

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022 AT 6:00PM AT TOWN HALL**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Lynn Terres, Dawn Steele, Jan Cole, Virginia Mike, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Larry Plage, Ann Foss, Chief Mac Cashin, Karen Foss, Carol Walker, Ginny Jeffries, Mike Betley

**The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm**

**APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS**

**2022 Warrant Review:** The board reviewed the warrant with Town Administrator Cowles. There was some discussion about Article 26: Install a Solar Array on Town Property regarding the wording of the article and funding of the project. The selectmen decided to recommend the article.

The board decided to add an article for the purchase of a V-Plow for the Buildings & Grounds truck as the existing plow is damaged.

**Chief Mac Cashin – Extended Coverage:** Chief Cashin said he had heard concerns from a resident about the lack of 24-hour coverage in the town. Chief said the hours for 2022 have already increased with the recent return of Sgt. Jarvis from deployment. He said hours could be extended by 14 hours per week with on-call coverage (one hour earlier in the morning and one hour later in the evening than current scheduling) for an additional \$6,840 in wages. After a brief discussion, the board said this could be presented to the voters at town meeting and a motion could be made from the floor if voters wish to add the additional funding to the budget.

In response to a comment from a resident about the town's proposed COLA increase and the school's proposed COLA increase, Chairman Brewer said she attended the school's budget hearing recently and was surprised at the low attendance there. She said she is saddened by the perceived negativity towards town employees and doesn't understand where its coming from. Public comment was given in response.

**TO SIGN/APPROVE**

The February 14, 2022 transaction report was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.

The January 24, 2022 minutes were approved as amended on a motion from Selectman Walker and a second from Chairman Brewer.

**ZBA Appointments:** Chairman Brewer made a motion to reappoint Susan Retz and Phil Krill to the ZBA. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

### **TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:**

**Review Budget Adjustment from Public Hearing:** Town Administrator Cowles provided some Adjusting Journal Entries recommended by the auditors for the board's review and provided the email communications with the auditors detailing their recommendations. The adjustments totaled \$1.35. The selectman approved the adjustments.

### **Tax Abatement Applications:**

**George Wile** - Chairman Brewer read the response to the abatement application from Avitar Associates recommending the application be denied due to a comparison of property sales in town showing that the property assessment is equitable and fair. The selectmen reviewed the recommendation and unanimously agreed to deny the application for abatement.

**Virginia Mike** - Chairman Brewer read the response to the abatement application from Avitar Associates recommending the application be denied due to the applicant being taxed on the correct number of bedrooms and the applicant opining a higher assessed value than the town's assessment. A lengthy discussion with the applicant ensued. After the discussion, the board agreed unanimously to deny the application for abatement.

**Correspondence:** A resident wrote a letter to the board and shared that she thinks the proposed COLA increase is too high, the proposed budget could be trimmed and that she would like to see greater fiscal responsibility for all levels of government (municipal, state and federal.)

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Broadband Initiative:** Selectman Meth said there is a Zoom meeting on this Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm with Carol Miller of the National Collaborative for Digital Equity (NCDE). They are looking to finalize their timeline to be in preparation for the Grafton Country Broadband Commission's "Middle Mile".

**Chamber of Commerce:** Selectman Walker said there is a meeting tomorrow morning at 9am at Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank.

**Conservation Commission:** Chairman Brewer said the CC next meets Wednesday February 16<sup>th</sup> at 4pm at town hall.

**Energy Commission:** Selectman Meth said the EC is meeting at town hall on Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm.

**Planning Board:** Selectman Meth said the next meeting has not yet been confirmed. Selectman Walker added that at the last meeting, the PB worked on compiling the responses to the Master Plan survey.

**CIP:** Selectman Walker said there is still CIP activity with the Fire Department's request for a new truck and the Highway Department's request for a new truck. He said getting estimates this year has been difficult due to supply issues and adding to the difficulty is that the estimates are typically only good for 30 days. He said a special town meeting could be considered to address these purchases.

### **ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:**

The board discussed the meeting schedule for the next few weeks and decided to meet on Tuesday the

22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00pm (Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> is a holiday) and to not hold a meeting the 28<sup>th</sup> during vacation week. The regular meeting schedule will resume on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Public comment was given by Ann Foss and Dawn Steele.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan  
Administrative Secretary