

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Approved Minutes for Meeting of July 2, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: Gordon Kemp and Matthew Saxton.

STAFF PRESENT:

Name	Position	In Person	Google Meet
Misty Gratacos	Town Administrator	•	•
Shelley Steuwe	Recording Secretary	•	•
Stephen Murrell	Police Chief	•	•
Steve Reynolds	Emergency Mgmt Director	•	•
Jesse Moore	Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds	•	•
Bobbie Wilson	Supervisor of the Checklist/Ambulance Lt/Vilas Pool Committee	•	•
Richard Beringer	Fire Department	•	•
Rod Bouchard	Land Use Clerk	•	•

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: **In person:** Joe Levesque, Marge Noonan, Judith Willis; **Google Meets:**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Saxton called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 PM and then proceeded with leading the agenda-based discussion.

ACTION ITEMS: Review the following emails: Margaret Byrnes (NHMA) visit; Penny Gendron regarding Power Washing of Town Office; Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute from HealthTrust; Wilmington Trust distribution letters; review & sign one (1) Tax Exemption Application.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 6/25 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Washed-out glass** – Mr. Saxton reports that last week culverts were replaced, the ditch re-established, and glass was gathered (as much as was possible with the machine they were using). Mrs. Gratacos reports that she received a response from Servpro – this is too broad a spectrum for their services.
- B. **Thayer Brook bypass** – No updates.
- C. **Bridge projects** – No updates.
- D. **Dams** – No updates.
- E. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – No updates.
- F. **Model T MOU** – No updates.
- G. **Langdon Library Fees** – No updates.
- H. **Employee Health Insurance** – No updates.
- I. **Department & Board**

NEW BUSINESS:

- **FD Policies:**
 - Mr. Kemp received feedback from the Fire Department, and will use that to further revise the policies, providing an updated version next week.
- **Town nepotism policy:**
 - This will be discussed when Mr. McCarty returns at next week's Selectmen's meeting.
- **Oil/Propane Contracts with Irving (to lock in pricing for the season):**
 - Mr. Saxton reviews that agreements are in hand for signature. The contract price for propane is \$1.43, and for oil is \$2.85.
- **Joe Levesque, re: Affordable Housing:**
 - Mr. Levesque reports that a considerable amount of federal money is available to build affordable housing, in addition to State funds (via investnh.org). He is concerned that as young adults graduate from Fall Mountain, they have no place to live independently, so we're losing young residents of Alstead. The Northern Borders Regional Commission and EARMARKS (formerly called congressionally directed spending, or, CDS) can direct funds to projects like affordable housing. The Town would hire someone to do the development, and another group (like Southwest Community Services) to manage the building/s. This type of development would not cost the taxpayers. Mr. Levesque also mentions that it would be easy to justify ARPA money for this.

Mr. Levesque seeks to gauge the interest of the Selectboard before pursuing any further investigation into what this type of development would require. At present, Mr. Saxton is in favor, and Mr. Kemp is not in favor. They would like to discuss this again next week when Mr. McCarty is present.

- Library Town-issued credit card:
 - Mrs. Gratacos reports that the Library is requesting a Town-issued credit card. She asks the Board now for additional information, like who will pay the bills, and how they will be paid. If it falls under the Town, Mrs. Gratacos would typically take care of everything. She understands the Town does their payroll, but the Library does everything else, so they would be managing their own credit card as a result. Mr. Saxton requests to move decision making to next week and asks Mrs. Gratacos to email him the details.

OTHER ITEMS: Select Board Admin will be out of the office on July 3rd, the Office will be closed.

GUESTS:

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Department – Chief Murrell reports they have received 583 calls to date. Mr. Fuller was at the station last Thursday to measure downstairs to make sure they had the right size for the new AC unit. At that time Chief Murrell mentioned the generator issue and generator contract, and Mr. Fuller reported he is looking into that. Chief Murrell and Chief Kercewich met with Amer Electric and went through all the buildings. The meeting went well, and they should have an estimate soon. Mrs. Gendron reached out to Power Wash NH, LLC, and they stated they will donate their services yearly to the Town for one project. They will powerwash the Town Office building on 10/4, and will power wash the East Fire Station in 2025. He is waiting on an estimate from Mr. Bellows for painting. Mr. Saxton asks if they expect anything unusual over the 4th, and Chief Murrell says no, just expecting the usual fireworks complaints.

Town Office Administrator – Mrs. Gratacos reports that the budget has been entered into QuickBooks Online, but there are still several accounting things that need to happen before the budget is ready to widely distribute. She provided a preliminary report to meeting attendees. She will be working on this over next 1-2 weeks, and plans to provide an updated budget at that time. She also reports she is still working with Ms. Schoppmeyer on calendar coordination.

Emergency Management – Director Reynolds reports that they discussed solar flares interrupting communications at the most recent Hazard Mitigation meeting. They are continuing to monitor the weather for concerning weather systems. Safety audits are complete, and they will start up with them again in the Fall. He reached out to Mr. Fuller three weeks ago, and was told he was going to get the December bill and contract to him. He followed up on this over the weekend, and was told they were submitted to the Town Office on 7/1. Mrs. Gratacos will follow up on this 7/3. Cintas sent in quotes for the Library 10 lb extinguisher and a specialized one for the Police Department. He is going to see about getting a lower price on the Police Department extinguisher, but believes the Library one reasonably priced, and recommends signing off on that. Mr. Kemp wonders if we need to get a new one for the Police Department if the halon extinguisher is still available and won't cause damage to the server. He also wonders if there is a server that backs up all Town files. He asks Mrs. Gratacos to look into this.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

- Transfer Station – Director Moore reports that the NH Bureau of Forest and Lands came to inspect the Transfer Station and found that they are operating a burn pile without a Class IV fire permit. At this time a permit is not possible as the space does not meet their requirements for safe burning (proximity to forest, proximity to building, adequate water supply for firefighting). As a result, the Transfer Station will no longer burn brush. Mr. Saxton suggests posting an update on the website and at the Transfer Station (Director Moore confirms this is already done) and removing the cage/burn pit remnants.
- Parks – Director Moore reports that mowing is up to date. He reviewed an email from Mr. McCarty about mowing the Warren Dam, stating that it can't be shorter than 6 inches around the dam. He reports that there is tree work needed at the Alstead Center Common. Mr. Saxton suggests having a survey of the tree work needed, getting a quote, and bringing that as a warrant article. Mr. Saxton also mentions the historical value of this common, and the group discussed the benefit of educating the public about this, as many in the room were unaware. Mr. Beringer offers to talk to Mr. Bellows about adding this to the Historical Society's newsletter.
- Ambulance – Director Moore reports that this is the 5th summer doing Local Heroes (reading with kids). The Fire Department and Police Department will be there as well.
- Next Friday they're having another day-long session (CPR, Stop the Bleed, AED, Basic First Aid) with the incoming class at the Heartwood School, including some community members.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Saxton – Spoke with Mr. Fuller about outlets at the Town Hall, and talked to Keith Hanatow (Melanson) about the Historical Society roof and is awaiting a quote.

Mr. Kemp –

Mr. McCarty –

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

INFORMATIONAL:

EXECUTIVE SESSION/S: RSA: Land Use Clerk

- Mr. Bouchard wants to see how things are progressing and see if there are things coming up in the future. He also has some questions/concerns about his job description, and the tendency to have creep outside that description. Mrs. Gratacos thinks some people's expectations of his job description are a bit more broad than his expectations. Mr. Kemp states it was his intention for Mr. Bouchard to start with the Land Use Boards as Admin and to eventually start taking on Land Clerk duties as well. He felt it would be beneficial to get up and running with the first two before adding responsibilities, but admits they may not have been clear about that. Mr. Bouchard asks for clarification on the parameters

around this work. Mr. Kemp confirms that it requires more paperwork and forms, and Mr. Saxton suggests connecting with Mrs. Iozzo, as she has taken on this work. Mr. Kemp says the Land Use Boards have struggled to hold a quorum, and that they need to recruit more board members. Mr. Bouchard says it would be helpful to have not only the Chair, but the Vice Chair attend in order to appoint alternates. Mr. Saxton asks if there are items for either Land Use Boards that have yet to be completed due to lack of quorums, and Mr. Bouchard says they have something that requires attention at the 8/1 meeting. Mr. Kemp reiterates that at this time, administrative duties for the Land Use Boards are within Mr. Bouchard's purview. Mr. Saxton asks what the Selectboard can do to support him, and he says to continue to stay in communication with him as he learns.

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, July 9, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street.
Next FM School Board meeting:	Monday, July 8, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2nd Monday)
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:32 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary