

**Town of Franconia
Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 6PM
at Town Hall**

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

Others Present: Libby Staples, Jenny Monahan, Virginia Mike, Dawn Steele, Jan Cole, Steve Schwartz, Mark Hessler, Karen Foss, Monica Laflamme, Pat Garvin, Sharon Penney, Mary & Peter Grote, Mike Betley, Larry Plate, Chief Mac Cashin

The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM.

Appointments/Work Sessions

Personnel Administration Budget Review: Town Administrator Staples said the Personnel Administration Budget is proposed at \$207,000 for 2024 which includes the addition of short-term and long-term disability plans, life insurance and dental. It was discussed that the lack of these benefits in the town's insurance offering has been a hindrance to hiring additional police officers as the town is not competitive with other municipalities. Town Administrator Staples provided a spreadsheet showing costs for the town's current contribution split of 75/25 as well as 90/10 and 85/15 and a sliding contribution model of 90/10 for single coverage, 85/15 for two-person coverage and 80/20 for family coverage.

Public Comment

Dawn Steele and Jan Cole asked about the period included in the health insurance quote. Mike Betley asked about doing an employee reimbursement plan with a deductible. Karen Foss asked what plans other towns offer. Dawn Steele asked about the town clerk/tax collector salary increase.

To Sign/Approve

The minutes of December 20, 2023 were approved as written.

The selectmen approved the December 29th, 2023 – January 5th, 2024 transaction list.

Property Tax Abatement – Map 22 Lot 4-1.2 - This property was subdivided and was taken out of current use but should have remained in current use. The abatement will correct the error. The selectmen approved the abatement.

Avitar – Preliminary DRA Assessment to Sales Ratio Form – Signed by Chairman Brewer on behalf of the board.

To Discuss/Review

Correspondence – Chairman Brewer read a letter from Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust asking if the board is aware of any hazardous or solid waste on map 17 lots 2 and 3. The board was not aware of any waste on the property and signed the letter accordingly.

Committee Reports

Broadband Initiative: Selectmen Meth said there is a meeting at the Sugar Hill Meeting House on January 4, 2023 at 3PM with representatives of the federal government about Grafton Country broadband funds. The public is encouraged to attend.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the recent rainstorms have furthered the issue with the Sugar Hill property that was altered without proper permitting from the state causing damage to neighboring property and Mtn. View Road. Red McCarthy has drafted a letter for select board review that he would like to send on to the Department of Environmental Services regarding non-compliance with the DES mandates.

Energy Commission: Next meets on the 16th at town hall at 4PM.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the PB meets on the 9th and a number of planning board members attend this evening's meeting. He said the PB feels very strongly about entering into a contract with retired North Country Council member Tara Bamford for a comprehensive review of the town's zoning and assistance with technical updates. There followed a lengthy discussion with members of the public in regard to the funding for the contract and how the funds were proposed for use.

Town Administrator Staples said she needed to amend some numbers presented for the proposed Personnel Administration budget.

The board entered non-public session at 7:01PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 on a motion from Chairman Brewer and second from Selectman Meth. The board left non-public session at 7:31PM.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31PM.

Respectfully,

Jenny Monahan
Executive Assistant