**January 3, 2024TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Select Board**

**Unapproved Minutes for Meeting of January 3rdth, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Town Hall, 9 Main Street, Alstead, NH 03602**

**SELECT BOARD PRESENT:** Joel McCarty, Gordon Kemp, Matthew Saxton

**STAFF PRESENT: In person –**Misty Gratacos, Office Administrator, Mary Schoppmeyer, Office Administrator (outgoing); Prescott Trafton, Road Agent; Steve Reynolds, Emergency Management Director; Wendy Underwood, Police Lieutenant; Kim Kercewich, Fire Chief; Mike Kercewich, Fire Dept.; Jesse Moore, Director of Transfer Station, EMS & Grounds; Robert Esslinger, Transfer Station; Rick Beringer, Fire Dept.; Bruce Bellows, Trustee of the Trust Fund, Head of Historical Society. **Google Meet –**

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** **In person –**Judith Willis, Barbara Viegener, Marge Noonan, Glenn Elsesser. **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 6:04 p.m.

**ACTION ITEMS**: Reviewed & signed 2024 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant paperwork; reviewed and approved email request from Park Ranger, Mike Servant.

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** Minutes of December 27, 2023; Non-Public Session minutes of December 27, 2023. On a motion from Mr. Saxton that Mr. Kemp seconded, ***the Board voted unanimously to accept both sets of minutes as submitted, non-public minutes unsealed.***

**OLD BUSINESS: Washed-out glass –** Mr. McCarty reported that he has a meeting on 1/4/24 with Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) to discuss the mapping phase. **Thayer Brook bypass –**The Select Board and Road Agent met with FEMA to discuss needs; willing to reimburse a percentage for Hydrologic & Hydraulic (H&H) testing in that area. **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 was held on 12/29 which provided a revised timeline and will accelerate the permitting phase. **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. Saxton reported that he would review the paperwork sent in by realtor, Mary Johnson. **M11 L2 adjacent to Town Hall –**Mr. McCarty reported that there will need to be soil & water analysis done. **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 9th 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 & Memo of Understanding–** The Admins were tasked with asking Primex for a sample of a Memo of Understanding, which was presented. Director Reynolds stated that we have enough of an outline from Primex to draft our own Memo of Understanding. **East Station progress report –** No date set yet to have the barrel of chemicals removed from East Station. The Board urged Chief Kercewich to acquire a date and to make it happen. Chief Kercewich reported that most of the punch list items that were in the JLMC Audit report are completed. The board requested in writing, a progress report on what is left to do. **Langdon Transfer Station fee –** Mr. McCarty reported he has a meeting with Langdon on 1/8 to discuss Transfer Station fees for the upcoming year. Mr. McCarty stated that the Library Treasurer had said that they received money from Langdon for their use of the library back in January 2023, however after speaking with Langdon, Mr. McCarty says they have no record of that. **Beaver Dam mitigation –** Mr. Kemp has been in contact via email with Skip Lisle. There was discussion of the amount of loss by the landowner, and that the town has interest in preventing the washout of the roadways.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Admin Department –** Outgoing Office Administrator, Mary Schoppmeyer, presented the proposed department budget (1st read). **Highway Department** – Mr. Trafton reported that we are anticipating back-to-back storms in the coming weeks, according to the forecast. He has submitted a purchase order for 9 loads of salt for approximately $20,000. The Board approved & signed. Mr. Trafton also made mention of roads are being graded and filled to prepare for the upcoming storms. He also stated that there are issues with the new International that the town purchased last year. It will have to go to the dealership for repairs, however, he is waiting until after the storms to be sure we have proper equipment to manage. The International is still under warranty. Mr. Trafton also made the board aware that he had signed off on the CAT A (debris clean-up) for FEMA. The reimbursement should come within the next 3 weeks and should be approximately 75% of the total cost ($18,371). He is expecting a check for $13,778.25. **Fire Department –** Chief Kercewich stated that things have been quiet lately. Nothing further to report. **Historical Society -**  Mr. Bellows reported that the Historical Society has interest in keeping the Model T for its historical value. Mike Kercewich stated that the Model T value is in the range of $4500 - $10,000. Suggestions of donations and raising money to build a structure to permanently house and display the Model T along with other Fire Department memorabilia was heard. Discussions of an area located near the bandstand on town owned property and questions of whether the building would encumber any town cost, whether the location would be viable for solar lighting and parking were all raised. The Board asked the Association and Historical Society to bring forth a design plan & map forward for further discussion and possible approval. **Ambulance Department**- Director Moore reported the Ambulance crew responded to 179 calls for the year, 18 more than last year. Director Moore stated that the old ambulance is going in for its state inspection and the new ambulance is having the FirstNet HPUE installed next week, which will improve the ability to communicate to other emergency services in areas that once they could not. Director Moore reported that he spent the day at the Transfer Station evaluating & making notes on procedures and work flow. He noted that there was an issue with hot embers coming from the pellet stove and immediately found a temporary solution. New part has been ordered to permanently fix the issue. Director Moore was tasked with the removal of tree branches at the Town Offices, which fell during the last storm. **Emergency Management –** Director Reynolds reported that the Cobb Hill generator was repaired on January 2nd. The technician noted on the paperwork that the heat shield was never installed. He will follow up with billing and review the warranty information. Director Reynolds presented the new Health & Safety policy, ***on a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton the boarded voted unanimously to approve the new Health & Safety policy as submitted.*** The question arose of who is responsible for the punch list for Bragg Lane? Mr. McCarty suggested contacting Mike Jasmin, Health Officer, to spearhead the action items on the punch list. Mr. Esslinger reported that he has removed the window air conditioning units, secured the windows, changed the deadbolt lock and made sure that only necessary people have a key to ensure the building is secure at all times. The board tasked Mr. Esslinger with removing the old gas grill. Mr. Esslinger will stop by the Town Offices to acquire a list of audit items left. Director Reynolds reported that the JLMC will be following up on all other audits as well. **Transfer Station –** Mr. Esslinger reported that he has started work on the audit items from their Safety Report. He will submit a status report to Director Reynolds via email. Resident Barb Viegener asked if there is a cost list for household items at the Transfer Station? Mr. Esslinger responded “yes”, however discussion followed of the discrepancy between the flat rate list & use of the scale to determine cost of disposal. Mr. Kemp & Mr. Saxton stated that they thought everything was supposed to be weighed. Mr. Esslinger reported that if the Transfer Station is inundated with residents, they may use best judgement to move things along. A question was posed on the acceptance of cash at the Transfer Station, Mr. Esslinger stated that they do accept cash and that it is stored in a lock box. Normally they only have $50-100 in it and that Mark Pitts normally handles this. The board reminded everyone that their policy states no cash to be accepted and that new management will be tasked with following up on this matter.

**BOARD REPORTS – Mr. Kemp: Fire Department -** Mr. Kemp reported that he has several policies and bylaws written and ready for review by the board, however Chief Kercewich prefers to have the policies reviewed by the department and officers first, the board agreed. Mr. Kemp will attend the association meeting on January 8th. **Sidewalk Project –** Mr. Kemp asked if Mr. Levesque should proceed with finding committee members? The Board stated last week that he should proceed. **Mandatory Training –** The Board asked for a roster from each department of who has and has not completed the training. The Board reminded staff member to record their time on their time cards for all training**. Mr. Saxton:** Had nothing to report at this time**. Mr. McCarty:** Mr. McCarty reported that we have received an email request from the Army Corps of Engineers & Park Ranger Mike Servant, for permission to add our town forest to their Snow Pack Survey. The specific location of this request is M 18 L 42, Old Settlers/ Newell Pond Rd. The consensus of the board was to allow this request. Office Admin was tasked with responding to the email.

**QUESTIONS & COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:** Resident Barb Viegener asked what is the plan for glass remediation? Mr. McCarty responded with the first step being to map the areas of devastation, establishing all landowners that have been affected, so the town will know exactly how big the problem is. Mr. Kemp posed the question about upsizing the culvert at the top of the hill. Road Agent, Mr. Trafton responded that the culvert can be 1 size larger. Mr. Esslinger volunteered to be a contact person for glass clean up.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

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| **Next regular Select Board meeting:** | Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Hall, 9 Main St. |
| **2024 Budget Hearing:** | Tuesday, January 16th, 2024 @ 5:00 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. |

**On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton,** ***the Board chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:41pm.***

Respectfully submitted,



Misty Gratacos

Office Administrator