

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Approved Minutes for Regular Select Board Meeting
August 29, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Town Hall, 9 Main Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: In person: Chair Joel McCarty, Matthew Saxton, Gordon Kemp.

GUESTS: Jason Cooper, South West Region Planning Commission (SWRPC); and Nora Hanke, Monadnock Sustainability Hub presenting re: Community Power

STAFF: Kim Kercewich, Fire Chief; Jesse Moore, Ambulance Chief; Steve Murrell, Police Chief; Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator; Bobbie Wilson, Ambulance Lieutenant.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Jeanne Brooks, Ken Bergeron, Rosemarie Dowling, Jim Gordon, Rich Nalevanko, Marge Noonan, Barbara Viegner, Judith Willis.

CALL TO ORDER: After the group recited the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. McCarty called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:00 PM, and introduced the guest presenters.

PRESENTATION: Mr. Cooper started the presentation with statistics about New Hampshire's residential power usage and cost and explained that the Community Power approach allows municipalities to buy in bulk and adjust the supply and source mix, while billing and delivery stay the same. The model also allows municipalities to include value-added services in their offering, depending on the contract. Ms. Hanke provided more detail about the portfolio of Community Power options in the Monadnock Region, the process used to arrive at a decision, and provided contact information for other towns that have followed this path as well as for brokers and service providers that can assist with the process. The presentation was followed by a lively question and answer session that touched on pricing, economic factors, net metering, pros and cons, process and contract detail, and speculation about longevity. The Board thanked the presenters for their very clear and thorough presentation and thoughtful responses to the many questions. The presenters offered to provide the slides, which will be posted on the Alstead web site. The group took a five-minute break to allow the presenters to pack up and depart; then the meeting resumed.

ACTION ITEMS: Considered Mr. Levesque's volunteer grant writer application; tabled for next meeting - no duration provided. Considered a proposal for knotweed mitigation on Pratt Road. Considered whether to post a link to information about overdose awareness and naloxone on the town web site. Accepted the annual donation from Anne Delancey to the Cemetery fund. Considered a report showing 2022 Library Payroll and Benefits expenses. Signed one Vilas Pool expenditure (credit card bill).

MINUTES: Minutes of August 22, 2023 regular meeting. No changes were requested. On a motion from Mr. Saxton that was seconded by Mr. Kemp, ***the Board voted to accept the minutes as submitted.***

OLD BUSINESS: **Library expenses** – Having signed the agreement with Library Trustees on 8/22, the Board considered 2022 expenses and whether to bill the library for them. It was decided to present the report to the Trustees for discussion at their next meeting. **Washout Glass deposits** – Mr. Saxton reported that a meeting at Mr. Landry's property is planned with a rep from a company that provides vacuum truck services. At that time the key players will explore the clean-up options for the glass deposited there during the July flood. **Flood repair update** – Mr. Kemp reported that the Thayer Brook repair looks like a long-term overwinter repair and wondered if there are plans to pave it. Since the Road agent was not available for comment, Mr. Kemp will follow up. Fall Mountain Transportation judges that section passable for school bus traffic. Mr. Kemp noted that the Road Agent is still looking for a contractor to complete shoulder work on Gilsum Mine Road. **Broadband** – Nothing to report. **Bridges** – nothing to report. **Dams** – Mr. McCarty reported on the Lake Warren Association meeting that he attended over the weekend and lauded Mrs. Dowling's advocacy for working to improve the lake's water quality during that meeting. There remain passionate feelings about Pine Cliff Road and paving. Mr. McCarty reminded those present that there is a plan on file at the Planning Commission for moving that road away from the water that should be located and shared, and encouraged the association and all interested parties to work together with the Select Board to secure funding to realize the desired improvements. Mr. Levesque, Alstead's representative to the Planning Commission, offered to locate the plan. **Real Estate** – Nothing to report. **Village Station lighting** – Chief Moore reported that an experiment with twenty dollars' worth of LED bulbs appears to resolve lighting issues the station has been experiencing; he requested permission to spend \$178.50 on more bulbs to complete the changeout. Mr. Kemp will visit and view. **Plastic recycling** – Mr. Kemp

suggested that there is enough information about what plastics get recycled to make some changes to sorting requirements at the Transfer Station, and will work with station staff to implement some signage.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: **Fire department** – Chief Kercewich reported 73 calls to date and that work on the punch list for East Station continues. Mr. Kemp reported that he has scheduled a meeting with FD officers and interested parties on Wednesday 8/30 at 6 PM at the Town Offices to discuss policies and procedures changes. **Police department** – Chief Murrell reported 703 calls to date. He noted that the Alstead Emergency Preparedness event was cancelled due to budgetary concerns, but that the Fall Mountain event on September 14 is a go. The sign trailers have been programmed for the resumption of school and Chief urges everyone to drive especially carefully. Mr. McCarty reminded the group that Chief Murrell and Susan Norlander have been asked to repeat their Guns on the Bus presentation from last year. **Vilas Pool** – Ms. Wilson reported that the last scheduled event at the park (a two-day wedding) took place this past weekend, and that Sunday September 3rd is the last day of the 2023 season. She reiterated her belief that more fill is needed on the left side of the parking area and asked Mr. Kemp to have a word with the Road Agent about it. **Ambulance** – Chief Moore reported 105 calls to date and provided the board with a list of equipment needed to re-supply Ambulance 1 and to complete the outfitting of Ambulance 2. The squad plans to once again reimburse the town for the Ambulance 2 items from their donations fund since the plan for a revolving fund that would make ambulance income available to the squad cannot be set up until next year. **By consensus, the Board approved the purchase of supplies to restock the current ambulance and outfit the new ambulance.** Chief also noted that the ambulance payroll is over budget. He noted that he has no concerns about staffing the second ambulance; the members' call response is exceptional. The Board commended the squad for their achievements and their service. Mr. Kemp mentioned that the Board should consider hiring emergency workers into open town positions. **School board** – Mr. Levesque reported that the school district will return 1.5 to 1.7 million dollars to tax payers for 2024, due to the inability to fill positions. The money goes to all five towns; Alstead will get approximately 12-13%. Mr. Saxton asked if they doubled up on class sizes to accommodate the positions they could not fill. Mr. Levesque indicated that they did extra classes instead to keep class sizes optimal.

BOARD REPORTS: Absence – Mr. Kemp reported that he would be out of town for the 9/5 Comstock Road bridge width discussion meeting and asked for permission to attend remotely. On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Saxton, **the Board voted unanimously to allow Mr. Kemp to attend fully by remote connection.** Mr. McCarty reminded those assembled that there would be no regular Select Board meeting that night; only the bridge meeting. **Metal removal** – Mr. Kemp reported that he has scheduled the removal of metal farm equipment from the Cold River trail rehabilitation area for Wednesday morning, with the help of volunteers Dave Smith and Bill Blaiklok. **Memorial service** – Mr. McCarty reported that he represented the Board at the memorial service for Judy Thayer.

NEW BUSINESS: Tree removal letter – The Board tasked Mr. Saxton with crafting a letter to the Spauldings explaining why the town would like to cut down two to three trees on their property. **Dam engineering** – The Board tasked Mr. McCarty with beginning the process for securing engineering work to address dam deficiencies. **Meeting change** – Mr. McCarty reiterated that the meeting on Tuesday September 5th will be limited to the bridge width discussion and there will be no regular Select Board meeting that night because it follows a Monday holiday. **Clean Fleets** – Mr. Levesque reported work in progress on this effort; the Road Agent is pondering the options. **Web site link** – the Life Safety Institute would like us to post a link to overdose information and naloxone on the town web site. Ms. Schoppmeyer suggested the resources page. **The Board agreed by consensus.** **Knotweed mitigation** – Ms. Norlander requested permission to work with a group of volunteers to eradicate a patch of knotweed growing at the entrance to the fire pond on Pratt Road. **The Board agreed by consensus.**

There being no further public business, the Board took a two-minute break at 8:20 PM to allow the room to clear for an executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. Kemp, **the Board voted unanimously by roll call (McCarty – Y; Saxton – Y; Kemp – Y) to enter non-public session at 8:22 PM, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(b) – the hiring of any person as a public employee.** At the end of the session, the Board approved and signed the minutes from the session.

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, **the Board resumed public session at 8:28 PM.**

On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. Kemp, **the public meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.**

INFORMATIONAL:

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, September 12 th , 2023 @ 6:00 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main St.
FM School Board meeting:	Monday, September 11 th , 2023 @ 6:00 PM, High School.
FM Budget Committee meeting:	Wednesday, August 30 th , 2023 @ 6:00 PM, High School.
Fall Mountain Emergency Services event	Thursday, September 14 th , 2023
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	Wednesday, October 25 th , 2023 @ 4 PM, Acworth.
Comstock Road bridge width public meeting:	Tuesday, September 5 th , 2023 @ 6 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main St. (NO regular Select Board meeting.)
FMRSD Superintendent Meet & Greet	Wednesday, September 13, 5-6:30 PM, Vilas Middle School Gym

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator