

TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 23, 2020 AT 3PM AT TOWN HALL

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eric Meth, Jill Brewer, Jeff Blodgett.

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Jenny Monahan, Rick Gaudette, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Dawn Steele, Lynn Terres, Karen Foss.

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

APPOINTMENTS:

3:00 – Chief Mac Cashin – Mask Policy Update: Chief Cashin said he talked with the Plymouth's chief about having a town mask mandate. He said they were not experiencing much difficulty with enforcement and have issued no citations. He also spoke with Cannon Mountain's General Manager, John Devivo, and said he was happy to hear that the town was considering its own mandate in addition to the state's.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to pass the Franconia Face Covering Ordinance. Selectman Blodgett seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.**

3:05 – Chief Rick Gaudette – Fire Department Budget Review: Chief Gaudette reviewed his budget with the selectmen. His Vehicles & Equipment line is over by about \$6,700 due to issues with a truck this year. He is currently under budget by approximately \$30,000 but says this is due to the pandemic preventing trainings and causing less calls.

3:15 – Kim Cowles – Recreation Budget Review: Kim reviewed her budget line by line with the selectmen. She said the Health Insurance line is over as it needs to be split with the town administrator position. The Spring Programs category was unspent due to the program being cancelled. For Summer Programs, Pool/Facilities is overspent due to using more locations for the summer program so groups could be smaller. The Supplies line is overspent for pandemic related expenses.

3:30 - Dinny Richmond – Tree Removal at Library: Dinny said there is a large Pine tree at the southern edge of the library's lawn that has died and will need to come down. The selectmen permitted Dinny to do what is necessary to facilitate the tree's removal.

TO SIGN/APPROVE:

The November 16, 2020 meeting minutes were approved as amended.

The November 23, 2020 transaction list was signed by the Selectmen.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW:

Setting of Tax Rate: Town Administrator Cowles said Jamie Dow at the Department of Revenue Administration recommends doubling the Capital Outlay amount due to the pandemic and the completion of the town wide reevaluation next year. The Fund Balance is currently \$1,334,545.00. Town Administrator Cowles suggested using \$150,000 of the Fund Balance to lower taxes.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to take \$150,000 from the Fund Balance to reduce taxes. Selectman Blodgett seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

The 2021 tax rate is set at \$18.50.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to set the Capital Outlay at \$150,945. Selectman Meth seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Van Pelt Property Stewardship Fund Contribution from FCC: Chairman Brewer said the Conservation Commission has been working on trying to purchase the Van Pelt property for some time. The Commission would like contribute \$5,000 of their funds towards a Stewardship Fund that has been established by ACT.

Chairman Brewer made a motion to authorize the Town to contribute \$5,000 towards the Van Pelt property stewardship from the Conservation Fund. Selectman Meth seconded the motion. All were in favor. **Motion passes.**

Town Administrator Update: Town Administrator Cowles said she is in conversations with CIP and NHDOT about paving Main Street from Route 142 to Route 117. The drainage issues at the south end will be fixed. There has been discussion about doing the sidewalks on Main Street at the same time, which would ultimately save money on doing them. The total cost of the project will be over \$200,000. There are some funds available in the Sidewalks Capital Reserve Fund but the rest would need to come from a warrant article.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Cable Consortium: Selectman Meth said there has been some new interest in joining the commission and he hopes to speak with Easton Selectman Zach Mai about joining.

Chamber of Commerce: No update.

Conservation Commission: Chairman Brewer said the CC met last week and in addition to doing some work for the Van Pelt's property, discussed conserving another property and discussed the Franconia Ski Club building progress. Chairman Brewer also gave an update on the trail that is being built from Profile to Bethlehem.

Energy Commission: The Energy Commission had a presentation from Megan Schleck of Raising Green last week.

Planning Board: Selectmen Meth said the PB will hopefully begin working on the Master Plan at their next meeting.

CIP: Selectman Blodgett said CIP has been discussing the Main Street paving project costs at the last two meetings.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Mary Grote suggested that that the town seeks grants for the sidewalks to preserve the historic look of the street

Karen Foss asked if the budget spreadsheets reflect the hundred thousand dollar budget cut, which Kim confirmed.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary

