



*Town of Goffstown*  
TOWN OFFICES  
16 MAIN STREET • GOFFSTOWN, NH 03045

August 15, 2023

Commissioner Robert R. Scott  
NH Department of Environmental Services  
29 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03302-0095

Sent Via Email

Re: Hadley Falls Project – Project No. P-5379-008

Dear Commissioner Scott,

On behalf of the Goffstown Select Board, please accept this letter and attached meeting minutes as the Board's support for NHDES imitating and expedite a feasibility study for available options for removal of the Hadley Falls Dam in Goffstown, NH.

**At the May 22, 2023 meeting the Goffstown Select Board voted unanimously to formally request DES initiate a feasibility study and expedite the study's completion for the removal of the Hadley Falls Dam.**

The Select Board took this vote after the joint meeting with Assistant Commissioner Sanborn and staff from the NHDES Water Division (earlier on 05/22/23). The Board took this action with the understanding the two (2) other State-owned dams on the Piscataquog River, Greggs Falls Dam and Kelley Falls Dam, are classified as high hazard state-owned dams and have issues that require resolution. The Board looks forward to partnering with NHDES to find a solution for all three (3) dams that impact residents and property owners in Goffstown.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Derek M. Horne; Town Administrator

CC via email: Mark Sanborn, Assistant Commissioner NHDES  
Corey Clark, Chief Engineer, NHDES Water Division, Dam Bureau

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*Vice Chair Georgantas made a motion to approve the Eversource request for night work dates for construction on the C196 Transmission line. Selectman Adams seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0-0. All in favor. Motion carries.*

Chair Boyer said she's assuming with the coordination of the Police Department they will be putting out notices for that. Town Administrator Horne said they would.

**Hadley Falls**

Vice Chair Georgantas said he'd like to discuss this afternoon's meeting and the direction the Board wants to take. Chair Boyer said they would send a formal request from the Select Board to NHDES to request they begin those feasibility studies as soon as possible. As we heard today, we can't go into any of the collaboration or coordination processes of an outcome without those studies being done.

***Selectman Adams made a motion to formally request DES to initiate a feasibility study and expedite its completion for the removal of the Hadley Falls Dam. Selectman Lemay seconded the motion.***

Vice Chair Georgantas said that eliminates the six months they'd talked about. Town Administrator Horne said that is one of the studies, and the most important study. They would still have the water course study and some others. Vice Chair Georgantas said they originally said they wouldn't do anything for six months. Now we're asking them to start the process now.

Selectman Adams said yes. He thinks they should. Chair Boyer said the outcome from that is that they're going to give us a list of options that we have as a community. So, if we decide to move forward with a committee, we can't do anything until that's done. Is there any benefit to waiting six months? Vice Chair Georgantas asked if we are going to try to search for some of these grants. Is that feasible?

Town Administrator Horne said they've not had the opportunity to go through some of the federal infrastructure grants. They can. His concern is to remove and rebuild the dam as was discussed this afternoon, he heard they would be competing against projects that have a higher return on investment. You'll be competing for limited federal dollars. If the Board wishes, they will start looking at those items.

Vice Chair Georgantas said it was said that we may not want to concentrate grant efforts on Hadley Falls, but possibly grant efforts in the future for the other two dams. Selectman Craig said he's uncomfortable dealing with Hadley Falls separate from the others. His feeling is that Hadley Falls is probably gone. But he would fight for Greggs Falls because that's when the houses start coming in. He thinks that's what most people would start fighting for. He would feel better if he knew that was the plan.

Chair Boyer said we've not received any formal notification and she doesn't think they will for some time on when those dams will come into conversation. Vice Chair Georgantas said they did. We asked them to concentrate on Hadley Falls Dam today. They did say that in March of 2024 that the dam operator at Kelly's Falls was not going to renew their lease. It has nothing to do with them. That NOAA and Fish and Wildlife are requiring Kelly's Falls to have a fish ladder. We were also

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told DES can do nothing about it. It's the feds that require it. Fish and Wildlife is part of FERC. That's going to happen. That information is out there. The fish ladder does Gregg's Falls no good if there's not one on Kelly's Falls. His conversations with a dam engineer who operates Gregg's Falls told him that a 4 ft. fish ladder was nearly \$2 million dollars. We were also told DES can do nothing about it. Kelly's Falls could exceed \$10 million.

Selectman Craig asked about the repair at the lake that was done recently. Vice Chair Georgantas said there was a leak in the powerhouse. They had divers go in to try to fix it. The divers wouldn't work so they had to draw down the water to fix the leak from outside the Powerhouse.

Selectman Adams said they could do a full inspection. Selectman Lemay said Kelly Falls Dam is in Manchester. Why are we worried about it? Town Administrator Horne said Assessor Bartlett did provide him with a list of waterfront properties for each one. He can share that with the Board electronically. Vice Chair Georgantas said they are all Goffstown residents. Selectman Lemay said we have a big piece of the puzzle down there but ultimately, it's Manchester's responsibility to find the money for that \$10 million dollar fish ladder. Vice Chair Georgantas said no, it's not true. DES owns that dam. They lease it. Manchester doesn't own it. It's like Gregg's Falls. We don't own that dam. Manchester can fight for it. We have more residents on that lake than Manchester does. It affects more Goffstown residents than it does Manchester.

Selectman Adams said it's a river system and they are all interrelated. He'd rather go one step further. He had liked to take action to direct our state reps to collectively introduce legislation to fund a comprehensive study of the 34.7-mile Piscataquog River from its origins in Deering Reservoir to its discharge in the Merrimack River, then present their findings to the Select Board. Let's get them to act on our behalf. Let's get some funding for the study so we know what we're talking about.

Selectman Craig asked what Selectman Adams is talking about that's different than what is being done already. Selectman Adams said he's talking about the whole river system. Vice Chair Georgantas said that's what they are doing, from Deering down. Selectman Adams said someone has to pay for it. Vice Chair Georgantas said DES is. Maybe we should get clarification on that.

Chair Boyer said the feasibility study is the first step regardless. They're going to do those studies and we need them. Selectman Lemay said jump forward to two dams to the Kelly Falls Dam. He'd like to send a letter to the Manchester Board of Aldermen and the Mayor to advise them about what's going on. Do they know they could lose that dam?

Selectman Craig asked about having a hearing on the other two dams like they had on this one. It's all interwoven. Selectman Georgantas said he thinks he heard it say that's what they were willing to do. Chair Boyer said she thinks they need to be mindful of the amount of work we're asking our staff to do, just knowing they are at full capacity now. We have an important role to play in this, and we need to figure out a lot of things. She wants to be mindful of how they manage that internally. Is it within our purview to have town staff do those things? Should we ask DES to do some of those things. Selectman Georgantas said he's not willing to rest on someone else taking care of our town. Just tell our state reps to go find money to do the study. When is it going to happen?

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Selectman Adams said that would all be part of it. They would have to introduce legislation and those details would all have to be in there. Chair Boyer suggested working with New Hampshire DES for them to put on a public meeting with the town. Vice Chair Georgantas said that's fine, but we need to have more information.

Selectman Craig asked why they're making decisions on Hadley Falls not knowing what's going on below, which might affect how we deal with problems. Vice Chair Georgantas said he doesn't think it affects what they do with Hadley Falls at all. Chair Boyer said Hadley Falls is being demolished, no matter what.

Selectman Adams said they don't know what's going to happen when they remove the dam at Hadley Falls. There's a tremendous amount of sediment and debris that's collected behind that dam. That's going to have an effect on the downstream river properties. We don't know what's going to happen, and that's why it's going to take a comprehensive study to figure out how the river will react if they take that out. Is it going to move its banks? Is it going to change its course?

Chair Boyer asked if that was part of the environmental study, they were talking about doing. Selectman Adams said it would be part of the feasibility study. Chair Boyer said when requesting NH DES, do we have to make a formal request of them. Either we still to our January 2023 timeline of them starting the feasibility at that point, or we request they start that process earlier. Selectman Adams said they should start the process as soon as possible and get it going. Vice Chair Georgantas said they were willing to do that. Selectman Adam said the Board should send a letter to them signed by all members of the Board to request it. Then it is on record.

Town Administrator Horne said there is a motion to expedite the feasibility study. It needs a second and a vote. Selectman Craig said they should quickly have another meeting like they had today for the other two dams, so people know the whole situation.

***Selectman Lemay seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0-0. All in favor. Motion carries.***

Selectman Georgantas said Kelly's Falls doesn't know what that operator is going to do or where it stands. They don't know if they're going to maintain it. Selectman Craig said they should tell the citizens of Goffstown at a public meeting.

Chair Boyer said they asked that Town Administrator Horne work with Mark to coordinate a public meeting with the town and NH DES. It would be appropriate. Town Administrator Horne said IT is developing a banner or button across the home page for information. Chair Boyer said she's talking about the public meeting with residents that NH DES offered to put on. She thinks we could ask them to include that kind of information in that public hearing and presentation.

Selectman Craig said people are afraid for their houses. Vice Chair Georgantas said they said they'd have more information 2-3 months down the road. People are paranoid at Greggs Falls and Hadley Falls. But they had no idea because it happened so quickly. Selectman Lemay said they were as blindsided as Goffstown was. They could start negotiating with different operators at Kelly Falls. Glens Falls is all set. They have a lease and are redoing their lease. Selectman Adams said they generate plenty of power to be financially stable.

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Town Administrator Horne said he'd assume the Board doesn't want to do this in July. And, with school events and items ending, maybe not in June either. Maybe August? Vice Chair Georgantas said if we do it in August, we won't do it in a small room. We're going to have to do it in the auditorium or something like that. He'd like to be sure they have some kind of information to pass on. He doesn't want to go there and reiterate the same things over and over.

Chair Boyer asked, if it's requested for August, if Town Administrator Horne would also ask if they'd be willing, based on the list of property owners, to send out communication to those property owners. Town Administrator Horne said he can make that request. Vice Chair Georgantas said that's something we can talk about. Selectman Craig asked if Selectman Adams could find out what the State is doing now about the rivers. Selectman Adams said we should follow up on the study. It wasn't crystal clear to him where it was going. It sounded like good language, but he's not convinced.

Chair Boyer addressed the meeting minutes. Vice Chair Georgantas has some, and there are minutes from today's meeting. The web page is in progress. Can we put those on that web page when they are done? Town Administrator Horne said yes. The meeting minutes from April 20 are on the Town website, and we can put them in an easier location for people to get to.

She asked about the communication strategy. Do we release something publicly on social media or otherwise in regard to the meeting we had today, or just share the minutes. Vice Chair Georgantas said if something is done on social media, when minutes are approved, they can post something to direct them to the website. Chair Boyer said we discussed a committee, but we should wait to hear back about the feasibility and other studies being done. Vice Chair Georgantas said he doesn't know if it's necessary now, but people are calling for a committee. We do need to think about it. He doesn't see why they aren't starting something and then moving on to find people to get in it. Who are the people we want to have appointed to it who are interested in participating in it? Selectman Craig said politics is important because people really care. It's their homes and they are affected. It's comforting to have a policy or committee to keep an eye on it.

Vice Chair Georgantas said if something comes up, they can always pass it on to whoever is running the website. Selectman Adams said he assumes that would go through the standard process of establishing a charter. Town Administrator Horne said yes. Vice Chair Georgantas said he doesn't think it needs to be done until there is more information to pass on.

Chair Boyer said she'd also ask, if the Town is going to statutorily be in charge of that, what the process and outcomes of that committee would be. It's something to think about. Selectman Adams said it would all be laid out in the charter.

Vice Chair Georgantas said what might happen is that some group will make their own committee and take charge of trying to disseminate the information that's out there. They'll be calling everyone. Selectman Craig said he thinks they should start it now, even if there's nothing to do. At least, when it comes, they'll be ready to move. Chair Boyer said she doesn't think they should do it until they have a clear purpose for doing it. Selectman Craig said we do. We're talking about changing the entire character of the town.

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Chair Boyer said she doesn't want to remove the Select Board from the conversation. If there is no actionable outcome for a committee, it's a lot of work. She wants to make sure we know the purpose. We're already doing that work. Vice Chair Georgantas said he agrees. Right now, the Select Board is the committee. Selectman Adams said it shouldn't be that way. The details would be spelled out in a charter. Who is on it? What will they consider? What are their obligations for reporting? What's the timeline?

Chair Boyer said the Board will have to bring back some insight when they get more about the study. The feasibility studies would most likely have to happen first before there can be anything actionable. At that point, do we include the Planning Board? She wants to see if they can figure out what that committee would be used for because she doesn't want the Select Board to be removed from the conversation.

Selectman Adams said it's all about questions and answers to questions. Today, we had one question and an answer to that one question. The dam is coming up. Vice Chair Georgantas said you can understand their reasons now. Selectman Adams said yes, and the feasibility study is going to raise a whole different set of questions that need to be answered. It's an evolving process and the feasibility study is the next step. Then we get into design, engineering, construction, etc., until we're done.

Chair Boyer asked the Board to bring back to the next meeting their ideas for what that committee would do and to think about who might be involved. Selectman Adams said Town Administrator Horne has been good at setting up committees before. He could frame it up for us. It starts the conversation and gets the ball rolling. Town Administrator Horne said he's not sure what the committee would do, but he could provide the Board with the framework for them to figure out members and from which sections of town. You'd want input from both lake associations of the impacted waterways. He can provide the framework and send it to the Board as a draft document.

The Namaske Lake Association works with Patty Gale every year, with the milfoil grant that they work with the State and Town on. Selectman Adams said someone from PRLAC (Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee) should be included. Vice Chair Georgantas said today we got one thing finished. We know what direction we're going in with Hadley Falls. We can tell people who ask that the dam is in process to be removed. Selectman Lemay said this is where the Board should stay together and stay strong and think of the people in the community.

**Circle National Club**

Selectman Adams asked where they were with the Cercle National Club. Town Administrator Horne said he's been giving information to the Town Attorney and working with him to get enforcement. He's continuing in that process. Vice Chair Georgantas asked if there would be any ramifications if they notify the liquor commission the Town is having problems with them. Town Administrator Horne said he can talk to the Police Chief about it.

Selectman Adams said his patience is running thin and those poor people down there are being subjected to things they shouldn't have to be subjected to. They ought to at least submit for a site plan approval from the Planning Board, but make sure they meet all requirements for parking, and