**TOWN OF FRANCONIA**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN’S MEETING**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023, AT 5:00PM AT TOWN HALL**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Sharon Penney, Karen Foss, Carol Walker, Mike and Tina Betley, Mary and Peter Grote, Dawn Steele, Larry Plate, Virginia Mike, Meg MacLeod, Carol Wills, Jayne O’Connor, Chief Mac Cashin, Tyler Gaudette, and Richard Gaudette

**The meeting was called to order at 5:03pm**

Jill Brewer made a motion that the Board go into non-public session, taking with them Sharon Penney, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), second by Eric Meth. All were in favor per the roll call vote and the Board entered non-public session at 5:03pm.

Jill Brewer made a motion to come out of non-public session, second by Dan Walker. All were in favor per the roll call vote and the Board came out of non-public session at 5:35pm.

**APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:**

Trustees of the Trust Fund: Karen Foss, Mike Betley, and Carol Walker met with the Select Board to suggest the qualifications needed for the next Town Administrator from the Trustees’ perspective.

* The most important part of the TA job description should be a financial and accounting-oriented person with significant experience in these areas from training, education, and experience in municipal matters.
* Organizational and administrative skills which are needed when a request is made to the Trustees for a disbursement or transfer from a Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) or an Expendable Trust Fund (ETF), so all supporting documents, signed and dated invoices, check number, approval of the BOS and backup minutes of the meeting be included.
* The TA should be familiar with the investment reports that they are copied on every month, as should the Select Board. You need to understand each section, its point of reference for what funds are available and what earnings have been accrued during the year.

It was mentioned that the Trustees are concerned about policies that have been generated in the last year that have been taken from another town, the town name changed to Franconia, and it being passed out as a new policy. It is important that each policy be customized for Franconia and not cut and pasted and adopted.

The Trustees discussed the auditor’s comments over the last few years regarding risks to the town citing management overriding of controls, improper revenue recognition and use of QuickBooks as a general ledger. The auditors did not make any suggestions for an alternative program to QuickBooks; however, the Trustees recommend the BOS meet with the auditors and discuss these matters.

The Trustees also suggested that the town go out to bid every three years for the major expenses

such as employment benefits to make sure the town is getting the best price and best options.

There was discussion regarding the investment firm, Three Bearings, and how investments are handled. It was stated there is an investment policy that is approved every year and it guides how the funds are invested for both the Capital Reserve Funds and Expendable Trust Funds.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Public comment was taken from Tyler Gaudette

**TO SIGN/APPROVE:**

The minutes of December 19, 2022, were approved as amended.

The minutes of December 24, 2022, were approved as written.

**APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:**

**Chief Mac Cashin, Franconia Police Department** was present to discuss the prosecutor position for the Police Department. The Town of Littleton more than doubled their quote from 2022 ($6,500.00 to $15,000.00). Mac put out requests from other agencies and Wendy Roberts, who is out of Lancaster and is a prosecutor for several other towns, has agreed to prosecute for Franconia for $5,000.00 less than the Littleton quote. Wendy has a lot of experience, is very professional and is a very good prosecutor.

Mac stated that Wendy requested that the Board appoint her as the Town of Franconia Police

Prosecutor so that she would be an employee of the town and be under the Primex umbrella with the rest of the department. There will be an additional short-term expenditure to do that and that has been included in the budget number. Mac also stated that paying her on a quarterly basis would be the most appropriate frequency. It was suggested that Mac or the Board of Selectmen contact Primex and the Labor Department to make sure the proper procedures are being followed.

Dan Walker made a motion to appoint Wendy Roberts as a Town of Franconia Police Prosecutor

contingent on checking with Primex, the Labor Department and the Town Attorney to make sure it is all legitimate, second by Jill Brewer.  All were in favor and the motion passed.

Jill mentioned receipt of a letter received from Allan Clark regarding the number of hours worked and additional work involved with the number of building permits that have come in and the complexity of the construction. The Board briefly discussed the need to compensate him for his time and the fact that income has gone up as the number of building permits goes up. The Board noted this situation will be addressed when the budget is reviewed.

**TO SIGN/APPROVE:**

Three septic plans, all which have state approval and all on Circle Drive, were reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The January 3, 2023, Transaction Report was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The December 27, 2022, Transaction Report was re-signed by the Selectmen because there were two adjustments made to the report.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Broadband Initiative:** Eric stated there was a special meeting of the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee in Concord and they voted to approve grant funding of $40,000,000.00 plus another $25,000,000.00 on top of that. Consolidated Communication is putting in for that and they are one of the ISPs that the committee interviewed to wire up Franconia, so they are hoping to reap the benefit of that. The next meeting is January 17th, at 4:30 via zoom.

**Chamber of Commerce:** Dan stated they had their annual meeting, which he was unable to attend, but the news report was that it was well attended.

**Conservation Committee:** Jill stated at their December meeting a woman from Plymouth State

University, whose name she could not remember, who is a professor there, came up to talk about

some exciting things she would like to do with some of her students (i.e., wildlife inventory) related to conservation. So, the committee is hoping to be able to make something work.

**Energy Commission:** Eric stated they met on the 20th and discussed the EV charging stations and an application was to be submitted for a state program, but he will get an update as to whether the application was submitted.

The solar array has to be activated, and again, we waited until 2023 to allow us to claim a credit and refund which will be about 30% to defray the cost of the solar array.

Melissa Elander, who is with Clean Energy NH, gave us an overview of what’s going on around the North Country regarding solar and alternative forms of energy.

The next meeting will be on January 17th, at 4:30.

**Planning Board:** Eric stated the Board met on the 13th and talked about the InvestNH grant. The

application was submitted, but there was some information that had to be added to the application.

We continue to work on the Master Plan and the contract work that we are going to need from North Country Council and the expenditure the Planning Board is going to require to get the Master Plan in place. We talked about a line item of $14,000.00 to cover the costs.

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for January 10th, at 7:00pm.

**CIP:** Dan stated that the chair, Steve Plant, will be here next week to make the presentation.

Jill stated they are hoping to do the Tri-Town meeting next Monday, the 9th, at 4:30pm in Sugar Hill. They are waiting to hear from Easton.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Wills