

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021 AT TOWN HALL

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Allan Clark, Scott Leslie, Dawn Steele, Mary Grote, Janice Cole, Lynn Terres.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The May 10, 2021 transaction list was found to have an error so was not approved. An updated report will be sent to the selectmen remotely for review and approval.

The minutes of May 3, 2021 were approved as amended on a motion by Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker with all voting in favor.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS:

3:00pm Discuss Front Walkway, Lights and Lawn of Town Hall: Town Administrator Cowles, the board and all attendees of the meeting convened on the front steps of town hall to discuss the front walkway, front lighting and lawn. Town Administrator Cowles said the stone slab walkway is problematic due to its uneven surface which poses safety and winter maintenance issues. The front of the building lighting could also be improved. There were no decisions made.

3:15pm – Building Official Allan Clark – Request for Cease and Desist Order from Board: Allan said he has denied a building permit application for a shed as the property is in the flood zone. The property owner disagreed that the property is in the flood zone but Allan's research confirms that it is. The property is also in the Shoreland Protection Zone and disturbance done on the property has been in that zone, which is a state violation. He said there has been an ongoing disagreement with the property owner about the issue and requested that the board send a cease and desist letter to the property owner. After a brief discussion, the board was in agreement that the property owner should receive clear instruction from the board.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to send a cease and desist letter to the owner of Map 24 Lot 1. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Town Administrator Cowles said Fox Hill Cooperative has requested four tax abatements for units that are abandoned and/or uninhabitable. The units will be removed but are still there currently. Town Administrator Cowles said she let them know that the board cannot keep abating these units in the future so they will need to be dealt with.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE:

Town Administrator Cowles said Trevor Presby has offered \$250 for the old pumper truck that has been in storage at the Mittersill Fire Station. After a brief discussion, the board agreed to accept the offer.

Town Administrator Cowles said the NH Preservation Alliance has selected Franconia for an award for the restoration of the gates at Willow and Elmwood Cemeteries. The selectmen gave kudos to the Cemetery Trustees for their work on that project.

The topic of fireworks on town property was next discussed. There is an upcoming event that has requested to use fireworks on the Dow. The selectmen discussed this issue and decided that it was not a good idea and therefore denied the request.

Town Administrator Cowles said she did a walk down Main Street today with NHDOT and they will be starting at the south end of Main Street on June 1st and will be initially working to correct the drainage issues. She said she has been in contact with a restaurant owner from that end of the street who has concerns about the paving and sidewalk project as well as the occupancy allowance at her establishment. The restaurant owner also is also concerned about the condition of the trail from the Green Frog to the swimming hole behind it and would like to see the trail fixed. Town Administrator Cowles said improvements to that trail would be done by donation as there are not funds available in the budget for that project. The paving will not start until after August 1st. The Highway Department will start pulling up the sidewalks at the north end of Main Street and work towards the south end.

Town Administrator Cowles said the Town of Conway has recently passed an ordinance that disallows short term rentals in residentially zoned areas and it will be interesting to see how that works for the town.

OTHER DISCUSSION:

Selectman Walker said he had been contacted by Lafayette School Nurse Samantha Presby who is concerned that the town wide mask ordinance expires before the end of the school year. He also discussed the issue with Principal Johnk who shared the same concerns. After a lengthy discussion, Selectman Walker made a motion to extend the town wide mask ordinance until June 16th. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

Chairman Brewer said she would be in favor of doing biweekly meetings during the summer months as they have in previous years. Selectman Walker said the meeting time should be discussed again as well. This topic will be on the agenda in the next few weeks.

The board also discussed an application for a Veterans Disability Tax Credit that they had reviewed. After a brief discussion, the board decided to award an annual tax credit in the amount of \$2,000.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to grant the Veterans Disability Tax Credit to the applicant in the amount of \$2,000. Selectman Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Broadband Initiative: Selectman Meth said North Country Communications District Committee will meet on Friday the 21st at 5:00pm via Zoom.

Chamber of Commerce: No update at this time.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the Conservation Commission sent a letter in support of HB177 that prohibits the siting of landfills within two miles from state parks.

Energy Commission: Selectman Meth said the EC next meets on the 19th at 4:30pm at the pavilion and plan to discuss an NBRC grant and their plan to work with the Planning Board to develop a Solar Array Ordinance.

Planning Board: Selectman Meth said the Planning Board will meet on Tuesday the 11th at 7:00pm. They are still working on the Master Plan.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Dawn Steele asked if the MS-636 that is on the website is the same copy that was filed with the state. She also asked if the auditor's report was received yet and asked about how many Short Term Rental Registrations had been filed.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Walker.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary