

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2022 AT 6:00PM AT TOWN HALL**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Victoria Staunches, Virginia Mike, Dawn Steele, Lynn Terres, Patricia Garvin, Peter & Mary Grote, Monica Laflamme, Gene & Mandy Young, Karen Foss, Janice Cole, Carol Walker, Mike & Tina Betley, Dr. Virginia Jeffryes, Ann Foss, Duffi Pratt, Aaron Johnson, William Grote.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS

6:00pm – Town Administrator Cowles - Executive, Personnel Administration, Legal, Welfare, Misc. Budgets Reviews

Executive Budget: Chairman Brewer noted that expenditure to Municipal Resources Inc. in Contracted Services is proposed to be reduced to \$9,000, a decrease of \$6,000. Executive Wages is proposed to increase due to the proposed Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase of 5.5% and the Town Administrator position changing from 20 hours to 30 hours per week. There followed a discussion with the public that included amending the town administrator contract, lowering the proposed COLA increase to match what federal employees are receiving, moving to an automated timekeeping system and instituting a biweekly payroll schedule and employee retention in the increasingly competitive hiring market.

Personnel Administration: Chairman Brewer noted that Health Insurance has increased due to a couple employees adding a family member to their plans. Payroll taxes are less than proposed last year due to payroll taxes from the library and the water department not being deducted in error. Retirement, Unemployment and Workers Compensation reflect the proposed increase in wages.

Welfare: This budget was overspent but is being proposed in the same amount as 2021.

Legal: This budget is being proposed in the same amount as 2021.

TO SIGN/APPROVE

The January 31, 2022 transaction report was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.

The January 18, 2022 minutes were approved as amended on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker.

A Septic Application for Map 16 Lot 33, Franconia Mountains Road, was approved by the selectmen.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Correspondence: Fox Hill Cooperative wrote to the board to request an abatement for lot #85 and Operations Manager Victoria Stauches was in attendance to speak with the board. She said this lot was given to the cooperative but there were already outstanding taxes from the previous owner that were not addressed during closing due to the property being relinquished rather than sold. A new unit has been arranged for that lot.

After a brief discussion, Chairman Brewer made a motion to grant an abatement to Fox Hill Cooperative for taxes due for lot #85 in the amount of \$2,426.29. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Broadband Initiative: Selectman Meth said the North Country Communications District (NCCD) met on January 26th via Zoom and worked on solidifying their new subcommittees. They are moving forward with creating a legal entity for all the towns participating in the NCCD. He said coordinating with Nick Coates of Bristol and the engineer on the middle mile was also discussed. Selectman Meth said the next meeting will be with Carol Miller of the National Collaborative of Digital Equity on Thurs day, February 3rd.

Chamber of Commerce: Selectman Walker said the Chamber met today but he was unable to attend.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the CC next meets February 16th at 4pm and plans to discuss the seven-acre parcel that abuts the Lawrence property and is currently for sale.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the EC has been discussing that they would like the select board to lead the way for the solar array and would like to propose the array to voters on a warrant article. They would like to do a presentation to the public at the budget hearing next week.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the next meeting is in February 8th.

CIP: Selectman Walker said the CIP met Thursday with library trustees Dinny Richmond and Sally Small to discuss the library roof replacement, with Chief Rick Gaudette and Asst. Chief Tyler Gaudette to discuss purchasing a new fire truck, with Jeremy Hall to discuss purchasing a new dump truck.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION: The board decided not to meet on February 28th.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comment was given.

- Virginia Mike and Mary Grote expressed concern about holding the budget hearing at town hall.
- Monica Laflamme asked about town meeting plans.
- Several residents asked about the Personnel Policy Manual.
- Duffi Pratt asked about the proposed Keeping of Poultry Ordinance status.
- Monica Laflamme commented about the Master Plan survey.
- Karen Foss asked about the Personnel Administration budget.
- Mike Betley asked about employee health insurance and retirement plans.

- Karen Foss updated the board on the Capital Improvement Plan committee.
- Mandy Burwell Young read the petitioned warrant article she drafted aloud.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary