

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2021 AT 3PM VIA ZOOM**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eric Meth, Jill Brewer, Jeff Blodgett.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, various online attendees.

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

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The January 19, 2021 meeting minutes were approved as amended.

The January 25, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen remotely.

A driveway permit for Map 31 Lot 16-4 was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen remotely.

APPOINTMENTS:

Chief Rick Gaudette and Tyler Gaudette: Chief Gaudette said the Fire Department's Air Packs are going to expire next May and more will be need to be purchased this year. He said there is a Capital Reserve Fund for the Air Packs and asked how it can be expended. CIP Chair Karen Foss commented that as it is not an expendable trust, a warrant article would be needed. Town Administrator Cowles said she could work with Chief Gaudette to create a warrant article once he has found out what the price will be.

Chief Gaudette also said that the Sutphen Pumper is failing and a replacement should be considered. It is not scheduled for replacement until 2028 on the CIP but he doesn't think it will last another year or two.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW

2021 Budgets Review: Town Administrator Cowles said the year-to-date budgets and 2021 proposed budgets are on the website for review.

Warrant Articles to Date Review: Town Administrator Cowles said she has a draft of the warrant and offered to pull it up on screen or disperse to the selectmen so it could be discussed next week. The selectmen opted to have the draft warrant sent to them and discuss it next week.

Town Moderator Jim Walker - Town Meeting Plans: Jim said the Governor has granted the provisions of SB2 by executive order so the meeting can legally be postponed. Town Clerk Carol Wills commented that she would like to hold town meeting and the election on the same day. There was a discussion about which month would be best to hold the meeting with May and June being favored by the Selectmen. It was discussed that the election could be held in March and town meeting could be held in May or June. Town Administrator Cowles said that June would be too late for voters to make a decision on the Main Street paving project. The discussion closed with the board favoring May for town meeting and hopes to finalize a date at next week's meeting.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION: Selectman Meth thanked Karen Foss, Dawn Steele and Town Administrator Cowles for their work on the employee retirement plan.

Covid-19 Local Update: Chairman Brewer said the county is still in the red zone (active outbreak) and the highest amount of cases per hundred thousand people occurred in the last one to two days. She said it is important to remain vigilant at this time.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Cable Consortium: Selectman Meth said he is hoping to attend the Grafton County Broadband Committee meeting via Zoom on Wednesday morning. There is also a local Broadband Internet Committee meeting this Friday at 5pm that will be attended by other local town's residents and board members. Selectman Meth also said he spoke with Jennifer Gaudette in Sugar Hill and they discussed doing a warrant article to see if the towns would like their select boards to establish a local broadband and internet committee.

Chamber of Commerce: No update.

Conservation Commission: No update.

Tri-Town Transfer Station Committee: This committee met recently and decided to request funding of \$3,000 for Building Maintenance and \$12,500 to Wages for a part time employee to work weekends. The idea of vehicle stickers for access to the Transfer Station was also discussed and the committee felt this was not a good idea at this time as it would create significant extra work and little income. They also discussed adding a bathroom building to the Transfer Station and finding out what the costs would be.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the Energy Commission will be requesting funding of \$3,000 at town meeting for their Energy Commission fund and also discussed what the funds could be used for. They also discussed energy data and Raise Green Solar.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planning Board meets tomorrow the 26th at 7pm via Zoom and plans to begin working on updating the Master Plan.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Dawn Steele said that some residents who had vaccines scheduled for February have had their appointments cancelled and that this was disappointing for those residents.

Karen Foss said she was disappointed that the budgets were not reviewed in greater depth. She would like to meet with Kim to discuss her thoughts on the budgets. Kim said she would be happy to meet with her this week.

Mary Grote asked when the tax impact of warrant articles will be available to the public and requested it be made available prior to town meeting so the tax impact of the various articles can be evaluated by residents.

Dawn Steele asked where CARES Act grant funds go if they are not used. Kim said any unused funds go into the Unassigned Fund Balance.

At 3:45pm, the board entered non public session pursuant to 91-A:3, II (a). The Board left non public session at 4:15pm.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenny Monahan