

**FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 28, 2016**

A meeting of the Franconia Board of Selectmen was held at 3:00 pm on Monday, November 28, 2016 at the Franconia Town Hall. Regular members in attendance were Bernie Costa, Eric Meth, John Lachapelle, Sally Small and Herbie Bartlett.

Guests of the Board: Greg Wells and Dawn Steele

Other Guests: Russ & Lydia Cumbee, Peter & Mary Grote, Jim Alden

BOS Minutes for 11/21/2016: A formal reading of the November 14, 2016 minutes was waived and the minutes were approved as amended.

FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL:

Transaction Lists - 12/1/16 - Approved and signed by the Board.

Roberts & Greene Audit Contract - Sally had the letter of engagement from Roberts & Greene for the next three years. The Town has been with them for the past three years. The pricing would be \$16,975 for FY2016 which was the same as last year and then \$17,000 2nd year and \$17,150 for the third year. Tamar is coming on December 7th to review the FY 2015 report with the board and would come in the morning with some of her employees to do the preliminary work then return in the Spring to complete the audit.

John felt we should change to another auditor since Roberts & Greene has done the audit for the past three years. Sally thought it would be good to have an audit firm that is familiar with the town given that the town will now have a new Town Administrator when the audit is conducted in the Spring. John felt an audit firm gets cozy and that is a risk, although he doesn't think that is happening.

Peter Grote said they drafted by-laws that address these issues. Bernie questioned why they were drafting by-laws and stated that the town asked the audit committee to look at the audit and only make recommendations. Bernie asked that if Peter and the committee had something that needed to be said it should be put in writing. So the Board could take action. Peter felt it should be done in Closed Session. The Board needs a discussion in regards to this.

There was an audit committee created by concerned town's people. Bernie stated that actually it wasn't. The Audit committee as it stands was proposed by the previous Board Chairperson Bob Montagno to review the town's audit and make recommendations only in an advisory position. Bernie didn't realize that the committee had become so formal and felt it was inappropriate for a town this size. Friends for Franconia are an independent group that recommended an outside independent audit and agreed to pay for it. The Board agreed to let some town of

employees work with the independent auditor for the second audit. Peter stated that the Board may never see the audit report.

Bernie asked about minutes from the Audit committee and Peter said they had minutes but the Board never asked for them.

If we are not going to engage Roberts and Greene who does the audit committee recommend? The committee contacted four firms and selected two. One is Roberts & Greene the existing auditor and they have no issue with Roberts and Greene. Peter is concerned about the timing of their work. The second firm provides what the past auditors have not provided. There should be extensive commentary for management that shows the areas of weakness and areas to be improved on. Peter wants everyone to sit with the new auditors.

Bernie asked Sally to contact Tamar Roberts and let her know that she will just be meeting with the Board at 4:00 to review the 2015 Financial Audit.

Going forward the NHMA strongly recommends that management and the new Town Administrator not be involved in the selection of the auditor. The selection should be made by the Board and the Audit Committee. Peter will meet with Bonnie Batchelder and get her input on this, this week.

The Board would like more information in regards to this matter. Peter will provide his minutes and what orders were given to the committee. Put this on the agenda for next meeting. We will have the closed session.

Climate Realty Project - Table until Energy Committee Report at the end of the meeting.

Police Overtime - Where will we take the money from? Sally can use \$5K from her budget. Sally will review the Police budget and next week we will look at it again.

Transfer Station Fence - Greg will look into installing a security sign.

December Schedule - The Board discussed meeting on both Mondays and Wednesdays in December but will not meet the last week of December.

New Town Administrator - She will be here December 16-22nd. She will be here on Monday the 19th to meet all the Department Heads at 10am.

Events - Police should bill for any fund raising and town events if the officers are working overtime. Town events should also pay for police detail when extra officers are needed. When outside organizations need the Police for coverage the cost is billed at \$65.00 per hour. Kim will work with the Chief to iron out the details. We received \$60 per hour and \$45 is reimbursed wages and then the rest goes into income to the police.

Timber Tax Warrant - Signed and approved by the Board.

APPOINTMENTS:

4:00 - Closed Session - Hiring/Personnel

The Select Board entered into non public session according to NH RSA 91- A3, II (e) & (c) at 4:10 pm. The Select Board returned to public session at 4:45 pm.

At 4:45 pm the Board voted to come out of closed session and voted to seal the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Conservation Commission (FCC) - No Report.

CIP Committee (CIP) - No Report.

Energy Committee (FEC) - Street light Project - met with Eversource and got direction from them for our RFP. The vendor we chose to fill in some of the spaces for that big agenda item. The Committee was contacted by Lindsey Halvorsen an advocacy group with climate change threatening our planet. She is 100 percent committed. She may want to speak with the Select Board but Eric thinks she can speak to the FEC. John DeVivo may want to speak with her as well.

Northern Pass - Letter needs to go out to Christine Fillmore regarding the charges. We have not met about Sansoucy yet. We are waiting for a response from Christine. Sally will send a letter to her tomorrow to defer payment.

Planning Board - had a meeting for tree cutting on November 22nd. The Board made motion to give permission as long as they get land owner permission. Mary would like the contact persons info.

Wages & Benefits - John wants to be on the schedule for next week. The wages and benefit committee asked Peter Chapel from HealthTrust about employees who might like to go on Medicare and use the HealthTrust Medicare supplement. A person cannot sign up for the Healthtrust Medicare supplement and still work for the town. Going on Medicare may be cheaper.

FLSA Overtime that was to go into effect was thrown out by a federal court judge. So there will be no change and remain as it is now.

Audit Committee - No report.

Infrastructure Committee - Eric was turned down by one person. He would offer consultation but does not want to commit. Eric will speak to another man from Littleton who was involved with their town building.

TO DISCUSS & REVIEW

PUBLIC INPUT

Dawn Steele - Questioned where the money goes for police duty. We receive \$60 per hour of which \$45 reimburses the wages and \$15 goes into the general fund as income to the police dept.

Agenda - Letter from the Trustee of the Trust Fund. Trustee's Letter stated they will not release the funds for the truck. The Board wants to schedule a meeting with the Trustees and Laura Spector. Laura is on vacation but Sally will try and get her to come to the meeting on the 5th and/or 12th. Trustees will be asked to reimburse the funds.

The intention for special meeting in August was to make the Board agents to expend the Tanker Capital Reserve Fund. The discussion before the town voted clearly discussed using the tanker. The fund money to purchase the used ladder truck that also had a tank on it and the town knew that was where the money would come from for the purchase.

Eric wants to know why they are digging their heels in. The truck has a ladder, a pumper and a tanker and the attorney said it the funds could come from the Tanker Fund. The Trustees do not agree.

At the end of the year the Sally gives the Trustees a letter requesting the funds from the various Capital Reserve and Expendable Trust Funds. This is the first time we have had an issue with the Trustees. If they do not release the funds the \$69,000 will have to come out of the town line item budget.

Motion to go into closed session at 4:10pm.

The Board adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbie Bartlett
Executive Secretary