

**Town of Franconia  
Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting  
May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 at 6:00PM  
at Franconia Town Hall**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Board Members Present: Jill Brewer, Eric Meth, Dan Walker**

**Others Present: Sharon Penney, Jenny Monahan, Nate Hanson, Larry Plate, Karen Foss, Jan Cole, Carol Walker, Mike Betley, Mary Grote, Monica Laflamme, Pat Garvin, Jayne O'Connor, Virginia Mike, Dawn Steele, Chief Rick Gaudette, Chief Chad Miller (Littleton), Paul Hayes (Caledonian Record)**

**APPOINTMENTS**

**6:00PM – Chief Chad Miller – Littleton Fire Department – EMS Partnership Update:** Chief Miller provided a four-year cost analysis for continued EMS coverage for Franconia. He said Littleton had to temporarily table a long-term plan with Franconia due to EMS staffing issues in Littleton. He said calls were coming in for service in both areas at the same time and this was not sustainable for either town. Littleton's current staffing is three firefighters/EMT's per shift, each operating on an Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) or Paramedic level. The four-year cost analysis includes the expense of adding a total of four additional full-time firefighter/EMT's in Littleton so both towns could be serviced. It also includes the cost of maintaining a third ambulance as Littleton requires two ambulances at all times and servicing Franconia would require an additional ambulance, which as proposed would be Franconia's existing ambulance staying maintained and certified for service. Chief Miller said securing additional, qualified personnel will be a challenge and to that effect Littleton is working with two workforce development programs through state agencies.

Part of the proposal also includes the potential for an award of FEMA's SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant, which Littleton has applied for. The proposal also includes a ten-year Capital Reserve Fund plan for the replacement of the third ambulance by Littleton.

In response to a resident's question, Chief Miller said Littleton also covers Sugar Hill and Easton's EMS calls. He said both have three-year agreements and very low call volumes which Littleton was able to work into their own service plan. He said the addition of Franconia, with the demonstrated level of increased call volume is not serviceable with the same type of agreement as is in place with Sugar Hill and Easton.

There followed a lengthy discussion during which residents asked questions about proposed costs, services at Cannon Mountain and Lafayette Center and the financial impact of the SAFER grant on the total cost.

Franconia and Littleton select boards are working on finalizing a date to meet and further discuss the EMS partnership in coming weeks.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**TO SIGN/APPROVE**

The minutes of April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 were approved as written.

The transaction list for April 28, 2023 through May 4, 2023 was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.  
**DISCUSS/REVIEW**

**Septic Permit Application – Eddy – Map 13 Lot 26-1** – The selectmen approved this application for submission to the state.

**Review of Document for State Housing Grant – Hillwinds Project:** Planning Board member Monica Laflamme sought permission from the board to indicate select board approval on the application for the housing grant that is part of the T&T Mtn. Investments project to create four long term rental units at the Hillwinds property. While the board had previously authorized the Planning Board to proceed with the application, Monica wanted to revisit the application with the selectmen before finalizing it and memorialize the final approval. The selectmen approved Monica indicating their approval on the application and its submission to the state.

Selectman Walker made a motion that the board approves the InvestNH Housing Opportunity Planning grant application as written for submission to the state on the board's behalf. Selectman Meth seconded the motion, motion passes unanimously.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Grant:** Town Administrator Penney said that in order to be eligible for federal disaster funds the town needs to update its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan every five years. Emergency Management Director Nate Hanson said the town can apply for a grant to help offset costs for completing the plan update. Nate said part of the process of applying for the grant is select board approval indicated in meeting minutes, the agreement signed by the board and the signed contract with the company that is being used to assist with the update. Nate said the grant is a 75%/25% match grant, so the town could receive up to \$7,500 and would need to pay \$2,500 for total funding of \$10,000.

Chairman Brewer made a motion that the Town of Franconia Select Board accept the grant agreement terms as presented and sign the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program agreement with the NH Department of Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Selectman Walker seconded the motion, motion passes unanimously.

The Select Board, in a majority vote, accepted the terms of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as presented in the amount of \$7,500 for updating the local hazard mitigation plan. Furthermore, the Board acknowledges that the total cost of this project will be \$10,000, in which the town will be responsible for a 25% match (\$2,500).

**Short-Term Rental Safety Inspection Checklist:** Administrative Secretary Jenny Monahan presented the Short-Term Rental Safety Inspection Checklist that was created with the collaboration of Fire Chief Rick Gaudette, Building Inspector Dave Wiley and Planning Board members Pat Garvin and Monica Laflamme. Jenny said the checklist was reviewed by town counsel and recommended language changes were implemented.

Chairman Brewer made a motion that the board accept the Short-term Rental Inspection Checklist as written. Selectman Walker seconded the motion, motion passes unanimously.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Town Administrator Penney said a request was made to Chief Miller of Littleton that EMS services are provided at an annual rugby tournament that is held at the airport grounds. She said historically

Franconia Life Squad has attended the tournament free of charge to provide services if needed, however with the disbandment of the Franconia Life Squad and Littleton handling the town's EMS needs, this would require Littleton EMS personnel to attend the tournament with an ambulance on site. The requester opined that the town of Franconia should fund the cost of the EMS standby as the tournament attendees support local businesses while attending the tournament. After the discussion, the selectmen agreed that the town would not be funding the EMS services for the tournament.

### **OTHER DISCUSSION**

Chairman Brewer said that a non-public session was held on April 10<sup>th</sup> via a two-thirds vote of the board that town counsel advised against holding due to a lack of information about the intent of the session. She said that it is important that the board observe advice from counsel and that the board is careful to adhere to the requirements of RSA 91-A:3 and the justified reasons the board can enter into non-public session.

In continuance of this discussion, Jenny Monahan wanted to address a statement that was made in the non-public session about the Administrative Secretary position being recommended as a twenty hour per week position. Jenny said that the town office staffing analysis from Municipal Resources Inc. that was conducted in 2016 was mentioned in the non-public session and she subsequently sent the report to the selectmen for their review. Jenny said the position was not recommended as a twenty hour a week position but the town was instead presented with several options for the staffing of town offices, one of which being combining what were two part-time positions into a full time, Administrative Secretary position. It was Jenny's understanding that this is the option the town chose of the recommendations. Jenny said she would like clarification from the board that the position she currently holds is recognized as a full-time position unequivocally by the selectmen. There followed a discussion during which the selectmen agreed that the Administrative Secretary position is and should remain a full-time position for the foreseeable future, and Town Administrator Penney stated that it is her recommendation that the position remain full time based on her observations after having worked in the office since January. Selectman Walker and Selectman Meth expressed their regrets about what was stated in the non-public session. Several residents expressed their support for the Administrative Secretary position being a full-time position.

The selectmen asked Jenny to follow up on reports of downed trees on both the Green Frog Trail and the Riverwalk Trail and ask Buildings & Grounds supervisor Corey Rush to address.

Selectman Walker said the Capital Improvements Plan committee met today and there was discussion on whether the town should pursue auctioning town vehicles and equipment when it is no longer needed, or should pursue trading in vehicles and equipment towards a new purchase. The board discussed that both options have been used in the past depending on which provides for the best financial outcome. The board decided this should be approached on a case by case basis.

Selectman Meth said that in light of the EMS discussion and the deadline of May 5<sup>th</sup>, he would like to move forward with the application for additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the county. Town Administrator Penney said she is taking a short vacation so will not be available after May 5<sup>th</sup> to assist. Selectman Meth said the County Commissioner said she will work him on the application. Selectman Meth will pursue this directly.

Chairman Brewer provided a quick update on the Tri-Town Meeting held earlier in the day today. She said the tri-towns are going to move forward with an agreement with Mt. Carberry Landfill and therefore is not renewing its contract with Casella. The tri-towns will also engage with Normandeau

Trucking for its hauling needs.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan  
Administrative Secretary