

**TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Select Board**  
**Approved Minutes for Meeting of July 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall, 9 Main Street, Alstead, NH 03602**

**SELECT BOARD PRESENT:** **In person** - Matthew Saxton, Gordon Kemp. **Google Meet** - Joel McCarty. Because Mr. McCarty attended remotely, Mr. Saxton ran the meeting.

**STAFF PRESENT:** **In person:** Junie Esslinger, Interim Transfer Station Supervisor; Kim Kercewich, Fire Chief; Jesse Moore, Ambulance Chief; Steve Murrell, Police Chief; Steve Reynolds, Director of Emergency Management; Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator; Prescott Trafton, Road Agent; Bobbie Wilson, Ambulance Lieutenant.

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** **In person:** Joe Levesque & Judith Willis, Bob Molesky, Rich Nalevanko, Marge Noonan, Barb Viegener.

**GUESTS:** none

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Mr. Saxton called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Signed payroll manifest for 7/14 payroll (\$31,228.13). Signed tax liability manifest for 7/14 payroll (\$6,228.20). Signed bill manifest for 7/11 billing cycle (\$67,041.07). Signed PA-16 form for Feuer State Forest reimbursement and PA-28 Inventory of Property for 2024 letter (will not use) for DRA. Discussed and approved fire department purchase order for protective coat and pants for one new member (\$3254.31).

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** Minutes of June 29, 2023: No changes were requested. On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted unanimously to approve the public minutes as written.***

**OLD BUSINESS: Broadband** - Mr. Kemp indicated that T-Mobile subscribers should experience improved service very soon now that updates have been made to the infrastructure on the communications tower to support new T-Mobile equipment. **Bridges** - Mr. McCarty reported that work on a Note in Anticipation of a Grant (NAG) – a line-of-credit-type vehicle - is in progress, expectation is to close with Mascoma Bank in August or September. (We have one hundred thousand of the two hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the 2022 bridge warrant article, from the Bridge capital reserve fund, in hand to date to help with the design phase cash flow.) **Ambulance housing** - Chief Moore reported that the new vehicle remains in the hands of the graphics shop. **Realty assistance with selling town properties** - Mr. Kemp reported that there is interest in the two parcels that Mr. Saxton offered for consideration as a swap for the Boucher property next to Town Hall; discussions continue.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Highway** - There was extended discussion of flooding from 7/10 storms. Mr. Saxton indicated that worst damage is to the north - Crane Brook in Acworth, Cobb Hill Road, Thayer Brook Road and took a momentary tangent to advocate against the tax cap. Ms. Viegener asked if the beaver dam on Cobb Hill breached (yes - contributory but not causal). The Road Agent reported that temporary solutions for opening Thayer Brook Road are being evaluated. Mr. Trafton and Mr. Levesque suggested that the town look to its elected officials to unstick the language red tape that is interfering with the reimbursement of funds still owed the town for the 2021 flood event, as said funds would surely assist the town with addressing THIS flood. Mr. Saxton indicated that the Board would take those steps and Mr. Kemp volunteered to contact Executive Councilor Cinde Warmington. Mr. Trafton reiterated his desire to continue working with the current FEMA rep has been responsive and helpful and made some good things happen. Mr. Trafton then urged residents with small washouts to be patient while the department addresses the big washouts and strandings; he indicated that the state has opened 123A and noted that he would need two weeks of overtime from his crew while they work to get roads open and this was reiterated by the Police Chief. On a motion from Mr. Kemp that was seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted unanimously to authorize overtime for the departments dealing with July 10th flood-related emergencies.*** Mr. Levesque wondered whether the Vilas Pool dam could be opened during the next event to allow the river to scour out some of the silt naturally. Mr. Kemp replied that this only scours a narrow path and doesn't solve the wider problem. Mr. Nalevanko asked whether the event would be declared a disaster; Mr. Levesque noted that the Governor needs reports from the towns and that the Board must declare Alstead a disaster area based on Prescott's report, which is a lot of work compiling information and photos and completing paperwork. On a motion from Mr. Kemp that was seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted unanimously to declare Alstead a disaster area due to damage from the July 10 storm-related flooding.*** When asked what's next, Mr. Trafton indicated that the department would be working to get two lanes of Cobb Hill Road to Forest Road open to allow emergency and service vehicle traffic. The Board asked all present to express their appreciation for our Road Agent and his crew and everyone else who is working to get things opened up. A round of appreciative applause was offered. Mr. Nalevanko asked about the impact of the floods on Gilsum Mine Road

and the paving operation. Mr. Trafton indicated that Pike has been supportive in offering trucking and materials from grinding anywhere needed and paving start was delayed from Monday to Wednesday. He noted that the oil index pricing is down a bit and they ground a bit more than anticipated and if we're still within budget he will ask them to do a bit of extra shoulder work.

**Emergency Management** - The Emergency Management Director reported that monitoring began around 5:30 PM when they received word that the beaver dam on Cobb Hill was breaching and they started checking sites while the Fire Department began receiving rescue calls and the decision was made to open the Emergency Command Center and Concord was advised. The Director recognized the efforts of Fire Lieutenant Hans Mayer, who rescued a woman on Thayer Brook who was taking pictures and got swept away in her vehicle. Police Chief Murrell was assisting a stranded resident when his vehicle got stranded. Director Reynolds expressed his appreciation for Keene Fire's Swift Water Rescue team, Rescue Inc.'s Swift Water Rescue team, and the Swift Water Task Force including the Swift Water Technical Team, all of whom assisted with high water monitoring and safety; for Rescue Inc.'s ambulance coverage while the Alstead ambulance covered two non-flood-related medical calls during this time; and for Alstead Police and Fire departments, who assisted with evacuations and rescues during this time. The Emergency Command Center closed down around 11:30. Director Reynolds went on to explain that this morning's assessments revealed damage that occurred on Cobb Hill Road when the beaver dam gave way, causing damage on the Hancock property that destabilized the caboose. With Thayer Brook, DES quickly issued an emergency permit to allow repairs to commence immediately. The fix, whether temporary or permanent must be at least what was there and DES will inspect the repair. Director Reynolds indicated that post-event process evaluations were performed to determine what worked and what didn't; one primary item that came out of that assessment was the Village Station lighting problem; the Board needs to consult with Jack Fuller and take immediate action on an LED lighting resolution to replace the current fluorescent lighting. Mr. Fuller asked about the cyanobacteria postings on Lake Warren because he is concerned that his livestock drinks that water and wondered how he might get notified when warnings are posted. Mr. Levesque observed that the DES web site has a place where you can sign up to receive alerts. Mr. McCarty will check into it and report back. **Police** - Chief Murrell reiterated the need for some overtime in his department. He described getting stuck on the Acworth side of Thayer Brook Road and having to park his cruiser in someone's driveway and hike out with the only damage to the cruiser being a lost hub cap. PD 2023 calls to date are at 560 and things continue to be busy. **Ambulance** - Chief Moore reported that Dartmouth Pharmacy & Medical Direction are scheduled to inspect the Village Station Wednesday 7/13; the graphics shop will bring the new vehicle to the station for the inspection. The time is unknown. 2023 call volume is at 83 calls to date. Chief observed that onlookers complicated the emergency response during the flooding and there was lengthy discussion and sharing of stories about how to alleviate that risk and how it has been handled in the past. Chief reiterated the need for action on the lighting in Village Station. Chief Moore expressed the team's gratitude for Chris at Kmiec's Garage for coming in the day before **Fire** - Chief Kercewich reported 58 2023 calls to date. The team provided rescue and road checks on Thayer Brook Road, East Alstead, and Alstead Center passable status. He added that a bay at East Station is empty and ready for the new ambulance and he has a Purchase Order for turnout gear for a new member. Mr. Kemp asked if there was any gear in possession by people who have left the department without returning their gear (yes, gear and a radio), and a lengthy discussion followed about ways to get gear back and what to do about people who have retained possession of town property. Mr. Kemp plans to follow up. Mr. Levesque raised the question of whether the department received the two new sets of SCBA gear associated with 2023 warrant article #19; Chief replied that it is ordered but not yet received. **Transfer station** - Mr. Esslinger asked the Road Agent if the backhoe was still needed by HWY department; they could use it at the transfer station. Arrangements are being made to transport corrugated paper, which must be kept dry. Mr. Esslinger offered research he has done related to the lighting in the Village Station. Mr. Kemp will work with Mr. Esslinger and Mr. Fuller to make and implement a plan. **Vilas Pool Park** - Ms. Wilson reported that the park will NOT be closing for the season and will re-open as soon as the road and parking area can be repaired and re-opened. She has some bookings for which she requires a plan B and would like to arrange for Town Hall usage; Ms. Schoppmeyer will work with Ms. Wilson to check the calendar and confirm availability.

**SELECT BOARD: PA-28** - Mr. Kemp asked about the inventory form being signed and Ms. Schoppmeyer explained that the assessors clarified that Alstead is not an inventory town so the right thing to do is mark NO on the form and have the Board sign it. **Public expressions of gratitude** - Mr. Saxton described three separate situations he has witnessed where people have graciously expressed their gratitude to the town's public servants for their work on the Town's behalf.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Bob Molesky requested review of a pond design for an abutting property on Baine Rd. whose owner is manipulating drainage to the detriment of the road. He has spoken to the Road Agent. The Board indicated that that is the right thing to do but the timing is difficult, and asked for a reminder in a month when the emergency situation dies down a bit.

**INFORMATIONAL:** The next regular meeting of the Select Board is scheduled for Tuesday, July 18th, 2023 at 6:00 PM at the Town Hall, 9 Main Street. Acworth will host the next Five-Town Select Board meeting on Friday July 21st, 2023 at a time to be determined Acworth. The Fall Mountain School Board next meets on Monday, August 14th, 2023 at the high school (2nd Monday of the month). The Fall Mountain Budget Committee next meets on Wednesday August 16th at 6 PM at the high

school (3rd Wednesday of the month). The next Five-Town Select Board Meeting is Friday, July 28th, 2023, time TBD, hosted by Acworth. A public meeting to solicit input from interested parties about the Hill Rd and Comstock Rd Bridge projects will be held Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 6 PM at the Town Hall.

**EXECUTIVE SESSIONS:** There were no non-public sessions during this meeting.

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Schoppmeyer".

Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator