

**MINUTES
FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

Monday, March 16, 2015

A meeting of the Franconia Board of Selectmen was held at 3:00 pm on Monday March 16, 2015 at the Franconia Town Hall. Regular members in attendance were John Lachapelle, Bob Montagno, Bernie Costa and Suzy MacDonald

Guests of the Board - Scott Leslie, Chief John Monaghan, Chief Rick Gaudette, Chief Paul Schmucker, Jeff Phillips, Kim Cowles, Carol Wills

Also attending - Mark Taylor, Dawn Steele, Nick Mike, Mary Grote

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

BOS Minutes 03/9/2015: Formal readings of the March 9, 2015 BOS meeting minutes were waived. The minutes of March 9, 2015 were approved.

FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL:

Transaction List for 03/19/2015- The Board reviewed and signed the transaction list for 03/19/2015.

Application for Current Use - Map 32 Lot 0001 - 79 Acres - Wait to review next week.

APPOINTMENTS:

2:45 Carol Wills - Town Clerk/Tax Collector - The Select Board entered into non public session according to NH RSA 91- 3:2A at 2:45. The Select Board returned to public sessions at 3:05 pm.

3:00 - Department Heads - Budgets - The Select Board is faced with a vote of the towns people to cut \$54,000 from the budget as voted on at the Town Meeting on March 10, 2015. The Select Board and the Department heads will discuss all budgets and the Select Board will make the final decision..Also included in these proposed cuts by the people are Advertising & Regional Associations and Health & Hospitals. John looked at the material, the "shadow budget" that was presented to him. Bob feels strongly that we must maintain essential town services. John looked at the document with actual of 2014 and proposed of 2015. Took the lower dollar figure as an exercise. Some departments take a heavy hit. Fire department, Cemeteries, Fire Dept etc.....
One exercise took the cut of \$54,000 divided by 12 and made 12 groups from the list on the budget.. to share the cut 12 ways it's \$4,500 from each department. Another exercise was to go line by line thru each budget.

John Lachapelle will not support cutting some of the charitable organizations in any way.

The consensus from the group is they are not opposed with cutting the Chamber of Commerce in half. Jeff Phillips feels to take \$4,500 from cemeteries is a lot, almost the whole operating budget. . 3.5% is the amount to cut from the 2015 budget, this will equal \$54,000.

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Calls to the Fire department are always unpredictable. The Fire Department and Police Department have no idea on the maintenance costs of the building. These costs have not been considered in the budget. The Fire Departments budget this year is based on the number of calls from last year. Last year the Fire Department did not increase wages from one hour to two hours for a call out.

The Select Board and Department Heads reviewed Health & Hospitals and other lines. Chamber of Commerce is funded at \$10,000 per year. The Group supports reducing to \$5000. White Mountain Regional Airport is owned by the Town of Whitefield. The group supports cutting the total of \$ 1,371.00. North Country Council was discussed. They receive a fair amount of income from other towns. The feeling is this item is for dues and is not a contribution. This amount will stay in for now. Adaptive Sports Partners - funded solely by donations. This item will stay for now. Bernie Costa is not in favor of the Red Cross. The group agrees to remove \$496.00. Ammonoosuc Community Health serves the community. After discussion it was decided to put this item at \$3,500. Boys and Girls Club amount will be eliminated from this budget. CASA has two such people here in Franconia that are advocates, representative to the kids. This item of \$500 will stay. Center for New Beginnings will be kept at \$1000. Grafton Co Senior Citizens delivers meals on wheels to Franconia residents, transports seniors, among other items that directly benefit Franconia Residents. This item will go back to last year's figure of \$1,250.00 . Keep \$300.00 for Health Officer. North Country Home Health & Hospice; the group does not want to cut. \$3,100. Burch House leave at \$520.00. White Mt Mental Health, 26 people were seen in 2013. Hesitate to cut \$1,292.00. CAP keep at \$2,700.00 . Savings from the cuts in this area are \$8371.00

Paul Schmucker very uneasy taking funds from those who can't defend their budget. (Health & Hospitals)

The group is now looking at having to cut another \$45, 629.00. Discussed and figured was cutting 2.7% from each department.

Kim brought up the fact that the recreation budget is a tri town budget. Each town is agreeing to pay a percentage of the budget so does Franconia take the only hit? Does the percentage for Sugar Hill and Easton get figured in? TRI towns would need to be notified of any changes to the recreation budget

The Select Board would like to reorganize the numbers and get out to all Department Heads this week for their review. All Department Heads are asked to meet back here next week, Monday at 3pm.

Mary Grote made mention that what was proposed was a shadow budget. None of the essential services in the town where to be cut. The Select Board would like to know why none of this was addressed at the Budget Hearing. Dawn Steele would like to have all department heads available to answer questions at the budget meetings. The other towns have all information on the web site. All draft budget documents are to be available two weeks prior to budget meeting next year according to the Select Board.

Scott Leslie has to have repairs done to the International. It was done for the hydraulic system for the plows. No extended warranty on the hydraulic system. .

Jeff has a question on the Dow Clock. Will winding now be done electrically? Yes, the clock will now be electric. This will raise the cost of electricity. The cost of the clock winder should be eliminated.

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Three of four fire hydrants that were tested by the fire department are not working. They appear to be frozen. LRW needs to know about this. Select Board would like to meet with the Water Commissioners in early April regarding several matters.

The Select Board discussed using the income from the Life Squad since they bring in income to offset the budget. The Select Board will look closer at the Life Squad income. Discussed using the health insurance money rebate from Health Trust to help offset the budget.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

March 31, 2015 the Select Board has to be in court. Hearing on Evergreen Apartments failing to pay taxes in the past.

Time to rotate the chairperson. Bob Montagno will now be chair.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Wetlands Permit Application - Route 141 - Map 19/Lot 10-12 create pond (filed)

March for Meals - May 16

Thank you from Evelyn Moss - White Mt School

Selectman Lachapelle adjourned the public meeting at 5:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne MacDonald, Executive Secretary

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