**December 27, 2023TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Select Board**

**approved Minutes for Meeting of December 27, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.**

**Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602**

**SELECT BOARD PRESENT:** Joel McCarty, Gordon Kemp, (Matthew Saxton, late arrival)

**STAFF PRESENT: In person –**Misty Gratacos, Office Admin (incoming); Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator (outgoing); Prescott Trafton, Road Agent; Steve Murrell, Police Chief; Bobbie Wilson, Supervisor of Checklist, Ambulance Lieutenant, Chair of Vilas Pool Committee; Bruce Bellows, Trustee of the Trust Fund, Head of Historical Society. **Google Meet –**

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** **In person –**Joe Levesque, Judith Willis. **Google Meet –** None.

**GUESTS:**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the Board Chair called the Select Board meeting to order at 10:00AM.

**ACTION ITEMS**: Reviewed & signed payroll manifest ($27,600.79) and tax liability manifest ($5,464.02) for 12/29 payroll. Reviewed and signed bills manifest ($353,870.71)

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** Minutes of December 19, 2023; Non-Public Session minutes of December 19, 2023. On a motion from Mr. Kemp that Mr. McCarty seconded, ***the Board voted unanimously to accept both sets of minutes as submitted, with the non-public minutes unsealed.***

**OLD BUSINESS: Washed-out glass –** Nothing to report. **Thayer Brook bypass –** The Road Agent reported that he would be meeting with FEMA Hazard Mitigation rep today at 11am at the Highway garage; the Board suggested meeting at the Town Offices. **Broadband –** Mr. Kemp reported that the community question and answer meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30th, 2024. **Bridges –** Mr. McCarty reported that a meeting including himself, NH DOT and Hoyle Tanner is planned for 12/29 to discuss options for the dual bridge project now that one of the bridges has been closed. Mr. McCarty reminded himself and the rest of the board that the 2022 one-time bridge payment money was placed in the bridge capital reserve fund misguidedly, and it needs to be withdrawn and returned to the general fund. **Dams** – The Admin reported that the 2 firms who submitted RFQ’s will be present at the Board meeting on January 9, 2024 with a presentation for the board and public. **Town** **Real Estate –** Mr. Kemp reported information regarding the town owned plot within Garland’s gravel pit will be added to the realtor list. **M11 L2 adjacent to Town Hall –** Nothing new to report. **Fire Dept Bylaws, policies, & procedures –** Mr. Kemp reported that several of the policies were ready for review and we will add them to the agenda on January 3rd for full review and approval. **Village Station Lighting & overhead door update –** Next lighting update will be in January. **Sign trailer agreement –** Deferred to 2024. **Model T insurance status –** The Admins were tasked with asking Primex for a sample of a Memo of Understanding. **Repurpose Highway 2012 Dodge –** Mr. Kemp thinks that the 2012 Dodge would be better suited as a town vehicle for the Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds. Mr. McCarty suggested this be a conversation with a larger group as neither the Fire Chief nor Ambulance Chief was present. Questions were raised about what to do with the old brush truck and Police cruiser, which needs some additional repairs. Discussion on that was deferred to a later meeting. On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. McCarty***, the board voted (two in favor, one absent) to repurpose the 2012 Dodge for use by the Director of Sanitation, EMS and Grounds*** ***and sell the old Police cruiser on Municibid***. **East Station progress report –** Nothing new to report;a date will be set in January 2024 to have the barrel of chemicals removed and it will cost roughly $800. **Langdon Transfer Station fee --** Nothing new to report. **Beaver Dam mitigation –** Mr. Kemp has been in contact via email with Skip Lisle. Nothing further to report at this time.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Admin Department –** The departing Admin was given the opportunity to give some final words, she had none. **Supervisor of the Checklist** – Ms. Wilson reported that the Supervisors of the Checklist will have a session on January 13th, details to be posted. Vilas Pool -- Ms. Wilson submitted her request to the Board for warrant article to raise and appropriate $2500 for the Vilas Pool Capital Reserve Fund. **Police Department –** Chief Murrell reported 968 calls for service, up from last year; Chief Murrell also reported that he is following up on a call from last evening regarding someone shining a green laser in car windows, and following a car through town. The Chief reported that he will be meeting a tech from Powers Generator on January 2nd at 8am to make repairs to the tower generator. Chief Murrell requested that any contacts that the board receives about Police matters be forwarded directly to the Police Department with contact information to prevent delays. **Highway Department** – Mr. Trafton reported that was able to purchase replacement parts for Town Offices generator at a lower price than quoted previously. It now starts and runs. Mr. Trafton reported that he has sent the international truck to Reeds Trucking for repairs. If they are unable to repair it, it may need to go to Manchester to the dealer. Mr. Trafton stated that he is meeting with a rep from FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Team, Tony Messhini today to further discuss our issues with the Thayer Brook bypass. The Board asked Mr. Trafton to invite Mr. Messhini to the Town Offices so that they could sit in on the conversation after other business was handled today. Mr. Trafton also reported that Keith Short will be starting back on January 1st as a seasonal employee. Police Department and Road Agent both requested a key to the new lock that was placed on the door at Bragg Lane. Mr. Trafton is exploring the cost of outfitting our tractor with implements that support roadside mowing compared to renting equipment to do the same, to be funded by the one-time highway block grant. Mr. McCarty will confirm with C.R. Willeke (NH DOT) that one-time Block Grant money can be used in that manner. **Trustee of the Trust Funds:** Mr. Bellows reminded the board that he needs a written request from the Select Board to withdraw the money for the 2022 one-time bridge payment from the bridge capital reserve fund. **Historical Society:**  Mr. Bellows reported that some roof slates from the Historical Society roof broke; that the gable end of the building needs some clapboards; and that a shutter needs repair. In addition, when the clock repair tech visited, he snapped some photos of rot that needs attention and gave a referral. Mr. Bellows will provide a written list. Mr. Kemp suggested contacting the roofing vendor to see if they will guarantee their work.

**BOARD REPORTS: Emergency Management Stipend –** Mr. Kemp reported Emergency Management Director, Steve Reynolds offered to reduce his requested 2024 stipend by $1000 in exchange for the town issuing the Emergency Management Department a FirstNet cell phone. The Board approved the idea by consensus; the new requested stipend is $4200. **Fire Department Capital Reserve** -- The board acknowledged that the money raised and appropriated by 2023 warrant article #18 ($30,000) was never withdrawn from capital reserve because we learned that the Fire Department capital reserve fund was created for purchasing new equipment and not for repairing existing equipment. The board decided to take no action despite the fact that the money was voted to be removed from the fund at the last town meeting; it does not make sense to remove the money simply to put it back in**. Ambulance Billing Rates** – At the December 19th meeting, the board voted to approve the new ambulance billing rates. On a motion from Mr. Kemp that Mr. McCarty seconded, ***the boarded voted (two in favor, one absent) to approve the ambulance billing rates as submitted on December 19th.* Volunteer Forms *–*** Mr. Kemp reminded the board that the volunteer forms for Mr. Blaiklok need to be updated to include additional trail work at another location. The Police Department and the Road Agent would like to review any volunteer forms so they are aware where work is being done and who is authorized to do it. **Grants & School Board** – Mr. McCarty noted that Mr. Levesque submitted a detailed status report with his activities through 12/22/23. He suggested reviewing that report at the 1/3 Select Board meeting. **Mental Health Training** – A discussion took place regarding the mandatory mental health training for first responders. Mr. McCarty stated that the board will enforce the mandate; employees will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete the training; and the department heads are tasked with tracking compliance.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

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| **Next regular Select Board meeting:** | Wednesday, January 3rd, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main St. |
| **2024 Budget Hearing:** | January 16th, 2024 @ 5 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main Street |
| **2024 Town Meeting Deliberative Session:** | February 3rd, 2024 @ 10 AM, Town Hall, 9 Main Street |
| **2024 Town Meeting Voting Day:** | Tuesday, March 12th, 2024, 8 AM to 7 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main Street |
| **FM School Board meeting:** | Monday, January 8th, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School Library (2nd Monday) |
| **FM Budget Committee meeting:** | Wednesday, December 27th, 2023 @ 6:00 PM, High School (3rd Wednesday) |
| **Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:** | TBD – Reschedule in progress |
| **FM Budget Hearing:** | Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 @ 5:30pm, High School Library |
| **FM Deliberative Session:** | Wednesday February 7th, 2024, time TBD. |

Mr. Saxton arrived at the meeting.

There being no further public business, the Board Chair recessed the meeting to allow the public to depart in preparation for a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a)regarding employee compensation.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS:** On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Kemp, ***the Board voted by roll call (Mr. McCarty – y; Mr. Saxton – y; Mr. Kemp – y) to enter non-public session at 11:00am pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a) (compensation).***

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted unanimously to leave non-public session and return to public session at 11:05am.***

The board briefly discussed the balance of remaining ARPA money to use for offsetting 2023 budget overages.

Selectboard excused staff but remained in session at 11:05am. These remaining minutes taken by Mr. McCarty.

The board met with FEMA Hazard Mitigation representatives one in person (Tony Messhini) and one via conference call (Brenda Beisler), to discuss the ins and outs of the Hazard Mitigation Program, particularly in regard to the Thayer Brook Road culvert damage in July of this year.  Prescott Trafton was also in attendance.

The Selectboard now has a better understanding of the funding stream, our next steps, and the overall timeline.

On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty, ***the Board chair adjourned the public meeting at 11:39am.***

Respectfully submitted,



 

Misty Gratacos & Mary Schoppmeyer

Office Administrators