

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 5th, 2021 AT TOWN HALL**

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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Eric Meth, Jill Brewer, Dan Walker

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Dawn Steele, Mike Betley, Karen Foss, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Larry Plate

**The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.**

**TO SIGN/APPROVE:**

The April 5, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The minutes of March 29, 2021 were approved as written on a motion by Selectman Walker and a second by Chairman Brewer with all voting in favor.

Water Department Letter of Support for NBRC Grant.

**Tax Deeded Property Repurchase – Parkview Drive:** Town Administrator Cowles explained that the former property owners paid all back taxes and fees for the property. The selectmen signed the deed that was created by the town's legal counsel that returns the property to the former owners.

**Record of Appointment:** After agreeing last week to appoint Haley Ireland to the Lafayette Recreation Committee, the selectmen signed the Record of Appointment.

**APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:**

None

**TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:**

**Septic Application – Map 16 Lot 22 – Old County Road:** The selectmen reviewed and approved this application.

**Town Administrator Update:** Town Administrator Cowles reviewed the slide show presentation she created for town meeting that is intended to provide helpful information to voters. The presentation reviews warrant articles, unassigned fund balance recommended practices and computation, and provides formulas for tax impact and other financial information. The selectmen discussed the presentation and plans for town meeting at length.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Cable Consortium:** Selectman Meth said the Grafton County Broadband Committee was supposed to meet via Zoom on April 1<sup>st</sup> but due to technical difficulties was not able to. The meeting has been

rescheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup>. The North Country Communications District Committee has a Zoom meeting scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> and are hoping that Tripp Legendre will attend. Selectmen Meth also mentioned recent discussion about Starlink and how it may be a game changer for broadband challenged communities.

**Chamber of Commerce:** Selectman Walker said he spoke with Michelle from Lovett's and asked if there were any updates he could share with the chamber at the upcoming meeting.

**Conservation Commission:** Chairman Brewer said the CC will next meet on Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Energy Commission:** Selectman Meth said the next meeting is April 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm.

**Planning Board:** Selectman Meth said the Planning Board met briefly on the 30<sup>th</sup> but did not have a quorum. The Master Plan was discussed as well as the proposed survey of residents about the Master Plan update.

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

Mary Grote said the information provided to her for her 91A request is not what she was looking for. Mary said she is looking for a breakdown of what each department received from the CARES grant funds. Dawn Steele helped clarify Mary's question about where the funds were used and what they were used for. Town Administrator Cowles said the \$8,826 went to the General Fund to offset payroll expenses.

Dawn Steele asked about articles 17 and 4, and said article 18 – Transfer Funds to the Fire Department Heavy Equipment Fund, seems similar. Dawn asked why \$43,000 in article 4 is requested and also \$25,000 is requested in article 18 for the fire department. Selectman Walker said to his knowledge this is requesting that the fire department's 2020 surplus funds accumulated from less calls and trainings, etc., because of the pandemic, is being requested to be put back into their 2021 expendable budget.

Dawn Steele distributed a handout and asked about different dollar amounts requested in 2020 and 2021 on the respective warrants and the breakdown between the tri towns.

Karen Foss asked why residents are not voting on proposed revenues in addition to proposed expenses. Town Administrator Cowles said much of the way financials are presented is dictated by the Department of Revenue Administration. Selectman Walker said voting on revenues could prove problematic and should be researched.

Dawn then asked about the donation funds given by the Lions Club and where those funds were deposited.

Karen Foss about the \$800,000 proposed amount for the Unassigned Fund Balance and whether that figure is high end. It was discussed by the board and Town Administrator Cowles that this is because it is recommended that the town has two months of full operating expenses on reserve.

Karen Foss commented that she would have no objection to a once in a decade reset of the Unassigned Fund Balance if it has gotten too high.

Virginia Mike asked if there will be an official committee formed to study the proposed Welcome Center and how much it should cost. Chairman Brewer said this could be considered.

Larry Plate and Mike Betley then spoke to the board about the condition of Plantation Road, where they reside. He said the pavement was ripped up five or so years ago and the surface of the road has been in terrible shape since. Town Administrator Cowles asked if she and Larry could meet with Public Works Director Scott Leslie in a week or so to talk about the issue. Larry and Mike also expressed concerns about Airbnb properties causing more traffic on the road leading to more wear and tear.

There was no further discussion. Chairman Brewer made a motion to adjourn at 4:38pm which was seconded by Selectman Walker with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jenny Monahan  
Administrative Secretary