

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Select Board
Approved Minutes for Meeting of March 7, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 9 Main Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: Joseph Levesque, Joel McCarty, Matthew Saxton

STAFF PRESENT: In person – Jesse Moore, Ambulance Chief; Susan Norlander, Moderator; Steve Murrell, Police Chief; Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator; Prescott Trafton, Road Agent; Bobbie Wilson, Ambulance Lieutenant; **Google Meet** – None.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person - Jordan Cannon, Glenn Elsesser, Gordon Kemp, Rich Nalevanko, Jude Willis. **Google Meet** - None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE and CALL TO ORDER: The pledge was recited and the Board Chair called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS: Signed a letter from Cook Hill Farm requesting permission to sell their wares at the Bragg Lane pavilion beginning April 1st. Signed 1 Vilas Pool expenditure (power). Signed the cover letter for the MOBIL bridge packet submission. Signed the manifests for the 3/10 payroll (\$27,020.15) and payroll tax liability (\$5510.43) and the 3/7 payables (\$26,322.58).

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Minutes of February 28, 2023: No changes requested. On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board voted to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.***

BOARD REPORTS: Bridges - Mr. McCarty reported that the town received notice from the state that another Alstead bridge is one of sixty-five bridges that are eligible for 20% project cost funding (both construction and engineering costs) from ninety (90) million dollars of available funding. The state plan is for these bridges to undergo construction over six years beginning in 2027, with planning and engineering beginning as early as fiscal year 2025 (which begins July 1, 2024). The Alstead bridge on the list is bridge number 058/136, which is the double bridge at the bottom of Bell Hill. There were various additional musings about ways that repairs to this bridge, as well as to the two MOBIL project bridges (Comstock and Hill Roads over Darby Brook), might be managed. **Employee ill** – Mr. McCarty reported that one town employee who is in hospital is now out of ICU at Dartmouth. **Election setup** – Mr. McCarty asked any present who were able to stay after this night's meeting to help set up for Voting Day, next Tuesday, March 14th. **Warrant article mailing** – Mr. Saxton reported that he has completed work on his informational mailing to taxpayers that explains this year's warrant articles; watch for it in your mailboxes. Mr. Elsesser asked whether the tax impact calculations included a revenue offset; Mr. Saxton replied that all the expected revenue is included in the Article 2 tax impact calculation. Mr. Saxton also reported that he had multiple conversations with residents or potential residents in the past week. **Letter from residents about Rights of Way** – Mr. Levesque described the contents of a letter from the owners of 14 Main Street expressing disappointment that the Town doesn't seem to know what the Rights of Way are on its roads. Road Agent Trafton noted that rights of way are not as simple as it sounds and this resident's experience was complicated by a misleading response about their home being on a state road (it is not). The Road Agent plans to reach out to the New Hampshire Municipal Association for help crafting a warrant article that would clarify the rights of way on Alstead roads.

AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT: Chief Moore reported that he and some members of his team visited a dealer in Bangor, Maine to evaluate a second-hand ambulance originally from Virginia; he presented a report to the Board. The Board reviewed and discussed the particulars. The price for the fully-equipped vehicle is \$153,500. For comparison: Brand new, the same vehicle costs \$390,000 to \$418,000; Alstead last paid \$88,900 for a new ambulance in 2000. This vehicle is remountable and the body can be transferred to a new chassis in the future, further lengthening its useful life. The Chief also reported a successful two-and-a-half-hour CPR training course took place Friday morning March 2nd. Mr. McCarty suggested having an AED available on Voting Day since numerous people who will be in attendance that day are now trained to use one. Chief Moore added that the same training course will be offered in both Alstead and Walpole once per month. Ms. Willis suggested that the report be displayed for voters to see during Voting Day. On a motion from Mr. Saxton that was seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board voted unanimously to purchase the proposed ambulance vehicle with a May 2023 delivery target if Warrant Article 05 passes on March 14.*** Finally, the Chief thanked Mr. Elsesser for assisting with clearing a tree obstruction last week, and he noted that the ambulance now has a chain saw on board.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Vehicle update: Chief Murrell reported that outfitting of the new cruiser should be complete by next week. The Chief also reported that call volume was down a bit. There was additional discussion of whether any equipment from the existing cruiser was used to outfit the new cruiser (no – doesn't fit), and about what should happen to the old cruiser (no decisions made).

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: Mr. Trafton reported that the 2015 Dodge stopped running with an apparent timing issue. It is at Shamrock Diesel for diagnosis. Still exploring causes (estimated two to four thousand dollars to diagnose). Possible engine replacement – twelve to fifteen thousand dollars estimated. From a Capital Improvement Plan standpoint, the truck is due for replacement in 2025 and the backhoe in 2024 – maybe swap them and replace the truck first. After inquiring whether this failure is an emergency for the Highway Department (no), the Board agreed by consensus to authorize the exploration. Mr. Trafton then reported that the good news is all the other equipment is performing correctly even though he experienced a minor sliding mishap in another truck that wiped out a side mirror equipped with a temperature sensor, with a repair bill of approximately one thousand dollars. The repair was done; however, he found that it was incorrectly wired and he must return to the provider to have the wiring corrected. Mr. Trafton then noted that FEMA has finally begun paying out on the 2021 flood event reimbursements. Payments will be received in categories; payments for two categories have been noticed and received so far for a total of thirty thousand five hundred eleven dollars and fifty-two cents (\$30,511.52). Mr. McCarty noted that the money should go into unassigned fund balance. Mr. Trafton provided the Board with a copy of the revised Request for Bids for Gilsum Mine Road with the lawyer's advice incorporated. He would like to open the bidding with the Board's approval in about three weeks' time (target is March 28).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Elsesser suggested that the town track revenue over a five-year span; he offered to work with the Office Administrator on such a project. There was some light-hearted discussion about issues that Acworth faces at Town meeting this year. Ms. Willis asked about the status of the agreement between the Transfer Station, Trex, and Hubbard and Mr. McCarty noted that it is still a work in progress. Mr. Elsesser asked about previous questions raised about whether monies in the Fire Department Capital Reserve fund can be used to repair the broken pumper truck, as opposed to purchasing a truck. Mr. McCarty indicated that he had not heard that question previously but will seek an answer. Mr. Nalevanko asked about the answers to questions also asked previously about borrowing from trust funds. Mr. McCarty responded that the answer is no for private trust funds, and for capital reserve funds, the way to remove money is via the Town Meeting process – with a warrant article put to the voters in the usual way. Mr. Nalevanko asked if we know the cost of the Bennett Road legal action. Mr. McCarty responded that we don't know yet. He added that it is also not clear whether an appeal is expected. The decision (that Bennett Rd. is a class VI road) was reviewed for the benefit of those present.

INFORMATIONAL: The **next regular meeting** of the Select Board is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. **Town Meeting Voting Day** is Tuesday, March 14th, 2023 from 8 AM to 7 PM at the Town Hall, 9 Main Street. The **next 5-Town Select Board** meeting is Friday, April 21, 2023 at 4:30 PM in Walpole.

On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:11 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator (incoming)