

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 7, 2021 AT TOWN HALL

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Karen Foss, Mary Grote, Dawn Steele, Peter Grote, Robert Peraino

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The June 7, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The minutes of May 24, 2021 were approved as written on a motion by Chairman Brewer and a second by Selectman Walker with all voting in favor.

Driveway Permits for Map 22 Lot 9 and Map 24 Lot 56 were approved by the Selectmen.

A Sign Permit Application for True North Salon was approved by the Selectmen.

A Tax Abatement for a seasonal site rental at Fransted Campground in the amount of \$55 was approved by the Selectmen.

A Tax Abatement for 793 Main Street where the building was removed prior to this tax year was approved by the Selectmen in the amount of \$93.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:

None

DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Main Street Temporary Signs: Town Administrator Cowles said there have been some complaints about some signage on Main Street. She read the Temporary Sign Ordinance for the Selectmen. The Hungry Bear Café has a number of temporary signs on the building. Town Administrator Cowles said the ordinance does not include a definition of temporary signs and perhaps the Sign Ordinance could be made more clear in the future. After a brief discussion, it was decided to send Main Street businesses a letter notifying them of the Temporary Sign Ordinance and asking them to review their current signs and seek permits for them if they wish to keep them up.

Town Administrator Cowles said she continues to communicate with Cornelia Loritzen about issues such as her restaurant's occupancy limit and her desire to have a curb cut and a crosswalk put in by NHDOT while the road construction is happening. Town Administrator Cowles said there is not enough year round foot traffic there for NHDOT to approve installing a crosswalk.

Academy Tennis Courts: Selectmen Meth said he spoke with Cindy Berlack about the tennis court. Some clean up and repair efforts have happened there in recent weeks. Town Administrator Cowles said the proposal is that the court would be for public use and first come first serve. The town would not be monitoring the court. There is also \$5,000 that can be used for the court from a donation fund. Due to being a resident of the Academy, Selectmen Meth recused himself from voting.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to enter into an agreement with the Dow Academy to let the public use the tennis court there from June 15th to October 31st. Selectmen Walker seconded the motion. **Motion passes.**

American Rescue Plan Municipal Funds: Town Administrator Cowles said additional funds will be disbursed by the state as part of the American Rescue Plan. The amount is based on the municipality's population and will be given in two installments, the first being in December 2021 and the second in June of 2022. The funds can be used for a number of different purposes.

CORRESPONDENCE: Town Administrator Cowles read a letter from Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) asking if the board would allow hunting on a 114 acre parcel (Map 17 Lot 4) owned by the town. The permission would be renewed annually. The selectmen discussed the benefits to allowing hunting on the parcel.

After the discussion, Selectman Walker made a motion to sign the letter from ACT approving hunting access on the select parcel. Selectman Meth seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Town Administrator Cowles read a letter from a person praising Bill Mead and the Life Squad for their assistance when the person was injured recently.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Town Administrator Cowles said there is a bank account at Mascoma Bank for the Conservation Commission with a balance of \$550. The account was started to fund plantings around town but there has been no activity on the account since 2014. She suggested closing out the account and using the funds for their intended purpose this year. The board authorized her to move forward with this.

Town Administrator Cowles proposed scheduling a public hearing to discuss the Welcome Center. 192 Main Street and the American Rescue Plan funds may also be included in the public hearing. The hearing was scheduled for Monday, June 28th at 5:30pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Broadband Initiative Committee: Selectman Meth said the BIC met May 27th and discussed who might be the town's future internet provider. Next meeting is June 25th.

Chamber of Commerce: No update at this time.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the next meeting is scheduled for June 15th at the pavilion at 4pm.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the next meeting is June 16th at the pavilion at 4:30pm and they plan to continue their work on the on creating a Solar Ordinance and contributing to the Master Plan.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planning Board met on June 8th at 7pm. They continue to work on the Master Plan and may discuss a Temporary Sign Ordinance violation.

OTHER DISCUSSION: The board will begin meeting biweekly after June 14th.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Robert Peraino urged the board to rescind the mask mandate immediately citing advisory from the CDC and thinks the Pledge of Allegiance should be said before meetings.

Dawn Steele said she is in support of the mask mandate and thinks the selectmen have done a great job with it. Dawn also asked about the June 7th minutes to confirm that Treasurer Plant said the \$400,000 from the report discrepancy is in the General Fund. Dawn also said that there have been hunting issues at Forest Hills with hunters coming too close to

resident's homes, and there could be many hunters that would use the town property that was approved for hunting. Dawn next commented about the recent revaluation letters that went out to residents and suggested that rather than doing individual phone meetings with Avitar, they could come for a group meeting with residents to answer their questions and explain their process for reassessment. Dawn lastly said that some properties have been improved and it does not seem to be reflected in their reassessment.

Peter Grote commented about recent inflation.

There was additional discussion about the town wide revaluation and residents concerns over their new assessments between Dawn Steele and Selectman Walker.

Mary Grote commented that residents should be able to meet in person with Avitar to discuss their assessments.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:21pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary