

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Unapproved Minutes for Meeting of August 27, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Name	Position	In Person	Google Meet
Shelley Steuwe	Recording Secretary	•	
Stephen Murrell	Police Chief	•	
Jesse Moore	Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds	•	
Penny Gendron	Police Department	•	
Prescott Trafton	Road Agent	•	

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person: Barbara Viegener, Marge Noonan, Judith Willis; **Google Meets:**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. McCarty called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 PM and then proceeded with leading the agenda-based discussion.

GUESTS: Penny Gendron

The Police Department was invited to apply for safety grants via the state of New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety. These include speed enforcement, seat belt mobilization, impaired driving mobilization, and distracted driving mobilization. The Board needs to sign off on the grant as oversight and it becomes overtime for officers who do the work. It is reimbursed by the state, and shows up on payroll as overtime. Work begins 10/1 for the state's fiscal year '25. The Board verbally agreed to accept the grant and signed all paperwork.

ACTION ITEMS:

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 8/20 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Washed-out glass** – Mr. McCarty reports there will be a meeting on 8/28 at 10:00 am for a walkthrough with the vendor. Mr. Kemp will notify Mr. Landry of this meeting, and Mr. Saxton will attend as a Board representative.
- B. **Thayer Brook bypass** – Mr. Trafton reports that he has provided paperwork to several contractors to get prices for different plans/options. He hopes to have an update in the next two weeks. FEMA is looking for a plan so they can move forward with reimbursement.
- C. **Bridge projects** – Mr. McCarty reports he is engaged in conversation with NHDOT Bridge Design and Hoyle, Tanner & Associates about the Drewsville Rd bridge. He's hoping to get these two entities to agree on how best to move forward. Financing is complicated, as we did not raise and appropriate money for the preliminary design scope and permit application. We raised and appropriated money for bridge design that we haven't spent, but he is not in favor of using that money for the design scope and permit application. The other two bridges are on schedule and budget.
- D. **Dams** – Mr. McCarty reports that he showed up for the appointment last week with Dubois and King to check in, but either they missed the meeting or he got the date/time wrong.
- E. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – Mr. Kemp reports there have been a couple of text messages back and forth between Mr. Bouchard and lawyer/s, but no other update available at this time.
- F. **Model T MOU** – No updates.
- G. **Langdon Library Fees** – No updates.
- H. **Employee Health Insurance** – No updates.
- I. **Fire Dept Policies** – No updates.
- J. **Pine Cliff Road information/updates** – Mr. McCarty reports he spent another day surveying Pine Cliff Road and proposes to the Board that the Town apply for the NHDES 319 grant for stormwater management at the bottom of Arbor Way and the boat landing, and recommends implementing the recommendations embedded in the 2012 Watershed Management Plan to narrow a section of Pine Cliff Road. Beth Kurz and Karen Keim have agreed to take on the grant writing process. He clarifies that he is not asking the Highway Department to do this work, but wants to get an idea of how, how much, etc., and then offer for the Highway Department to help. He notes that permitting and design criteria have probably changed since 2012, and there is a dated, informal plan for the bottom of Arbor Way. Mr. Kemp asks Mr. McCarty to clarify what he means by "narrowing the road" – is that the objective, or is it to move the road away from the lake? Mr. McCarty confirms it is to narrow the road away from the lake (as described in the Watershed Management Plan). Mr. Trafton notes that this section of Pine Cliff Road is wider than it needs to be. The Board agrees unanimously to move forward with the grant application process.
- K. **210 Gilsum Mine Road land merger talks** – No updates.
- L. **Lighting upgrade for Village Station** – Mr. Kemp asked Ms. Iozzo last week if the check was received yet, and she said no. He has not heard any updates to the contrary since.
- M. **Department & Board**

NEW BUSINESS: Update on wage study - full informational presentation has been moved to mid-September by Mary Ann Wolf.

OTHER ITEMS: The Select Board Administrative office will be closed the week of 8/26-8/29.

REMINDER to Dept Heads: Payroll will be due on August 30th by 9am due to the Labor Day holiday.; reminder that selectboard meeting will be 9/4 due to Labor Day holiday.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Highway – Mr. Trafton reports that he has supplied the Board with a Purchase Order from the NH State Prison that needs to be signed (just over \$5,000) for road signs. This doesn't include delineators or sign posts. \$1,400 of this is for town line markers signs. Mr. Saxton asks if there are poles already present where signs need to be put in, and Mr. Trafton replies that there are none currently. Mr. Saxton goes on to ask who will tell them where the town lines are, and Mr. Trafton replies that they know where most of the lines are, and can use technology to determine the others. Mr. McCarty recommends approval pending budget confirmation next week. Mr. Trafton reports he knows there's money in the budget for it. Mr. Kemp asks if there is any chance this price will increase in the next week? He confirms via the Purchase Order that the estimate is valid for 30 days, so they will put off signing until the budget is confirmed next week.

Mr. Trafton goes on to report his team has continued their work putting culverts in, and that they're working on Griffin Hill now. They just replaced the culvert by Porter's. They're hoping to get another catch basin placed at the base of Hill Road next week. Members of his team will be taking a culvert maintenance class on 8/28 online (3 taking to renew certifications), and he started his OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 classes, which he hopes to have completed by 8/28.

Finally, they just got the roadside mower back together and are waiting for culverts to be done before using it.

Police Department – Chief Murrell reports they have received 758 calls to date, including 12 Langdon calls (this has dropped off a bit). Neighbor disputes are down, mainly due to two common complainants taking their issues to court. Mental health calls are also down. The panic alarm system they were testing has been removed and sent back. He is not in favor of moving forward with that company and is looking at a proposal from One Source (the Town's current security company). It would cost \$1,756.66 to install panic buttons and hook them up to the alarm system. He recommends doing this sooner than the big project they're working on. Mr. McCarty agrees but feels they need to address the budget next week. He also wants to hear from the three staff members who it will affect. Chief Murrell reports they just tested the school system and there was an issue with the keypad, which has since been swapped out. There is unanimous approval from the Board to move forward with this expense if it is within the budget.

Chief Murrell and Ms. Gendron are attending Right to Know training on 10/9. They try to attend one every couple years, and they are receiving a lot of requests currently.

Chief Murrell asks if the credit card policy has been finalized. The Board would like to add this to the agenda for next week.

Finally, he reports that the generator runs a test every Tuesday for self-check. The last 3 times we've had power outages it's failed during tests. He has asked Jack to come out on Friday to do a load test to see why it fails, and will update the Board with his findings. Mr. Saxton asks if we should be thinking about replacing the generators, and Chief Murrell reports that he asked Jack this and he said no. He points out that two of the generators are of lower quality and were purchased somewhere else. Mr. Saxton asks what the cost is for a commercial generator, and Mr. Trafton believes it's around \$35,000-\$50,000.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

Director Moore reports that:

- Ambulance – 121 calls to date. He received a request from CMS for information, as they are auditing every service in the US for a pilot program. He also received an email that the state wants a similar study done, and he can use some of what they put together for CMS for this (this request affects HB 407, governing ambulance billing).
- Parks – Mowing is up to date.
- Transfer Station – He provided the new permit policy to the individual bringing hundreds of bags of trash each week. He claims he will not be doing this and will take trash elsewhere. Director Moore's next step is to write a waste disposal enforcement policy (can set any parameters and fines up to \$2,333). He plans to give it a week to see if the problem disappears before doing this. He and Mr. Lund, the welder, have a final up to date/code drawing for safety upgrades around the dumpsters to prevent falls, which he will present to the Board next week. Of note, money has been raised and appropriated for this work. He asks the Board to compel the Fire Department to attend, with a pumper, the burning of brush at the Transfer Station once a month. He has been getting complaints from residents about the brush burning being shut down. Mr. Saxton suggests charging residents a fee for bringing a truckload of brush, which the Board unanimously agrees upon. The Board also unanimously agrees to direct the Fire Warden to oversee this with Director Moore.
- Jack has been working on the outlets at the Village Fire Station and will also check on replacing the light switches with motion sensor lights.
- Mr. McCarty asks if there have been any more reports of snakes at the Village Fire Station, and Director Moore reports that it was reported to pest control, and there have been no further sightings reported since.
- Finally, Director Moore reports he received an email from a 10-year-old resident requesting to build an ice rink at the Millot Green. The Board unanimously supports this initiative, but Mr. Kemp asks that he review it with Primex first.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Kemp – Has been fielding questions about the fiber internet. Consolidated has been in "Lost Alstead" hanging fiber. They did Barnett Hill and Proctor Road today, and hope to do Maclean Road tomorrow. Mr. Kemp will be there to check in. He also reports that all approved minutes have been uploaded to the internet.

Mr. McCarty – Regarding boat launch ownership – they discovered that the Select Board sold the launch to the state in 1966 for \$1. He has asked for the documents to be scanned and will send them to New Hampshire Fish & Game and the town attorney.

Mr. Saxton – He received the estimate for the Historical Society roof. He talked to Mr. Bellows today (sent the estimate to him) and he’s agitated. When he started this and asked Mr. Saxton to get the estimate, he was unhappy that slates have fallen off when they had just been up there and thinks they should fix it for free, so he’s going to talk to Keith Hanatow about this. Half of the quote is for a lift rental.

There was another leak in the roof of the library, fixed by Melanson, but he has not received the bill yet. They will be back after the leaves are down to clean gutters and perform a complete exam of the roof for cracks in the geocell.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS: Ms. Willis comments that most of the residents have no idea what the Town finances/budget are, and asks if Mrs. Gratacos can post it to the website for public access. Mr. Kemp states that “as soon as it’s a complete and accurate budget, they can put it on the website.”

INFORMATIONAL:

EXECUTIVE SESSION/S:

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Wednesday, Sept 4th, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street.
Next FM School Board meeting:	Monday, September 9, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2nd Monday)
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:33 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary