

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 AT TOWN HALL**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Dawn Steele, Janice Cole, Karen Foss, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Chief Mac Cashin

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

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The March 29, 2021 transaction list was reviewed and signed by the Selectmen.

The minutes of March 15, 2021 were approved as written. The minutes of March 22, 2021 were approved as amended.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:

None

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Lafayette Recreation Committee Appointment: Town Administrator Cowles said there were initially two people interested in joining the committee but one had since rescinded their request to be considered for appointment. After a brief discussion, Chairman Brewer made a motion to appoint Haley Ireland to the Lafayette Recreation Committee. Selectman Walker seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

Driveway Permit Application – Wells Road – Map 21 Lot 11-4: The Selectmen reviewed and signed the application that had already been approved by Public Works, the Fire Department and Police Department.

Tax Abatement Request – Map 23 Lots 22 & 25: After seeking additional information from the town's assessor, Dave Woodward of Avitar Assessing, the board denied this request for abatement. The property owners will be notified by mail.

Town Administrator Update: Town Administrator Cowles said the state sent out this year's Red Listed Bridges report and Bickford Hill Bridge has been removed from the list while Lafayette Bridge remains on the list.

In regard to the scheduled Main Street paving this summer, Town Administrator Cowles presented an agreement from the Dept. of Transportation to the selectmen for their review that states that the town accepts crosswalk maintenance responsibilities.

Spring clean up is underway at the park and started on some town trails.

The Franconia Soaring Foundation has again applied for property tax abatement. Dave Woodward of Avitar Assessing will review the new application.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Cable Consortium: Selectman Meth said Carol Miller, the state's former Director of Broadband Technology, attended the March 26th meeting of the North Country Communications District Committee. Some topics discussed were getting fiber to the door, bonding and digital equity. The next meeting is April 23rd. The Grafton County Broadband Committee will meet on March 31st.

Chamber of Commerce: Selectman Walker said he will be attending the next chamber meeting.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the CC met Wednesday the 24th and discussed the trail network and how to ensure its sustainability. Beth Horan of Peabody and Smith, Rosalind Page of ACT, Chris Thayer and some property owners attended. The importance of landowner involvement was discussed and ways to show appreciation for them. The next meeting is Wednesday, April 28th.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the next meeting is April 20th at 4:30pm.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planning Board is meeting tomorrow, the 30th and is still working on the Master Plan and developing a town wide survey of residents about the Master Plan.

Additional Discussion: After a brief discussion, the selectmen decided not to meet during school vacation on April 26th.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Mary Grote said the information provided to her for her 91A request is not what she was looking for.

Dawn Steele asked if grants have been sought for the proposed sidewalk improvements. Chairman Brewer said the town applied previously and was not awarded any funds. Town Administrator Cowles said the town has not qualified in the past due to the median income of residents. Dawn also provided a handout to all present that shows the General Fund's beginning and ending balances, deposits and withdrawals for 2015 to 2020. Dawn asked why the 2019 ending balance is \$414,000 higher than 2020's beginning balance and the selectmen balance is \$328,000 lower in 2020 than in 2019.

Janice Cole asked for the 2019 report from the auditor's to be put back on the site.

Mary Grote commented that the questions about the General Fund make it difficult to know exactly what the balance of the Unassigned Fund Balance is.

Janice Cole asked Town Administrator Cowles if she is aware that the Total Income figure in the 2020 Summary of Revenues and Expenditures is off by \$91,000.

Karen Foss said she and other residents have been trying to work on the Unassigned Fund Balance policy and true amount but there are many discrepancies that are making it more difficult.

Dawn Steele asked if it would be possible to have one of the auditors come to a meeting to answer questions from residents.

Janice Cole asked if Town Administrator Cowles could provide the under spent budget and excess revenues figures for the work she and others are doing on the Unassigned Fund Balance.

There was no further public comment. Chairman Brewer made a motion to enter non-public session at 4:02pm pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a).

The board left non-public session at 4:30pm. With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary