

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Select Board
Approved Minutes for Meeting of October 4, 2022 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; Stephen Murrell, Police Chief; Prescott Trafton, Road Agent; Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator; Adam Vose, Assistant Ambulance Chief.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person: Gordon Kemp, Marge Noonan, Barb Viegner, Judith Willis. **Google Meet:** None.

GUESTS: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: The Board Chair called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS: Signed the payroll and tax liability manifests for the 10/7 payroll (\$27,840.65/\$5584); Signed the payroll and tax liability manifests for the 9/23 payroll (\$30,275.65/\$6036.45), which was reviewed at the 9/20 meeting but not available for signatures at that time. Approved an Emergency Management town hall reservation request for 10/26 and a Conservation Commission town hall reservation request for 11/17; Signed one Current Use application (M54 L3); Signed the Well Hill foundation plan from a state-licensed engineer, to be used for two mobile homes that will soon be placed at the co-op to provide housing for two families in need.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Minutes of September 27, 2022. On a motion made by Matt and seconded by Joel, *the Board voted to approve the public minutes as written. The motion passed with two in favor; Mr. Levesque abstained because he wrote the minutes.*

SELECT BOARD: Well Hill Co-op: Mr. McCarty provided some background about the foundation plan that the Board signed. **Election sign mischief:** Mr. McCarty inquired of the Secretary of State's office about some apparent mis-handling of some political signs in town and learned that it is in fact illegal for people to remove those signs without the permission of the people who are displaying them. The signs subsequently reappeared as if by magic. **Water supply mapping:** The Board continues to explore the water rights issues associated with the sale of the 9 Mechanic Street property next to the town offices. The same water supply also serves multiple other downtown properties. The Board confirmed that there are water meters installed in some of the locations currently and historically served. A contractor has been engaged to map the extent of the existing supply and explore the implications of recognizing it as a public water system. **Voting PTO:** Upon learning that the province of Quebec offers all employed citizens PTO in order to vote, Mr. McCarty was inspired to propose that the town consider offering a similar benefit. The Board explored the topic with those in attendance. The consensus was that those present did not think that it is very difficult for people to find time to vote, so it does not seem necessary for the Town to offer a solution for a non-existent problem. **Bridge engineering:** Mr. McCarty reported that after reviewing the public feedback about the four firms who presented their credentials at the 9/20 and 9/27 meetings, there is unanimous agreement about which two firms particularly impressed those in attendance. Mr. McCarty suggested that the Board instruct the project liaison to contact the references for those two firms. **Elections:** Mr. McCarty reported that Mark Mastrocinque has accepted the role of Republican Inspector of Elections. **Solar AEDs:** The Police Chief confirmed the number of solar AEDs that we want to install for the solar cabinet vendor. The Ambulance Chief noted that the power requirements are not as acute as previously thought. **Fuel Assistance:** Mr. Saxton reported on the expected rate of fuel assistance inquiries this year. He read aloud the text he proposes to include on a mass-mailed postcard to town residents about fuel assistance. There was further discussion about mass mailing details and production logistics. **Charging station:** Mr. Levesque asked Mr. McCarty for an update. Mr. McCarty reported that he is waiting for more information from the school district about a school bus feature that allows the town to operate the Town Office infrastructure under emergency conditions. **Bennett Hill Rd. legal matter:** Mr. McCarty reported that all interrogatories for this matter have been completed and provided to the town attorney. **Zoning Officer needed:** Mr. Saxton reminded the group that the town needs a new Zoning Officer. He noted that while no zoning officer is in place, all permit requests go to the Select Board. Anyone interested in serving can contact the Select Board.

TRANSFER STATION: Mr. Hoy reported that our contract with Northeast Resource Recovery Services has expired and it is time to consider our options for solid waste trucking and disposal. Ruggiero offers a lower per-ton price for the transport component and a competitive price for the disposal component. There was considerable discussion among those in attendance and

clarifications from Mr. Hoy. **On a motion from Mr. Levesque that was seconded by Mr. McCarty, the Board voted with all in favor to sign a contract with Ruggiero for its solid waste trucking and disposal.** Mr. Hoy further reported that after researching the issue of using a scale to determine how much to charge for construction and demolition debris and that use of a portable scale is illegal. He therefore researched a more reasonably-priced permanent scale and proposed that the town spend \$2500 to obtain and install the device. There is a fairly rapid return on investment for the purchase. There was additional Q&A on the subject. **On a motion from Mr. Levesque that was seconded by Mr. McCarty, the Board voted to approve purchase and installation of the proposed scale.**

HIGHWAY: Mr. Trafton indicated that he projects the Highway Department to expend about \$14,776 to complete the last quarter of 2022. For perspective, there is \$6300 left in the Fuel Station budget. He is planning to budget for a permanent roof on the salt shed next year and the department has done well getting culverts installed and completing smaller projects. They are doing no roadside mowing for the rest of this year to reduce fuel and repair costs. Mr. McCarty asked about staffing changes for next year; Mr. Trafton responded that one employee expects to retire by the end of 2023, which was received with some skeptical humor because that employee has considered retiring for the last 15 years. Mr. Trafton added that he has demanded that a FEMA rep visit us so that he can work one-on-one with them on completing work on the two flood projects that have been so frustrating and time consuming. There are still culverts they would like to install before the snow flies, but there are still culvert supply challenges also.

AMBULANCE: Chief Moore reported that the Ambulance is at \$38,000 in billable income with 87% of its budget consumed. With one quarter left in the year he warned that the Ambulance budget has \$5400 remaining and they are likely to go over. This year's calls have been trauma-, equipment-, and supply-heavy with a high number of unbillable cardiac arrest calls. He projects between 40-70 more calls this year. In response to a query from Mr. Saxton, Chief Moore explained that the billing service now bills twice for their ambulance usage and any that remain unpaid at the end of the year get written off. Chief Moore finally indicated that they are out of teddy bears, and if anyone could donate two teddy bears, they would be much appreciated. Mr. Saxton pointed out that places like Walmart or Target often have a budget for contributions to non-profit organizations and could be considered as a potential source for such needs. Chief Moore completed his report by commending his dedicated team.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Chief Murrell reported that the times for this year's Halloween Trunk or Treat program are posted on the PD website and it is enthusiastically received. The department has been very busy assisting with Officer Underwood assisting with cases at the child advocacy center and with a couple of property disputes to follow up on. Between the meeting with residents about Shadowland fireworks and seasonal conditions there is nothing more to report on that situation. The new cruiser is being built.

BROADBAND: Gordon Kemp reported that there is an interesting building permit application for T-Mobile to install equipment on a tower in town. T-Mobile has a good fixed wireless network offering. He plans to stop by the office to have a look at that application.

INFORMATIONAL: The next regular meeting of the Select Board is scheduled for Tuesday, October 11th, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.; Mr. Levesque expects to be absent because there is a Southwest Regional Planning Commission meeting that night. Alstead will host the next Five-Town Select Board meeting on Friday October 28th, 2022 at 4:30 PM at the Walpole Town Hall, 34 Elm Street, Walpole.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Barbara Viegner asked about the amount in the cardboard disposal budget; Mr. Hoy indicated that that amount is a credit - that is, a payment from a vendor for recyclable cardboard received. There was additional discussion about using the new sign trailers to advertise elections, the time frame within which ARPA money must be expended, the state of the local job market, and a bit of Red Sox humor.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS: There were no executive sessions.

On a motion made by Mr. Levesque and seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:30 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator