

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING**  
**MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021 AT 3PM VIA ZOOM**

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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Eric Meth, Jill Brewer

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeff Blodgett

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, various online attendees.

**The meeting was called to order at 3:01pm.**

**TO SIGN/APPROVE:**

The March 1, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen remotely.

The review of the February 8, 2021 minutes was delayed until the next meeting as the Selectmen did not receive the draft prior to the meeting.

**APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:**

**Unassigned Fund Balance Policy:** Town Administrator Cowles researched Fund Balance Policies that other towns are using and found a policy that she felt was a good policy and sent to the Selectmen for review. She said the policy defines the components of the fund balance and outlines that the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) recommends the Fund Balance be 5% - 17% and that the Fund Balance be adequate enough to cover two months of the town's operating expenses.

Selectman Meth said he reviewed the policy and found it fairly comprehensive. Selectman Meth said that residents expressed concern with the balance of the Fund Balance at the budget hearing, but noted that it is within the parameters recommended by the DRA.

In response to a question from Dawn Steele, Town Administrator Cowles said Jamie Dow of the DRA informed her that the Fund Balance percentage is calculated by adding the total town appropriations to the county assessment, local school tax effort and state school tax effort and then subtracting the town's Enterprise Funds and current year bonds. Town Administrator Cowles said she will put the Fund Balance Policy she shared with the Selectmen on the website for the public's review.

**TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:**

**Town Administrator Update:** Town Administrator Cowles said the issue of the Mittersill sewage odor will be discussed next week as Mittersill Resort Manager Lois Bijole requested to make an appointment to be on the March 8<sup>th</sup> agenda to discuss the issue with the board.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Cable Consortium:** Selectman Meth said he was not able to attend the Zoom meeting for Grafton County Broadband Commission last week but will attend the next meeting at the end of March. He said

there has been email communication among the local members regarding the intent to reach out to companies that install fiber optic and meet with them in the future.

**Chamber of Commerce:** No update.

**Conservation Commission:** Chairman Brewer said the CC had a field visit to check the status of the easement boundary of the Middle Earth Trail. The new property owners of the parcel at McKenzie Woods attended and said they purchased the property because the trail system runs through it. They will be building a house on the parcel in the future and are excited to be on the trail system. The CC is working on protecting that trail system going forward.

**Energy Commission:** Selectman Meth said he was not able to attend the meeting on February 16<sup>th</sup> but topics of discussion were the EC's desire to continue to build their capital reserve fund through the warrant article that is on this year's warrant. The warming hut was also discussed as well as future solar array projects. The next meeting is on March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Planning Board:** Selectman Meth said the Planning Board met and discussed the Master Plan and their intent to survey the townspeople about updates to the Master Plan. Mary Grote added that the PB also voted to move their next meeting to the 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm as the election is on the 9<sup>th</sup> and that this needs to be updated on the town's website calendar. Selectman Meth said the PB is also seeking new members.

Selectman Meth and Chairman Brewer also scheduled their attendance at the March 9<sup>th</sup> election. Selectman Meth will attend from 5pm to 7pm and Chairman Brewer will attend from 3pm-5pm. They will ask Selectman Blodgett if he can attend from 1pm-3pm.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT:**

Earlier in the meeting, prior to public input, Peter Grote asked why the board is just addressing the issue of the town not having an Unassigned Fund Balance Policy now rather than at some point since 2017 when the town's auditors recommended one is implemented.

Also prior to the opening of public input, Kevin Johnson asked if a floor motion could be made at town meeting that would make all warrant articles seeking funds from taxation to instead be paid with the Unassigned Fund Balance funds. The board was not sure if that was possible.

Karen Foss asked about why on the MS-636 under Miscellaneous Revenues, it shows \$3.5 million dollars under Sale of Municipal Property. Town Administrator Cowles will check into this and report back.

Karen also asked about the numbers being in the middle column, Anticipated Revenues, rather than on the left, Actual Revenues. Town Administrator Cowles will look into this as well.

Dawn Steele asked about the increase in the anticipated revenues for the Water Department. Kevin Johnson said significant improvements are planned for the water system at Mittersill.

Dawn also asked about the Employee Wages Spreadsheet, saying that the Public Works Director increase appears to only be based on the Road Agent portion. Town Administrator Cowles said she

would check into that.

Dawn also asked about the \$14,000 in Lafayette Fundraising. Town Administrator Cowles said donations were made.

Janice Cole asked about Article 9 and the use of the term “non-lapsing”. Town Administrator Cowles said this is because if the project is not finished during the calendar year, the funding would be available the following year.

Dawn Steele also asked about the MS-636 Resident Taxes figure showing as \$0. Town Administrator Cowles will look into this.

There was no further public input. Chairman Brewer made a motion to enter non-public session for reasons of reputation.

The board left non-public session at 3:54pm. With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jenny Monahan  
Administrative Secretary