

**Town of Franconia
Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting
Monday, August 21st at 6:00PM
at Franconia Town Hall**

Board Members Present: Jill Brewer, Eric Meth, Dan Walker

Others Present: Libby Staples, Jenny Monahan, Mary Grote, Bob Tortorice, Peter Grote, Pat Garvin, Virginia Mike, Lynn Terres, Larry Plate, Dawn Steele, Mike & Tina Betley

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM.

Appointments/Work Sessions

Bob Tortorice – Class VI off Wallace Hill Road - Road Maintenance: Bob said he wanted to meet with the board about the class VI emergency road that goes from Wallace Hill to Bethlehem. He said there is no other egress from Wallace Hill in emergencies. Bob said that the highway department is currently doing the maintenance on the road and that was what he wanted to request of the board but he had already made the agenda appointment.

Planning Board – Accessory Dwelling Units, Short Term Rentals: Selectman Meth said the planning board requests to loosen the restrictions in the town’s zoning for ADU’s as a way of helping with the housing shortage. He said the planning board requests the boards permission to begin discussing this formally. Chairman Brewer and Selectman Walker approved the request. Selectman Meth said the planners would also like to discuss possible restrictions on short-term rentals. He said they are not sure what restrictions could be enacted but they would like to investigate the possibilities. Planner Pat Garvin said there have been a lot of changes in state regulations and the planners would like to use the left-over funds in their budget to hire Tara Bamford for guidance on possible zoning changes. She said the planning board hopes to have the Master Plan completed by December so they can then move forward with looking at the town’s zoning for ADU’s and STR’s. The board approved the request that the planning board use their residual budget funds and said a contract could be prepared. Pat will send the board Tara Bamford’s contact information.

Public Comment

Dawn Steele requested that banning casinos in town is also looked at in the town’s zoning. Mike Betley asked what the lawyer’s opinion was on restricting short-term rentals and if unregistered STR’s could have liens put on their property for unpaid fines. There followed a brief discussion about short-term rentals and what the town could do to impose stronger regulations. Tina Betley asked about the STR inspection process the town initially enacted but then amended. Dawn Steels gave the board a copy of the town of Jackson’s zoning and said there is an RSA about fees for STR’s. Larry Plate commented that many of the STR’s were residential homes prior to becoming STR’s and asked if a change of use hearing could be required and asked about taxing STR’s as businesses. Dawn Steele praised Road Agent Jeremy Hall for the presentation he gave on the ice rink. Virginia Mike said there are drug deals going on at the Fox Hill Park parking area and suggested the town consider installing surveillance cameras there.

Sign/Approve

The board approved the August 8, 2023 minutes as amended.

The board reviewed and signed the August 18th, 2023 to August 24th, 2023 transaction report.

Discuss/Review

NCDE Contract – Selectman Meth said the Broadband Initiative Committee would like to renew their contract with National Collaborative for Digital Equity for continued guidance on working with Consolidated Communications. The cost is \$3,750 and they would like to use ARPA funds again for the contract. A public hearing for the proposed use of ARPA funds will be scheduled for September 11 at 6:00PM. Selectman Meth said there will be a public informational session at the meeting hall in Sugar Hill on September 20th from

6:00PM to 7:30PM and it would be beneficial for Franconia residents to attend.

Selectman Meth gave credit to Jim Fitzpatrick for his work on a solar project with the school and the program Granite State Clean Fleets.

Selectman Meth gave an update on the solar array. He said a different disconnect needs to be installed and the town is waiting on Eversource.

Selectman Walker said he has been invited to attend a discussion about regional EMS that will be held at Littleton Regional Hospital on Thursday.

The board entered non-public session at 6:44PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker. The board returned to the public session at 7:38PM.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Executive Assistant