

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2023 AT 6:00PM AT TOWN HALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Walker, Jill Brewer

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Eric Meth

OTHERS PRESENT: Sharon Penney, Jim Fitzpatrick, Adam Boyer, Haley Ireland, Peter & Mary Grote, Steve Plant, Jayne O'Connor, Pat Garvin, Mike & Tina Betley, Paul Schmucker, Larry Plate, Karen Foss, Lynn Terres, Virginia Mike, John Brooks

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

Chairman Brewer informed the public that resident Sharon Penney, who was seated at the table with the board, has agreed to serve as interim town administrator. While she does not officially start work until tomorrow, a memorandum of understanding has been drafted and Sharon has agreed to serve for 20 weeks.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS

6:00 Lafayette Recreation Committee: Adam Boyer expressed the committee's concern about the recreation department since Kim Cowles has left the position of Recreation Director. He said as she was the only year-round recreation department employee, there are many unresolved questions about who will be continuing the programs already in progress and who will be planning the other seasonal recreation programs and events.

There was a brief discussion about the position being part-time or full-time, after which Selectman Walker said this will be discussed at the tri-town meeting on January 23rd in Sugar Hill. Chairman Brewer said the committee should consider whether the recreation director position should be full-time or part-time and a job description should be developed. Selectman Walker said the recreation committee will be invited to join the tri-town meeting as the position needs to be discussed with the tri-towns. After additional discussion, the selectmen said the current job description could be posted as a part-time position on the town website and the NH Municipal Association website to get the process started.

6:15 – Steve Plant - CIP Recommendation: Steve said the CIP committee began meeting in August of 2022 and new members were welcomed this year. He said the CIP spreadsheets were updated to allow for longer forecasting and asset costs were updated to reflect current market pricing. He said Recommendations for Proceeds was added to the CIP as some assets were auctioned and income received.

Steve said the Transfer Station CRF is currently healthy enough to fund the town's obligations for 2023. The committee chose to halt funding for this year and revisit when the committee reconvenes in the fall.

He said for the Police Department, the committee recommended to fund that CRF with approximately \$14,000 which is consistent with past years.

For the Highway Trucks and Heavy Equipment funds, the committee recommends funding the trucks fund with \$85,0137 and the heavy equipment fund with \$42,642. Both of these are increases over prior years due to increased market pricing. Highway Department Infrastructure is recommended for funding the CRF with

\$40,000 for bridge construction and the expendable trust funds (ETF) with \$21,000 for sidewalks and \$75,000 for highways. He said these figures are consistent with prior years.

For Buildings & Grounds, the committee recommends funding the equipment CRF at \$10,634 and funding the vehicle CRF with \$11,452. He said these are increases from prior years. The recommended funding for the town building ETF is \$30,000, which is consistent with prior year's funding.

For Life Squad ambulance and equipment, the committee concluded that these should not be funded for 2023 as they are unsure if the town will continue to offer this service. He said the halted funding amounted to about \$53,000 deducted from the 2023 CIP.

The Fire Department heavy equipment CRF is recommended for funding at \$52,006, an increase over prior years, and the fire safety equipment ETF with \$33,150, a significant increase over prior years due to increased replacement costs and some safety equipment expiring after a certain period of use.

Miscellaneous Departments funding were only increased for inflation, totaling an increase of \$16,118.

The total CRF and ETF funding is recommended at \$431,293, an increase of \$75,000 from 2022.

Steve said there are three purchase recommendations for this year. The first is replacing the Buildings & Grounds New Holland tractor with a Ventrac tractor, which costs about \$71,500. The recommended replacement tractor is more versatile and is made for plowing sidewalks but it can also mow and has a vacuum attachment for cleaning up debris. Purchasing the Ventrac tractor would eliminate the need to replace the Gravely mower this year which costs about \$16,000. He said the New Holland would be kept for highway department use in the summer, potentially until it needed to be replaced and then the town's equipment needs would be reevaluated. Recommended funding sources for the Ventrac is \$12,000 from the CRF and \$60,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB).

The second purchase recommendation is for the Buildings & Grounds Ford truck, which is estimated at \$72,000 with funding sources of \$45,000 from the CRF and \$28,000 from the UFB. He said proceeds from the sale of the used truck are recommended to go back to the CRF.

Steve said the Highway Department's fleet was reevaluated last year when it was determined that larger trucks were needed for some tasks. Highway is scheduled to purchase a ten-wheeler truck this year for \$247,300 and those funds are available in the CRF.

In regard to the newly added Recommendations for Proceeds category, the committee recommends that the proceeds from the sale of the Fire Department's Sutphen Pumper, which were \$57,890, are distributed to the Fire Department safety equipment CRF in the amount of \$40,000 and the remainder to the Fire Department heavy equipment CRF.

The sale of the Highway Department truck that sold for \$38,000 is recommended to go back to the heavy equipment CRF and the Wright mower that was sold for \$3,500 is recommended to go back to the Buildings & Grounds equipment CRF.

Steve thanked the members of the committee for putting in so much time this year and said they will meet

again after town meeting to get a plan going for 2024. The selectmen thanked the CIP and department heads for their work on this years CIP.

6:30 – Chief Paul Schmucker - Life Squad: Chief Schmucker communicated his recommendations for the Life Squad to the selectmen. He recommends that town’s ambulance is kept for transport if it is not kept as an Advanced Life Support vehicle for a town operated life squad. He said he called the state about operating a fast squad and is waiting to hear back. He is planning to meet with the current life squad members next week to see if they want to continue to serve or not. He said the ambulance is currently inspected medically and mechanically so is fully operational at this time. Chief Schmucker said excluding wages, the Life Squad budget is recommended at \$15,900, which would be just for a fast squad. He will report back to the board after talking to the current life squad members.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Foss and Larry Plate inquired in regard to the life squad discussion. Mike Betley commented in regard to the life squad discussion. John Brooks inquired about the interim town administrator salary and proposed town administrator salary for a long-term replacement. Larry Plate inquired about the town administrator job description.

TO SIGN/APPROVE

The January 9th, 2022 transaction report was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.

The January 3rd, 2022 minutes were not ready for review by the board this week.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the interim town administrator was reviewed. Chairman Brewer said it is for a 36-hour workweek for a period of 20 weeks beginning today, January 9th, 2023. A motion was made by Chairman Brewer to hire Sharon Penny as the interim town administrator and accept the Memorandum of Understanding. Selectman Walker seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

Chairman Brewer then made a motion to enter non-public session at 6:59pm pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) and RSA 91-A:3, II (b). Selectman Walker seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

The board left non-public session at 7:21pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker. The public session resumed at 7:21pm.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan