to five years to use the grant money.

Morgan asked what the total anticipated cost of the program would be. Ventura responded that he has spoken to the "Cadillac" of body camera companies and the quote he received was \$86,000 for everything he would want. He shared there are some items he could cut if needed. Ventura explained the cost has decreased over the last few years. He explained that would be the outside top quote. Morgan asked what the range would be for a step down from that. Ventura guessed it would be around \$50,000 - \$60,000 but explained he has not received all the quotes yet.

Jones asked if there is a current budget line body cameras would go under. Clement responded there is not a current budget line but explained it would qualify under impact fees. Mantegari asked how much is in the impact fee account. The response was "a lot". Ventura responded that impact fees is where he would look to obtain the funds. He explained the grant would require the department to pay for the items up front and then seek reimbursement. Artimovich stated the previous chief was supposed to do some fundraising for body cameras. He asked if Ventura knew the amount in the account from that fundraising. Ventura responded that there is about \$4,000 in that account. Jones asked for clarification that it was specific to body cameras. Clement responded it was.

Jones motioned, seconded by Mantegari, to accept the grant offered by the Department of Safety of monies up to \$35,000 for the purpose of reimbursement of 50% of the costs to equip Brentwood Police Department with body-worn cameras and agency vehicles with dashboard cameras as well as the on-going costs of maintenance and storage of data recorded by body-worn and dashboard cameras. All were in favor. The motion carries.

Chief Ventura offered an update on a previous request to the board for the puck connectivity issue. He explained the price has increased from \$5,000 to \$8,000 - \$9,000 on the desired system because some of the rebates were rescinded. Ventura explained there is more investigation that needs to occur to fully understand the direction Rockingham County is moving. Jones asked if the puck system was a temporary solution. Ventura responded it was. Ventura shared he was not sure of the timing, but it is his understanding the system would become obsolete in the next 12-24 months requiring the purchase of new laptops for the cruisers. The plan at this point is to continue utilizing what they have for about \$1500 a year for the next 24 months, according to Ventura. He will begin planning for the change over through CIP. Ventura felt it was necessary to update the board about the change. Mantegari asked if there would any grants for the system change. Ventura responded he hopes there will be and explained he would be looking for any available grants.

Kelly spoke about the energy and environment advisory committee he referenced at the last meeting. The committee would offer research and advice to the selectboard on issues related to energy and the environment. Kelly stated the electricity prices have increased significantly as many have seen in the last month. There was a well-attended informational session held at the library last Monday according to Kelly. He feels it is important to have a committee who is regularly able to follow these issues. The advisory committee would be established to follow the electricity issues and make recommendations on how to alleviate the burden of increase to the residents.

Referencing the packet provided to the board, Kelly touched on community power and the community power coalition. He mentioned there are currently 20 towns part of the coalition. Kelly explained the idea is that there is strength in numbers in being able to shop around for better rates and potential programs that are available. He also explained the possibility of information sharing and possibly joining together with programs to save money. Kelly shared there have been some residents interested in starting a composting project to reduce waste and cut down on costs for disposal.

Kelly reiterated the idea of the advisory committee would be to bring together a group of residents with various backgrounds ideally with subject matter expertise. He stated he would need direction from the board since he has only seen one committee form during his tenure on the board. He expects there could be seven members, one non-voting board member along with a few alternates.

Jones stated that at the session held at library, Don from the advisory group had proposed to the selectboard they investigate the community power coalition. She asked Kelly if the plan would be to have the advisory committee delve deeper into that and then make recommendations to the selectboard. Kelly responded Don Kreis, NH Consumer Advocate, was one of the three panelists at the information night who was excited to hear there was a possibility of a committee being formed in Brentwood. Kelly understands that if Brentwood desired to join the community power coalition it could require a warrant article. Additionally, he recognizes the board does not have the bandwidth to do all the necessary investigating. His hope would be that the advisory committee could research the information more thoroughly.

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Jones spoke about the NH community power coalition and explained there are currently 20 towns that have grouped together for an economy of scale to attempt to negotiate a better rate. She stated there are towns in our area including Exeter, Rye, Dover, Newmarket, Durham and Portsmouth. Jones explained there were some recent regulatory changes and an upcoming vote which will hopefully allow for some competition. She stated she felt it was a great use of a committee to be able to research this since there are unknown pros and potential cons.

Mantegari stated he felt it was premature to list some potential volunteers. He stated one person on the list seemed to be a conflict of interest. Mantegari would like to see it posted that the town is looking for volunteers for the committee. He would like to see it posted for 30 days to get a pool of people who might best be suited to serve on the advisory committee. Mantegari stated he would like to see Rob Wofchuck be considered since he was an integral part of the solar committee. Morgan agreed with Mantegari about the formation process. He referenced the development of the Economic Development committee formation. Morgan explained it was suggested to him to have an attorney, PR person, data person, real estate person and a person with civil engineering experience on the committee. Mantegari asked how long they posted for volunteers for the economic development committee. Morgan responded that he could not remember for certain, but guessed it was a few weeks to thirty days.

Artimovich suggested setting the date to maybe two weeks after the next newsletter is published. Mantegari asked when the next newsletter would come out. Clement and Jones both responded October. Mantegari suggested maybe November 1<sup>st</sup> as the deadline. Morgan stated the town stepped up when he was looking for volunteers to join the Economic Development committee. Jones stated she believes some towns already have an energy committee and suggested possibly gaining information from them regarding skill set.

Kelly explained the five people who are listed were suggestions and just listed as part of the discussion. He understands with the communications subcommittee there was a period of time where other people were permitted to express interest and he is totally acceptive of that same process. Mantegari stated again that he would like Rob Wofchuck to be considered for the committee and possibly to spearhead the search. Kelly responded that he had nothing against Wofchuck being part of the committee and was not arguing his value to the advisory committee. Jones shared she feels it is a great idea to have the committee and feels the educational meeting was helpful because there is a lack of awareness in resources. Kelly stated there are a lot of positives that can be done including educating the residents.

Kelly thanked Janice Wiers, library director, and the library staff for hosting the informational meeting.

Artimovich asked if there was any more board discussion before he went to the audience for questions. Mantegari stated he would like to have more time to research what the board needs and to have time to post for volunteers if the board is going to move forward with the advisory committee.

Liz McConnell, Stevens Drive, stated she agrees Rob Wofchuck would be an awesome addition to the possible formation of the energy and environment advisory committee. She further shared why she believes the person previously referenced by Mantegari was added to the list of interested volunteers was because of her relationship in and knowledge of the solar field. McConnell stated it had nothing to do with the sales piece. She went on to say that if Wofchuck would step up it would take care of a lot of questions people would have in the area of solar and it would be presented in layperson's terms. Mantegari asked if it was McConnell's daughter she was referring to. She responded it was.

Mark Young, Fellows Road, asked Jones for clarification on being able to purchase energy elsewhere. Jones responded that her understanding is it would be a buying group off the market like how Eversource buys off the market. She explained that currently residents, as individual customers, can choose their own supplier. The difference with the coalition is you would have better bargaining power, according to Jones, because you would be considered a larger customer when combined with 20 other towns. She continued explaining that she understands there to be an opt out option for residents not interested in being part of the coalition. Kelly stated she explained it the way he understands it as well. Young asked if the town would then be a vendor. Jones responded it would be as if the town is a customer as part of the conglomerate to allow better bargaining power.

Young asked if the committee would require a line item. Jones responded that she did not think so, as it is just an advisory committee.

Mantegari shared the website to the power coalition as [www.cpcnh.org](http://www.cpcnh.org).

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Rebecca Dunham, Block Drive, asked if the board would first draft the mission and the parameters of the energy and environment advisory committee. She expressed her feelings that a community meeting would be necessary as well to understand the dynamics and responsibilities of the board. Artimovich responded that was one reason there is a plan to check with other towns that have a committee already established to see how the committee is made up and what their mission is. Jones stated she felt it was a good point. Deciding if the committee has a narrow focus of only deciding to join a power coalition or a wider scope that is more global to include if more solar should be done in town, for example, would be important according to Jones. Dunham stated there needs to be a public meeting to see if the residents want a committee such as this. Kelly stated he was not sure that is the precedent of establishing a committee. Morgan responded that is not the precedent.

Morgan responded to Dunham regarding her comment of just learning about the committee now. He pointed out that the board is also just learning about the committee idea. Morgan reminded the public about quorum rules that prevent the board from discussing a matter like this except in a public forum. Jones stated she would be interested in reading some of the missions/vision of energy groups. Morgan requested issues and purpose statement be added to the minutes.

Mantegari read some of the details about the purpose and issues the proposed energy and environment advisory committee would examine.

The proposal included the purpose: To advise the Town of Brentwood Select Board and other committees and boards on best practices related to energy and the environment.

The proposal included these issues to be examined:

- The burden of high electricity rates on residents, businesses, and town offices, and the need to seek potential remedies
- Community Power rules (see background info below) approved by NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will allow cities and towns to save money and prioritize renewable energy
- Towns joining the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire
- Potential for voluntary composting program to reduce household waste and potentially provide cost savings to the Town
- Town solar array: issues and education
- Residents looking for more information related to saving money, reducing environmental impact, and reducing electricity usage and waste

Bob Stephens, Northrup Drive, chair of conservation commission, stated he would like to encourage the board to keep the focus of the committee narrow and focused before voting on it. He suggested the board not act right away and to take time to consider before they vote. Stephens also stated some of the topics including composting and waste have been discussed at Conservation Commission. Artimovich reminded Stephens this was the first time the committee has been discussed and stated ConCom was not intentionally left out.

James Goodwin, South Road, expressed his dismay about his taxes. He expressed his disapproval of the proposed committee in fear it will increase his taxes.

Jim Michaud, Route 125, voiced his concern that the committee will be rushed. He believes it should be brought before the town and have more discussion. Michaud stated he fears it will be a wider scope than anticipated and he believes there are existing entities that could handle these issues.

Robin Wrighton, Middle Road, Brentwood newsletter representative stated she would be happy to partner with Kelly and the board to help get the word out about the committee to the town.

Jones stated she supports the idea of the energy and environment advisory committee. She realized after the informational meeting at the library last week that there is a lot she still does not know about energy and the available options.

Mantegari asked if the meeting at the library was recorded. Jones responded it was and it is on the homepage of the library's website. Mantegari asked if there is a way to link it to the town's website. Kelly explained he asked the three panelists for links connected to their presentations. He hopes the links can be put on the website with the recorded meeting. Mantegari motioned the zoom link be added to the town page. Jones added there is a one-page handout that would also be helpful to accompany the zoom link. There was no second and no

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further discussion.

Morgan asked Wrighton when the next newsletter deadline is. Wrighton responded September 15<sup>th</sup> for the October newsletter. Morgan stated if the board wanted to get something in the newsletter about looking for people with certain expertise, it would need to be submitted next week. Jones responded she was not sure they were ready for that. Clement stated it would be rushed because there are no agenda items for next week's meeting. Artimovich stated it would need to be pushed out to the November newsletter.

Artimovich asked Wrighton if there would be a November/December issue of the newsletter. Wrighton confirmed that was correct with an October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. She offered to leave space in October issue if the information would make it to her close to the deadline. Jones responded she was not sure they would make that deadline. Artimovich agreed they would not be ready. Wrighton expressed her concern about not getting the news out since she believes there are people in town who are directly connected to composting and energy. She believes it would be advantageous to get the word out. Morgan responded that he believes the board is trying to figure out the next step.

Jim Michaud, Route 125, asked why the board would not put something in the newsletter explaining the intent and to invite the public to the next meeting. Artimovich replied he did not think the board would be ready to discuss this at the next meeting.

Kelly asked, by a show of hands, how many in the audience were at the informational meeting held at the library. About 5 or 6 people raised their hands. Kelly suggested people watch the video to understand why he believes the board and town needs help and advice going forward regarding energy. He stated there seems to be a misunderstanding about how the process works and he feels like there is something not being addressed in the comments.

Michaud stated he heard there were already people selected to be on this committee, which is why he was in attendance. He stated he does not feel the committee is a bad idea. Saving money is important and tackling the energy crisis is important according to Michaud.

Morgan offered information in hopes of clearing up some things. He explained when the Economic Committee was formed close to a year ago, he had some people in mind to be part of the group based on residents reaching out to him. Once the community was reached out to, he learned there were other more qualified people than he was originally aware of and many of the people from the original list were removed. Morgan explained the residents were put on the list because those were the people who reached out to him.

Stephens wanted to go on record as stating he is not opposed to the committee being formed especially if it is going to be narrowed down to saving residents money on energy.

Bill Dunham, Block Drive, expressed his beliefs about why the energy has increased and suggests a root cause analysis.

Jim Johnson, Shannon Way, questioned the criteria Morgan referred to. Morgan responded there was some confusion about what he was referring to and clarified it was not the proposed advisory committee he was referring to. Artimovich explained Morgan was describing the Economic Development Committee process being established.

Artimovich stated the agenda had review of bids for gas, oil, and diesel. He explained there was only one proposal from Hartmann. More bids will be sought before a decision is made.

Mantegari requested Bob Stephens, SA Associates, to speak on the bridge update. The bridge is open to traffic in both directions, according to Stephens. The milestone they are looking for is called substantial completion. He explained that to be the point in the project where it is useable for the intended purpose. Stephens stated they have reached that point. He is waiting to be notified by the contractor to such completion.

Belliveau made reference to the debris in the dam and the bench still needing to be put in place. Stephens reminded people the dam is privately owned.

Stephens explained project closeout will be the next step where the contractor must go through a "punch list" which he explained to be a list of small items to be wrapped up.

Jones asked for an update on the retaining wall the board members examined during a site walk. Stephens replied the wall was repaired. He explained there was concern that the repair would not be as good as other options such as being replaced. The wall has been chinked

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into place and is stable. Jones asked if that part of the project came in at the expected budget. Stephens replied yes with the exception of a small crack repair.

Mark Young, Conservation Commission, asked what the weight limit is on the bridge. Stephens responded the limit is 15 ton, but the posted weight is 10 ton. He explained the DOT handles weight limit changes. Stephens suggested the weight remain the same, as he expressed no need to increase it.

Belliveau commented Mill Road needs to be paved. Mantegari responded it was deferred because of the possible pending development.

Clement shared the change orders for the bridge project. The linear feet of concrete from WP Davis was \$9,025 over and above the lump sum included in the contract. The change order for SA Engineering for construction engineering administration for the last 3 weeks was \$9,600. Clement explained there is enough in capital reserves to cover those change orders. Artimovich asked if the DOT aid could be used instead of the capital reserve funds. Clement responded she has reached out and is waiting to hear the amount. Once the amount is decided, a public meeting will need to be posted to accept those funds. Clement believes it will be \$82,000 but she needs to have that confirmed from DRA.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to expend \$18,625 out of capital reserves for bridge repairs. All in favor.

Clement asked when the first department head meeting to kick off budget season will be held. Artimovich responded September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Stefanie Lewendon, communications subcommittee chair, was present to offer an update. She provided an organizational chart. Lewendon was not looking for approval, just sharing information with the board that it existed. She also referenced a phase plan for the launch of a Facebook page. Lewendon explained Daphne Woss, town clerk, will be the pilot user. The plan is to get the page up and running after the primary elections. The announcement will be posted on the website, in the newsletter, and on the private Facebook pages.

Lewendon explained that unlike a website, once the page is live it is live. She shared the plan is to do a soft launch and stated the board members could check it out at that point. Mantegari asked if comments would be turned off. Lewendon replied that the comments will be turned off.

There was discussion about page usage and being connected to a specific user. Lewendon stated it would be a town clerk user. Morgan pointed out that town clerks are elected, and this would be a good practice so the permissions/access can be passed to another town clerk in the future, if needed.

Lewendon requested Clement send her the town seal.

Jim Johnson, Shannon Way, stated he saw and heard from a previous meeting Clement's husband was hired onto the payroll. He stated there was nothing in writing about this. Artimovich clarified that Clement's husband is not on the payroll. Artimovich further explained he is a vendor who was permitted to bid on an exterminating job. He pointed out it was done like many other contracted services and there is a one-year contract. Jones added there was full disclosure at that meeting. Artimovich explained nepotism is when you hire an employee. Mantegari stated that company gave a lower rate. Jones pointed out that Clement is not a voting member of the board.

At 7:46 pm, Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to go in to non-public for legal matters. Artimovich – aye; Jones – aye; Mantegari – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye.

At 8:07 pm, Mantegari motioned to come out of nonpublic and seal the minutes from the non-public meeting. Jones seconded the motion. Artimovich – aye; Jones – aye; Mantegari – aye; Kelly – aye; Morgan – aye.

Morgan said the board should discuss alternates for the selectboard representative to other boards.

At 8:07 pm Mantegari made a motion to adjourn. Jones seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

