

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2022 AT 6:00PM AT TOWN HALL**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Lynn Terres, Dawn Steele, Jan Cole, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Monica Laflamme, Karen Foss, Jayne O'Connor, Larry Plate, Pat Garvin, Ann Foss, Jeremy Hall

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS

Chief Rick Gaudette & Asst. Chief Tyler Gaudette – Fire Department Fleet: Rick and Tyler updated the board on the status of the department fleet. As discussed at a previous meeting in December, the department was informed that Engine 2 would likely not pass next year's inspection due to rust issues. Engine 2 was recently scheduled to be serviced by WD Perkins and it was discovered that the truck was not serviceable and it was recommended that the truck be removed from service immediately citing that failure of the truck is imminent. The truck has been removed from service at this point. They further explained that the department will now need to rely on Engine 1 (tanker). Engine 1 was subsequently scheduled to be serviced and while doing so it was discovered that the gear box is full of water due to internal pump failure. The estimate for repair is approximately \$21,000 and will take about a week. Documentation of the issues, photos of the corrosion and financing information (five-year lease to own) was provided to the board.

In regard to Engine 2 being completely out of service, Rick and Tyler sought three estimates and the truck they recommend has the most favorable quote at \$669,759. Rick said the lead time for the new truck could be a year and a half to two years and the town will need to rely heavily on mutual aid in the meantime. Engine 2 and the rescue truck would be sold outright.

The board discussed adding this purchase to the petition for the special town meeting for the highway truck and will consult town counsel.

Dawn Steele – Salary Suggestion and ZBA Application: Dawn suggested that the board consider the longevity of a transfer station employee and provide an increase in their pay.

Dawn also asked about the status of her request to be appointed to the ZBA. Chairman Brewer asked Jenny to add this to next weeks agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tina Betley, Monica Laflamme and Mike Betley inquired about the fire truck and fire operations. Kevin Johnson commented on the Chamber of Commerce meeting scheduled for tomorrow (see Committ.ee Reports). Mike Betley asked about the status of the Welcome Center RFP.

TO SIGN/APPROVE

The March 14, 2022 transaction report was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.

The February 22, 2022 minutes were approved as amended on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker. The March 7, 2022 minutes were tabled until next week.

A driveway permit application for Map 24 Lot 66, Timber Lane was approved by the board.

A septic permit application for map 14 Lot 34, Fox Hill Cooperative lots 50 & 54 was approved by the board.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Conservation Commission Property Purchase: Chairman Brewer said the commission is meeting Thursday March 17th to discuss purchasing map 17 lot 3 which abuts the conserved Lawrence Property. She said there is a private donor that will match the funding. Chairman Brewer will update the board next week.

Property Tax Abatements: The board reviewed the recommendation of Dave Woodard of Avitar Associates of New England's recommendation for map 5 lot 5, Kevin R. Johnson 08 Revocable Trust, 1 Main Street. He recommended adjusting the property value by \$45,300 and providing an abatement based on the new value.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to provide an abatement on the \$45,300 value change for 1 Main Street, map 5 lot 5. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

The board next reviewed the recommendation for map 6 lot 10, Jere Peabody, Overbrook Road. It was recommended that this abatement request be denied as in Avitar's opinion this property is fairly and equitably assessed.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to deny the abatement request for map 6 lot 10, Overbrook Road. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

Correspondence: None

Special Town Meeting: Chairman Brewer said as discussed at last week's meeting, Town Administrator Cowles has consulted with town counsel about holding a special town meeting on April 19th and the town now needs to petition the Superior Court and demonstrate certain criteria that shows that there is an emergency situation that was not able to be addressed at the town's annual town meeting. She said this motion was made last week but must be redone as an additional article now needs to be added for the fire truck.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to petition the NH Superior Court to hold a special town meeting on April 19th, 2022 for an article to purchase a new highway truck from the Unassigned Fund Balance and a second article to purchase a new fire truck from the Fire Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and the Unassigned Fund Balance. Selectman Walker seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Broadband Initiative: Selectman Meth said the Northern Grafton Communications District met March 9th and discussed that the Grafton Country Broadband Committee was denied the NTIA grant of 26 million dollars. He is not sure how this will affect the middle mile. He said the it was also discussed that the New Hampshire Electric Coop (NHEC) board recently voted to provide all their members with fiber optic, however Franconia is not a member of the NHEC. Selectman Meth said this will be a focus of the National Collaborative of Digital Equity going forward.

Chamber of Commerce: At tomorrow's meeting, Kevin Johnson said he will propose holding the town wide yard sale again this year on the weekend before Memorial Day (or a later rain date), holding a community plant swap this year at the pavilion and sponsoring a regional job fair at Profile School.

Conservation Commission: No new update at this time, continued work on purchasing Map 17 Lot 3.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said NH Public Radio will be doing a story on local municipal solar arrays to include Franconia. Franconia's coverage will be Wednesday March 16th.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the next meeting is scheduled for March 29th at town hall at 7pm.

CIP: Selectman Meth said the CIP will meet Thursday the 17th at 4pm at the Safety Services Building with Chief Gaudette and Asst. Chief Gaudette to discuss the fire truck purchase.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary