

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Select Board
Unapproved Minutes for Meeting of March 5, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: In person: Joel McCarty, Matthew Saxton, Gordon Kemp. **GOOGLE MEET:** No one

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Reynolds, Emergency Management Director; Mary Schoppmeyer, Administrative Consultant; Misty Gratacos, Office Administrator; Steve Murrell, Police Chief (arrived at 5:17pm); Jesse Moore, Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds; Bobbie Wilson, Supervisor of the Checklist & Ambulance Lieutenant.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Joseph Levesque, Marge Noonan, Barb Viegner, Rich Nalevanko, Chris Garland. **GOOGLE MEET:** Glen Elsesser

CALL TO ORDER: The Board Chair invited all to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS: Reviewed & signed payroll manifest, reviewed & signed tax liability manifest; received and reviewed a letter from the Treasurer regarding State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program can now spend money on affordable housing; reviewed letter endorsing Julie Bacon for re-election as Tax Collector/Town Clerk from New Hampshire City & Town Clerk's Association; reviewed NH Solar Commission rebate letter.

GUESTS: Terry Clark, Cheshire County Commissioner to discuss Community Power, Steve Kwiatkowski, Community Solar (Mr. Kwiatkowski's presentation is deferred to 3/19)

Mr. Clark spoke with the board and community members present about Community Power, their purchasing power, and the savings each household could have if they were willing to sign up. Mr. Clark explained the Community Power concept of buying power each week and put into their portfolio to sell to customers cheaper than anyone in the area. Mr. Clark explained that smaller towns can join the county under RSA 53-e:6 by the resolution of a vote from the Select Board. Liberty Utilities would continue to deliver the power; Cheshire County Community Power (CCCP) would become the supplier. Mr. Clark answered questions from residents in the room with satisfaction. Mr. Clark stated that individuals can join, however they do not tend to. Towns opt in via CCCP, minutes are submitted to PUC, Alstead could be added. Individuals who have contracts with other providers would need to wait until their contract was up before they could opt in. The Board want to fully inform residents and possible put a Warrant Article forward in 2025.

The board thanked Mr. Clark for his time and will leave this for further discussion later in the year.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Minutes from February 13, 21, & 27, 2024 *On a motion made by Mr. Saxton, seconded by Mr. Kemp, the board voted unanimously to approve all sets of minutes as correct. All-in favor.*

NEW BUSINESS: Chris Garland is in attendance this evening to discuss the purchase of the town owned "postage stamp" lot that is land locked in his property located at Map 25 Lot 2. *Mr. Kemp moved to sell the property located at Map 25 Lot 2 to Chris Garland for \$1.00 on condition that he covers the cost of the transaction, Mr. McCarty seconded the motion.* No further discussion, All-in favor. Mr. Garland then excused himself, thanking the board.

OLD BUSINESS: Washed-out glass deposits: Mr. McCarty reported that Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) is making progress. **Bridges and Dams:** Mr. McCarty reported that he has another meeting in Concord on March 27th to discuss the new goal to bid out both bridges together in 2025, construct Bell Hill bridge in 2025 and to construct Comstock bridge in 2025/2026 with staggered closings. The Drewsville Road bridge will be state funded 80/20 in 2025. Mr. Elsesser reiterated making the Select Board agents to expend on Bridge Capital Reserve Fund. **Sale of town properties** –Nothing new to report today. **M11 L2 (Property next to Town Hall) status** –Joe Levesque reported that the Boucher family will only discuss the sale and moving forward with testing via attorneys. Mr. McCarty reported that Mr. Levesque is not protected by the legal representation for the town. Mr. Kemp will negotiate instead. **Model T Memo of Understanding** – Mr. McCarty reported that this is deferred until after March 12th voting. **East Station progress report**– No new updates regarding barrel of chemicals to be removed. **Langdon Transfer Station and Library support** – Mr. McCarty reported that he is waiting for Langdon Town meeting.

DEPARTMENT AND BOARD REPORTS: Emergency Management – Director Reynolds reported that he feels it would be a good idea on installing cones to prevent unsafe backing to dumpsters at the Transfer Station. *On a motion made by Mr. Kemp, seconded by Mr. Saxton motion to have orange poles installed at the Transfer Station. All in favor.* Director Reynolds recommends expanding the travel lanes and that this is a work in progress. Director Reynolds reported that he met with US Representative Annie Kuster's people asking for funding for a list of projects and he heard back with four different opportunities. **Ambulance Department:** Mr. Moore reported that the Ambulance Department has been very busy with several calls lately. **Police Department:** Chief Murrell reported information

to the Board regarding the accident on February 29, 2024 involving a car that went around jersey barriers and crossed over the closed bridge, then crashing into the 2nd set of jersey barriers. Town property was damaged. The town will file insurance claims and necessary people at Primex have been contacted. Chief Murrell reported that an arrest was made for outstanding warrants and stated that the investigation is ongoing. Mr. Nalevanko asked if Alstead can recover any cost associated with the damages. Chief Murrell stated that the town could file charges. Chief Murrell reported that he has fielded several phone calls regarding the 2017 cruiser that is for sale. Bids will be unsealed and reviewed at the March 19th board meeting. **School Board Report/Grant Information:** Mr. Levesque reported that the School Board is very quiet right now; concerns about getting stuck with the default budget. Mr. Levesque believes that sports would be the first thing to go, followed by High School transportation funding. Mr. Levesque reminded Chief Murrell that the BP vest grant window opens in May. Mr. Levesque reported that he has found a USDA grant that could fund expanding East Station at 55 cents on the dollar. The board proposed presenting this information to the Fire Dept. at their next meeting or after the elections. Mr. Levesque reported that a committee has been assembled for the Complete Streets Program. They will be holding a public meeting on March 19th. This committee will be discussing and planning a project to provide a sidewalk from Vilas School to the Library. **Fire Department:** No one present to report. **Transfer Station:** Director Moore reported the cardboard is all gone from the Transfer Station for \$110 a ton of revenue. Everything else will go out this week. Director Moore reported that he is in negotiations with Walpole regarding plastics. Director Moore notified the Board that the scales will be inspected next week. Barb Viegner asked Director Moore if the town gets money for paper. Director Moore stated that Walpole sends their paper to a different vendor who does not buy it, but they take it away for free. He will be looking to find out more. **Admin Office:** Mrs. Gratacos reported that she had some issues with payroll this week as she had to spend a few hours tracking down information for people who had worked hours and were not known to be employed, as she had not received the necessary paperwork. Mr. McCarty suggested that a new policy be discussed. Payables were not ready for Board review; they will be completed for the Board to review and sign tomorrow. The Board will come to the Town Office when notified by the Admin. **Planning Board:** Mr. Kemp reported that the Planning Board has not met in months as they have not had a quorum and they still do not have an Administrative Assistant.

The Board thanked Director Moore for his work at the library and then thanked Mr. Trafton and Mr. Saladyga for their repair of the library railing by welding it back in place.

Mr. McCarty reminded all in attendance that there is no meeting next week and he encouraged everyone to get out and vote on March 12th.

INFORMATIONAL:

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, March 19 th , 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic St.
FM School Board meeting:	Monday, March 11 th , 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2 nd Monday)
2024 Town Meeting Voting Day:	Tuesday, March 12 th , 2024, 8 AM to 7 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main Street
FM Budget Committee meeting:	Wednesday, March 21 st , 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (3 rd Wednesday)
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS: On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, *the Board voted by roll call (Mr. McCarty – y; Mr. Saxton – y; Mr. Kemp – y) to enter non-public session at 6:51pm, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) (reputational).*

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp, seconded by Mr. Saxton, the board chair adjourned the meeting at 7:11pm

Respectfully submitted,

Misty Gratacos
Office Administrator