

MINUTES
FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Monday, March 21, 2016

A meeting of the Franconia Board of Selectmen was held at 3:00 pm on Monday, March 21, 2016 at the Franconia Town Hall. Regular members in attendance were Bernie Costa, Eric Meth, John Lachapelle, and Sally Small.

Guests of the Board: Mary Grote and Jim Alden

Others in attendance: Karen Foss, Dawn Steele, Russ Cumbee, Peter Grote and Nick Mike

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

BOS Minutes 2/29/2016: Bernie apologized to Herbie Bartlett for adding the amended sentence to the February 29th, 2016 minutes concerning the Chamber of Commerce and asked that the amended sentence be deleted. The matter was actually discussed on February 22, 2016.

BOS Minutes 3/14/2016: Formal reading of the March 14, 2016 minutes were waived.

Eric makes a motion to accept the minutes as amended, John seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL:

Transaction Lists – 3/24/2016 – Approved and Signed by the Board

MS-232 Report of Appropriations Actually Voted (2) – Approved and signed by the Board

Petition & Pole License – Wallace Hill – Sally explained that this was for a pole to be replaced at the bottom of Wallace Hill for the power lines. **Approved and signed by the board.**

Appointments- Police – Part-time Officers (Ryan S. Jarvis & Kayla M. Audit) – Approved and signed by the Board

Thank you Letters – Letters for Bob Montagno, Grace Montagno & Mark Taylor – Approved and signed by the Board.

APPOINTMENTS:

3:00 – Open Time - Peter Grote asked why the Board changed their mind regarding the Chamber of Commerce's appropriation. Bernie explained that in Bob Montagno's conversation with the Chamber's president, Barbara Ashley, he was told that the Chamber's position had not changed in regard to Northern Pass; they were still opposed so the board decided not to reduce their line item. Mary Grote stated that she had not seen anything in writing that backed up the board's statement. Bernie asked Sally to contact Barbara Ashley and request that the Chamber make a formal statement opposing Northern Pass as currently proposed

John Lachapelle brought up the board's chairmanship asked how it was determined. Bernie explained that prior to the Town Meeting she, Eric & Bob had discussed it and that she had agreed to be chairman. Since the board had changed it was agreed to hold an election. Eric made the motion to appoint Bernie as chair, John seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

John Lachapelle also questioned the delay in requiring employees to enroll in Medicare. Bernie explained that the board didn't feel they had adequate time before Town Meeting to revise the employee policy and discuss it with the employees so it was decided to implement it in 2017.

3:15 – Mary Grote – Procedures & Minutes – Mary Grote was concerned that our minutes are not posted in a timely fashion per RSA 91-A:2 which calls for the minutes being open to public inspection not more than 5 business days after the meeting. Bernie was concerned about posting minutes that hadn't been approved. It was suggested that the word draft could be in the background of the minutes posted before board approval.

Mary was also concerned with the non-public sessions that they aren't always listed on the agenda but covered by the blank statement at the bottom of our posted agenda. Bernie explained that it was our attorney that had suggested that wording in the event something came up that required a non-public session.

John had the list that stated the 6 reasons, as per RSA 91-A:3, that would allow the board to go into a non-public session and Bernie and Eric agreed that when the non-public sessions were utilized they all fell within the six allowed reasons.

Mary felt that for the sake of transparency we should state the reason for going into a non-public session on the agenda whenever possible. Bernie stated that she did not like the word transparency because it showed a lack of trust in the board.

Mary voiced a concern about the meetings being held in the afternoon and that there were many young residents who could not make a 3:00pm meeting. Bernie explained that the boards had tried later meetings but not many people attended. Sally then stated that the board had kept the meetings at 3:00 so they could meet with the department heads without making them come back for an evening meeting. Bernie suggested to Mary that people who could not make the meeting could read the agenda and minutes and write to the Town with their concerns.

The Board agreed to post the draft minutes within the 5 day period on the website and the approved minutes including any and all revisions by Wednesday after the Monday meeting where they were approved.

3:45 – Jim Alden – Committees– Jim met with the board to discuss the Budget/Finance committee and the membership of the committee. In talking with his attorney about RSA 32:15, she didn't feel it was appropriate to have an employee on the committee. Eric reminded him that it wasn't a budget committee but an advisory finance committee, Jim noted established expectation to follow intent of the RSA. John Lachapelle stated that the Advisory Finance Committee was set up to make recommendations to the Selectmen but could not make any decisions.

There was a brief discussion about the difference between an SB2 budget committee and a traditional Town Meeting budget committee both of which would have to be approved by the voters of the town at Town Meeting.

Jim was interested in obtaining a copy of the Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) report that discussed the recommendations for staffing the Town Hall once Sally has retired. Bernie pointed out that the report did not include the two hours a week the Planning board secretary had office hours so she didn't feel the report was complete. The board asked Sally to contact MRI to amend the job descriptions to include the office hours. The board offered Jim Alden a copy of the MRI report but he declined.

The board agreed to post the report online but to mark it "Preliminary".

(The conversation concerning the last part of the MRI report was discussed later in the meeting)

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Resignation – Sally read the email from Bob Montagno where he resigned effective immediately from all Franconia Committees he currently served on.

Right to Know Law – Eric talked with Milton Bratz, a Littleton Selectman, concerning emails that are informational only and whether or not one selectman could correspond with another when it was only information not an email seeking a dialog. Milton said in Littleton they just add the wording " **This email is for update purposes only. No response is warranted or required.**" The board asked Sally to share the wording with the other committees.

Energy Commission – Energy Audit of the Public Safety – The Energy Commission was interested in conducting an audit of the new Public Safety Building to confirm it is energy efficiency. Bernie suggested that the commission get together with Allan Clark to make sure all items on the "to fix list" were done prior to any audit and to include Allan when going through the building.

Street Lighting Initiative – The Energy Commission would like to refit the street lights with more efficient lighting and decommission the street lights that weren't necessary. Eric had a list of all the street lights and the ones the Police and Fire personnel felt could be eliminated. John mentioned that a number of years ago we had looked into changing out the light fixture to more efficient lighting but we didn't have time to organize it before PSNH had scheduled their regular swap out. The cost at the time to do it after the swap out was too high to consider. John suggested that the commission get in touch with Eversource to see when they were doing their next swap out and whether or not the timing was right to see if we could change the lighting and save money. Sally pointed out that when we changed to the high sodium lightning it took a vote of town meeting and this would require the same. Sally told Karen Foss that she would give her the contact person at Eversource to get in touch with.

Selectmen Committee Assignments- The board members agreed to the following committee assignments: **Bernie** – CIP; **Eric** – Northern Pass, Planning Board & Energy Commission; **John-** Town Staffing & Conservation Commission.

Trustees of the Trust Funds – With the resignation of Grace Montagno and Ann Foss the board needs to appoint two trustees. John had a suggestion for one of the trustees and said he would talk to her before next week’s meeting.

Committees Needing Members – The board discussed the committees needing members to serve and whether or not some could be combined. In the end the three committees and known members were:

1. Salary/Wage & Benefits - Dawn Steele
2. Town Hall Staffing – John Lachapelle
3. A committee to review the independent audits – Peter Grote

Bernie agreed to write a summary of each committee to be posted on the website in hopes of generating interest in serving on a committee from the residents.

Northern Pass Transmission, LLC Order of Notice “Petition to Cross Public Waters”– Sally showed the board the legal document that had been received in the mail and it was decided to give Peter Grote a copy of the document.

Town of North Hampton Regulation – Eric mentioned the email that came from Lydia Cumbee regarding the regulation of explosives and if the board felt the Town would be interested in adopting something similar. She was asking the Selectmen to review it and decide whether or not she should bring it to the Planning Board. Bernie asked that Sally put it on the agenda for next week.

The Select Board entered into non public session according to NH RSA 91-3:II(e) at 3:30pm to discuss strategy in a legal matter. The Select Board returned to public sessions at 3:40pm.

John made a motion to adjourn the closed session meeting and seal the closed session minutes, Bernie seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

ITEMS TO RVISIT:

List of items to be revisited- Sally passed out the list and the board agreed to remove the overtime item but will review the list again next week and decide what other items could be removed. Bernie asked Sally to add the Street Lighting Initiative to the list.

Bernie made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 pm, John seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

There may be a possibility of a closed session meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally L. Small
Administrative Assistant