

FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Monday, November 16, 2015

A meeting of the Franconia Board of Selectmen was held at 3:02 pm on Monday, November 16, 2015 at the Franconia Town Hall. Regular members in attendance were Bob Montagno, Eric Meth, Bernie Costa, Sally Small and Herbie Bartlett.

Also attending – Peter Grote, Mary Grote, Dawn Steele, Karen Foss, Rick Gaudette, George Whitcomb.

SELECTMEN'S TIME:

BOS Minutes 11/9/15: Formal reading of the November 9, 2015 BOS meeting minutes were waived. The minutes for November 9, 2015 were not approved.

FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL:

Transaction List for 11/19/15 – Approved and signed by the Board.

Health Trust Authorization & Membership Agreements – Tabled for the next meeting.

Municipal Resources, Inc. Agreement – signed and approved. It had been reviewed by Laura Spector. Sally will mail to Municipal Resources, Inc.

Auditor's Letter of Representation – Signed by the Selectmen.

APPOINTMENTS:

3:00 – CLOSED SESSION Per RSA 91-A:3II(c)

3:30 – Carol Wills – Town Clerk/Tax Collector 3rd Q Budgets – Her Town Clerk budget was over because of the mandatory State software program needed to do the registrations. Next year we will need a line for the internet and the phone too. Equipment – after Carol was elected she purchased equipment to get the office set in a way that worked for her. None of it was anticipated. Some of the expenses were Marie's, our temporary Town Clerk, expenses. Marie arranged things for her liking. This year was an anomaly when it comes to this department.

We will probably be all right. It will be close by the end of the year. Lien process – will cost more for next year. Recording fees will be adjusted. Carol will run a report on how much she has collected.

4:00 – Public hearing for Burning Ordinance was opened - Rick Gaudette – Burning Ordinance Proposed Changes & Fire – 3rd Q Budget – The town has an ordinance that was posted in 1999 that requires a permit year round. The state does not require a permit if there is snow on the ground. Rick Gaudette would like to have the ordinance follow the State's and not require permit in the winter when there is snow on the ground. None of the surrounding towns require a permit to burn in the winter. We don't see a risk or a problem.

George Whitcomb – had his concerns in regards to people burning things that they shouldn't. Permitting is good to keep track. Rick Gaudette thinks it will be simpler for the general public.

George was a Fire Warden and we respected how he wanted to do things. Now we have to respect what the new Fire Warden wants to do. We have the right to go out and inspect any fire at any time.

George said by state law a brush pile must have snow 100 feet around the brush pile. Sally will write the revised ordinance and we can vote on it next week.

Fire Department Budget – was discussed. We are not paying anyone to clean the station. We are cleaning it ourselves.

Rick thinks there would be a better way to split the costs with the other department in the Public Safety Building. Bob Montagno is interested in what he has to say. Rick will give us his thoughts. We want to allocate reasonably.

Rick would like to purchase new gas detection meters this year. They are worn on the coat for personal protection. We have three and he is trying to buy at least one a year.

Pagers and radios are broken, damaged and worn out. The replacement cost is about \$3K per year.

The Rescue truck is in for repair and at this time they have no idea how much it is going to be to fix it.

Inspections – certain businesses are mandated to be inspected annually. Wages are paid for the inspections performed. Businesses needing Liquor licenses have to be inspected. We cannot charge for it.

Sally will add the wording to the 1999 Burning Ordinance it and send to Rick Gaudette for his review so we can bring back to the table next week.

4:30 – Paul Schmucker – Life Squad 3rd Q Budget - The budget is over spent but the income off sets the expenditures. Bill collection fee is up because the income from transporting is more than anticipated and we pay 10 percent to Comstar for taking care of the billing. The building maintenance is over budget because it was hard to anticipate the new building and we had problems with the septic that also weren't anticipated. The other expenses that were over budget are because the Life Squad has made more runs than anticipated. The budget anticipated bringing in around \$30,000 in transport fees but to date we have brought in closer to \$54,000. 47 percent of the runs come out of the nursing home. We never take people to DHMC. We take a patient to the local hospital. We will bring them back if they are town residents. They may need new bunker gear. What they have is 14 years old. They will be taking on two more members.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Public Restroom at Town Hall – Tabled until next week.

Letter from Kevin Johnson RE: Kim Cowles’ Dedication & Service – Selectmen read the very positive letter concerning Kim.

Town Office Organization Study – Tabled until next week.

Franconia Marketing Committee – Table for next week.

Eversource Meeting Plan – Preparing for the public hearing in regards to our citizens concerns. What does the town want us to do? We need to draft a letter to DOE. No Eversource representation at the meeting. We haven’t had any response from them for the questions that we asked at our last meeting. We gave Scott Mason the minutes from the meetings. Everyone will have specific questions. Pass questions on to Eversource.

Peter Grote thinks we need leadership. He is an economist and a financial analyst. According to BTLA (Board of Tax & Land Appeals) there is a lot of misinformation out there. What is Eversource is really saying in it proposal? Addressing the net value of the proposing for tax breaks. Fair market value not acceptable. The court is not going to make a blanket decision as to value based on some principles. He feels we need to sit down and negotiate with Northern Pass.

Invitation to the meeting in Whitefield to discuss the utility assessment process is being held on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 between 3-5pm. Eric Meth and Peter Grote will go to this.

We may want to record the meeting on Wednesday at the Town Hall. We want the public to voice their concerns and ask their questions. Negotiate a better deal for the town.

Bernie will come up with an Agenda for the meeting.

ITEMS TO REVISIT

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

There may be a possibility of a closed session meeting.

Bernie made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Eric seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbie Bartlett, Executive Secretary