

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 22, 2020 AT 3PM AT TOWN HALL**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eric Meth, Jill Brewer, Jeff Blodgett.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Karen Foss, Bob Montagno, Janice Cole, Mary Grote.

The meeting was called to order at 3:02pm.

APPOINTMENTS:

Bob Montagno – Franconia ArtWalk Association: Bob had several topics to discuss with the Board. He first requested that a link to the Franconia ArtWalk Association's website could be added to the town website. The Board agreed this would be a good idea.

He also let the Board know that another regional art association is hosting a project that involves placing murals that honor essential workers in participating towns. The Board was interested to learn more about this project. Bob will look into it further.

Bob said that the area surrounding one of the art installations on the Riverwalk Trail has a lot of wood debris at the site and on other sections of the trail. He is hoping the town could clean up the wood on the trail and at the installation site as he feels it detracts from the look of the installation and the trail. Town Administrator Cowles said the trail is on private property and the stacks of wood could not be removed without permission from the landowners.

Karen Foss – Trustees of the Trust Funds: Karen said the 2019 Auditor's Report recommends the annual review and adoption of an investment policy for the investment of public funds. Karen said the Trustees of the Trust Funds does review and approve an investment policy yearly, which is filed with the NH Charitable Trust Unit, and which guides the investing by the Investment Manager Three Bearings, but was unaware that it needs to be annually adopted by the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen reviewed and briefly discussed the policy.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to approve the Trustees of the Trust Fund's Investment Policy from Three Bearings Fiduciary Advisors. Selectman Meth seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The June 15th meeting minutes were approved as amended.

The June 22nd transaction list was signed by the Selectmen.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Fox Hill Cooperative Tax Abatements – Map 14 Lots 43-30, 43-31, 43-12, 43-6 & 43-2: As discussed at the June 15th meeting, the Fox Hill Cooperative has some abandoned and uninhabitable units that they wish to demolish to make room for new homes to come in. Selectman Meth has spoken with Victoria Stauches, Operations Manager for Fox Hill Cooperative and made a site visit there to look at the units they would like to demolish. The Cooperative has asked that the back taxes, interest and penalties be abated for the abandoned units so they can be demolished and rented to new residents. Selectman Meth did not know what the amounts to be abated were but the Board agreed to make a motion contingent upon the amounts so a letter could be provided to the Cooperative which they may use to begin the process with the demolition of lot 50.

Selectman Meth made a motion that the Board abates the back taxes, interest and any penalties for Map 14 Lots 43-30, 43-31, 43-12, 43-6 & 43-2. Chairman Brewer seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

July Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule – After a brief discussion, the Selectmen decided to meet bi-weekly for the summer. The next meeting will be July 6th, 2020.

Town Administrator Update – Town Administrator Cowles said there is an issue with a culvert on Wells Road that will require it be replaced sooner than anticipated as it is causing the road to get flooded during heavy rain. There is a grant that she will check into.

A person considering buying a property in town asked Kim if there were any restrictions on operating an Airbnb. The Selectmen didn't think there were any restrictions from the town. Kim will check with Allan Clark to see if he has any information.

The Transfer Station is up and running after the compactor broke down. As previously requested by Selectman Blodgett, Kim will find out if we have a maintenance contract on the compactor. She is also working with Tim to determine how many days he would need from an additional employee so that the position can be developed. A couple recreation employees have been working at the Transfer Station processing cardboard as needed to help out in the meantime.

Today is the first day of the Summer Recreation program. In order to observe the state's guidelines, this year's program has the campers divided into groups of ten (two counselors and 8 campers) at four different locations.

On Friday the 19th a group of residents and Kim went to Lafayette Center with signs expressing appreciation for the staff's hard work keeping their residents safe during the pandemic and their handling of the boil order, which caused a great deal of additional work for them.

Sally Small continues to volunteer her time to assist at Town Hall. She's been training Kim and Jenny in addition to helping with the work load. Kim said we owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude for the huge amount of work she has done free of charge.

CORRESPONDENCE: Chairman Brewer said Chief Cashin will be hosting a workshop with former Chief John Monaghan at town hall that is intended to help officers better understand the national climate in regards to police brutality and the black lives matter movement and provide a forum for questions and discussion. Franconia officers will attend and he has invited surrounding town's officers to participate as well.

Selectman Meth said there is a grant opportunity through the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund to address the increased need for internet connectivity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Selectmen Meth sent questions to Jenny that were put on letterhead and sent to the program director.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Cable Consortium: No update at this time.

Chamber of Commerce: Selectman Blodgett says the Information Booth is opening on July 1st. He asked when the public bathrooms will be open to accommodate visitors. Chairman Brewer and Town Administrator Cowles said they are not sure if it is a good idea to invite people to use the public restroom as it is impossible to disinfect after each use and it will be used by the Recreation program kids and employees for the summer. Selectmen Meth also said he visited the under construction Franconia Market & Deli and part of his conversation with Thad Presby involved Thad wondering if the Town would do some landscaping of the property along Main Street. Chairman Brewer and Town Administrator

Cowles both said the town is not able to extend such services to some properties and not others.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the Commission did not meet last week as planned and is now on hiatus for the summer.

Energy Commission: No update and on hiatus for the summer.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planners have not met. The Selectmen briefly discussed that the Planning Board needs to be meeting regularly and Eric said he will broach the subject with the Chair.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Regarding the requested tax abatements for Fox Hill Cooperative, Karen Foss asked if the back taxes were from prior to the park changing hands. Selectman Meth confirmed that to be the case.

Karen also asked if the Board was aware of the policy at Echo Lake this year. Town Administrator Cowles and Chairman Brewer were aware that online reservations are required for all visits to the lake and no one is permitted there after 6pm. It was suggested that she send any complaints about the policy to John DeVivo.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary