

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 2021 AT TOWN HALL**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, James Fitzpatrick, Mary Grote, Dawn Steele, Peter Grote, Larry & Karen Plate.

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

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The August 16, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The minutes of July 30, 2021 were approved as amended on a motion by Selectman Walker and a second by Chairman Brewer with all voting in favor.

The PA-16 Application for Reimbursement for Federal & State Forest Lands was signed by the Selectmen.

The PA-28 Inventory of Taxable Property for 2022 was signed by the Selectmen.

NHDOT Near-Term Recommendations Letter – A letter drafted to NHDOT stating the board's support for the DOT's recommended safety implementations at the Main Street/Route 116 intersection was signed by the board.

Septic Permit Application – O'Grady – Map 19 Lot 10-12.1 – Approved by the board.

Driveway Permit Application – Schmitt – Map 17 Lot 5 – Approved by the board contingent upon Chief Gaudette's signature of approval on the application.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:

Chief Paul Schmucker – Life Squad Budget Review: Town Administrator Cowles said the Life Squad has brought in \$66,233 in transport payments to date this year. Chief Schmucker said the Life Squad is about \$30,000 under budget for this point in the year. The health of the ambulance was briefly discussed, followed by a lengthy discussion on declining volunteerism and how this might be handled in the future. Karen Foss noted that the Uniforms Line and Training Line are under spent for this point in the year. Karen also commented that the audit states that there is an issue with the Life Squad's billing reconciliation process. Chief Schmucker said the Life Squad has a 70% to 80% payment rate which is very high.

Chief Rick Gaudette - Fire Department Budget Review: Chief Gaudette said that his budget is on track for this point in the year. Chairman Brewer noted that the Vehicles & Equipment line is mainly unspent and Chief Gaudette says he is not planning on spending those funds unless a truck fails. Chief Gaudette

also noted that his Wages Line is unspent due to the wages being paid annually in November. Declining volunteerism, the potential for needing a paid full-time employee in the future and regionalizing local departments were also discussed.

Executive & Miscellaneous Budget Reviews: Town Administrator Cowles said the **Executive Budget** is on track for this point in the year. The **Personnel Administration Budget** is under budget in both Health Insurance and Police Retirement due to Sgt. Jarvis being deployed currently but the town being required to retain those funds in case of his early return to work. The **Legal Budget** is on track. The **Welfare Budget** will likely be overspent due to providing long term housing to an applicant. The **Recreation Budget** is in good shape. Town Administrator Cowles said Soccer Camp was cancelled this year due to not enough people signing up and being understaffed so that line will be unspent. She said \$4,000 in grant money was received in June which was used for additional wages so the camper groups could be smaller and dispersed in different locations. The Summer Recreation program went very well.

DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Intersection Update: Town Administrator Cowles said the Near-Term Solutions recommendations from NHDOT is to make the intersection a four-way stop, adding illumination to the stop sign on the Church Street side of the intersection and adding a "Stop Ahead" sign on that side as well. She also said a 6' wide median will be painted onto the road on both sides of Route 116 to slow traffic.

Town Administrator Cowles said Avitar has today sent out letters to all property owners detailing their updated assessments.

Safety Services Parking Lot Sealing Estimate: The board approved an estimate of \$3,900 to seal the parking lot.

Welcome Center RFP: Town Administrator Cowles said the RFP from the Safety Services Building is being updated for the Welcome Center. She said that due to the relatively small size of the building, Building Official Allan Clark recommended forgoing the solar panels on the roof and instead doing a radiant heat slab. Town Administrator Cowles said she thinks we should include the solar panels in the RFP and if the bids are too high consider removing the solar panels from the plan. She said the language in the RFP enables the town to modify the plan as needed. The RFP will be published tomorrow and the deadline for proposals is August 30th. Town Administrator Cowles said she would recommend the Welcome Center Committee include Building Official Allan Clark, Selectman Dan Walker, Adam Nyborg, Energy Commission Chair James Fitzgerald, Chamber of Commerce President Kevin Johnson, Jayne O'Connor and herself.

Town Administrator Cowles said Pike is currently paving Route 117 and will begin paving Main Street when they finish. Prior to that, Central Paving will be here installing asphalt sidewalks from the Gale River Motel to the Iron Furnace Brewery. The work should commence this week.

Town Administrator Cowles is still working on the Radar Speed Signs for Route 116. Chairman Brewer suggested that we request signs advising motorists to be careful of cyclists.

CORRESPONDENCE: Doctor Charlie Wolcott sent a letter to the board announcing his resignation as the town's Health Officer effective September 1st. The town will begin looking for a replacement.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Broadband Initiative Committee: Selectman Meth said there is a meeting of the Northern Grafton Country Communications District will be meeting via Zoom on August 27th at 4:00pm. He said the New Hampshire Electric Co-op has been actively working with several towns in the state and it is hopeful that progress will begin moving more quickly.

Chamber of Commerce: Selectman Walker said the Chamber meets this Wednesday the 18th at Woodsville Guaranty Bank.

Conservation Commission: No update.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the next meeting is on the 19th at town hall. The plan is to finish the Solar Ordinance.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planning Board delayed their August 10th meeting until August 31st due to not having a quorum and the August 31st agenda includes a lot line adjustment and continued Master Plan work.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Peter Grote requested copies of the discussed budgets and Jenny gave him copies.

The board discussed that the next meeting will be August 30th and then begin meeting weekly again on September 13th. After a brief discussion, the board decided to begin meeting at 6pm on September 13th.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary