

**MINUTES
FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

Monday, October 19, 2015

A meeting of the Franconia Board of Selectmen was held at 3:05 pm on Monday, October 19, 2015 at the Franconia Town Hall. Regular members in attendance were Bob Montagno, Eric Meth, Bernie Costa, Sally Small and Herbie Bartlett.

Also attending – Scott Mason, Kathleen Lewis, John Keyser, Mark Hodgdon

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| SELECTMEN’S TIME: |
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BOS Minutes 9/28/15, 10/5/15 & 10/7/15: Formal readings of the September 28, 2015, October 5, 2015 & October 7, 2015 BOS meeting minutes were waived. The minutes for September 28, 2015, October 5, 2015 & October 7, 2015 were approved with the following corrections.

September 28, 2015

Bernie made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Eric seconded with all voting in favor.

October 5, 2015 – Page 2 Letter to Dick Reinhold. Change the following sentence: The previous Select Board stepped into this issue in 2012. We will write a letter and acknowledge the problem and give him a response. Dick was not consulted by the people doing the work. Not our realm of expertise. Bob is not advocating this. Hold off until Sally gets back. Make sure we are **legally** responsible.

Fire Chief Littleton – page 3 - No selectmen **will** be involved.

Flat roof leak...date – I will ask Jeff. October 2nd.

Comment – Keep in mind about the honor roll. Do we know if there is photograph of it? Has the museum taken a photo of it? Make a notation of which wars they were in. Sally can take a picture of it.

Dick Reinhold - The town does not have to maintain the Scragg Mountain Road.

Bathroom sign – get rid of **they**.

Bernie makes a motion to accept the minutes of the 5 October & 7 October, 2015 with the corrections noted, Eric seconded with all voting in favor.

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| FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL: |
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Transaction List for 10/22/15 – Approved and signed by the Board.

**Peabody & Smith Building Permit Map 14, Lot 146 – Foundation work
Angelia & Cabot Carmen – Map 14, Lot 25 Phase 1 repairs of 2nd floor apartment.**

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| APPOINTMENTS: |
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Bob Montagno made the following announcement - This is an informational meeting, no protesting and no demonstrating please. We will have a meeting for the public at a later date. No comments in regards to this informational meeting. No questions from the audience.

3:00 – Paul Schmucker – Meeting with Calex - was not able to make it.

**3:30 – Scott Mason – Northern Pass Community Outreach (Franconia’s Impact)
Kathleen Lewis – Eversource
John Keyser – Northern Pass Engineer
Mark Hodgdon – Attorney NH DOT Underground Construction Information**

Kathleen Lewis – Discuss the project – Information was given to the board. New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee has the application and it is being reviewed. They would like to share with the board questions and concerns about how it will impact Franconia. There is a 14 month public information process. Federal process Dept of Energy to draft environmental impact statement and will be welcoming public comments. The Panel wanted to listen to the Selectmen’s questions. Discuss Tax information. Forward NH Fund – we have announced the benefits to the NH communities. Community projects – apprentice projects.

They want to support the region. Electric prices are important to our customers. Natural gas prices have increased. Many of our energy sources come from natural gas. Our company is to address the energy supply constraints. Pilgrim Nuclear plant is retiring. Find a balance that will work for our community.

John Keyser – the lines will be buried underground in Franconia on Route 18 and then turn south on Route 116. There will be two 8 inch conduits with 4.5 inch in diameter cross linked polyethylene shielded cable in each. There will be three two inch conduits for monitoring cables. The cable trench will be approximately 3 feet 9 inches deep. The cables will be approximately 30” below grade. They will make an exact route during detail design. They will be maintaining traffic control during construction.

How much damage will be done to the roadway? They will back fill and put a layer of asphalt. They will work with DOT for final restoration. They will fix the 12 foot travel lane. It will be flush with the existing asphalt. We have severe frost heaving and cracking. Department of Transportation’s (DOT) main concern will be on both sides. There will be splice pits or vaults. How many vaults 3 per mile? The vaults will be 10’ x 30’ and will be below grade. They will

stay within the DOT right of way. They want to stay away from roadside vegetations and wetlands. It is intended to avoid the impact of other items along the road side. There is a very narrow area coming thru town. We have had some of the business people concerned about their businesses. There is no proposed taking. No eminent domain. The proposal is to stay within the

Right of Way. There is no request to SEC or DOE and no requests to them as far as he knows. There are concerns of disruption to businesses. As we are going thru the detail design working they will be working with local businesses. They want to minimize the disturbances. It will be a small brief window. They are required to provide access to abutters.

There will be a traffic control plan. They want to address for town emergency. What methods have you done before? There are lots of different techniques to allow emergency services to get thru the area. A normal road project with flaggers and get help from local authorities. They will be using some plating in the work area.

What will the rate of construction be? They will be installing 75 to 150 feet per day. This is dependent on what is below the surface. The vault construction takes 3-5 days and again depends on what is below the surface. They will have to do Geo tech borings.

The town has water mains and some electrical utilities at the intersection down to the Village Store. This will dictate the depth of the line. It will have to be installed above or below the existing utilities and will be backfilled around them.

We have a water commission and the water lines that run under your work. What happens if we have to do a repair to the water lines? DOT standards are designed so existing and new utilities can coexist. Everything has to be identified which is normal course of action. They will have to address the existing users. We have some old pipes. There is an issue that we may have to put in a more extensive septic system in the downtown portion of town. We will have to accommodate as many users as possible. It may be a good time to make a sleeve and cap to make that system possible at a later date. We would have to have our water commissioners and other utilities to be involved.

Culverts will have to call dig safe before construction. They will do a sub surface survey.

Have you encountered these similar problems? Our systems have been in place for 20 years. Have you done previous underground transmission? They have an overhead line but there is not room in that Right of Way (ROW) because that is route that was chosen. Rivers and streams will have horizontal directional drillings and they will go underneath that and will have minimum disruption.

There are fifty identified right now and that number could go up. One large bore or a 24 inch bore. There will be some large culverts and they will detail them.

As far as traffic control will you pick up the tab for those projects? The contractor is in charge

of that but Northern Pass will pay for it. There will be jobs available.

Cable itself as it is running past people's homes. There is a magnetic field four feet out from the proposed cables. The EMF information how would you verify it? We have people who do the estimates. At what point would you do that? We do it if people ask to have it measured. Electric fields with underground fields are essentially zero. The cables are shielded. There is copper shielding around the cable.

How many cables involved? There are 2 cables four and half inches in diameter. Then there is a 1.5" 320 KV DC.

What is the safety factor? You don't know the exact safety factor for after 40 years. When will it be evaluated and by whom?

The vaults are incased in cement. The conduits are backfilled and cross sections 8 inch encased and will be backfilled with thermal sand. What type of maintenance? There will be manholes for maintenance.

Splices are required based on the length of the cable. The can be installed on a straight area not on a corner. Cables can go around the corner. Design documents are preliminary.

What is the arc flash rating of the system if there was a problem? Electrical workers will determine what protective clothing they will wear. It goes by calories. You don't rate the cables on arc flash. The cable will be damaged. It will throw a breaker. They are submersible. Fault on the cable would come from dig-ins. There is high speed protection at both ends. The geological fault line between Scragg Mountain Road and Garnett Hill, how will the project be affected by it? They determine where they are and there are usually not a lot of concerns with the seismic activity. He does not know what the exact magnitude could be. He will get back to us.

Why does it not go down 93? It is a straight line and could be a median strip down the side. There are a lot of reasons 93 is not viable. The Notch we would all agree is one of the most environmentally sensitive regions in our state. The impacts would be substantial. There isn't a lot of room and using the disturbed areas will not be permitted. You will have to be on the outside. Disturbing the outside areas of the Notch is not viable. Beyond that you get into duty standards and possibly by national discussion using interstates as utility corridors and very few states permit it. There may be one that you can use a median area. A median area can only be used for exceptional circumstances. Median is out and travel lane is out. You have to show extreme hardship and that there is no other viable alternative. We proposed per DOT's perspective and fed highway and other permitting highways that route this is a viable. The fence line is the edge of ROW and that is where DOT would want you to be. You would have to build an access road and you would have to go thru ledge and wetland and alter the character of the roadways. It would be sensitive to our tourist environment. It would change 93 as you go south.

Feds and DOT would not let you go in and out from the roadway. You would have to build that access road and that is a lot of damage on that long road. When you get into the practical realities of the impact it would be enormous. You are not going to get it thru the Notch. It is one lane each way. DOT will not let you shut it down.

Route 18 where it crosses the interstate separate issue but it raises all the other issues...parallel access road over there. There is an access that goes out to the Verizon tower which is a ROW on Scragg Mountain Road. It is a class VI road. The bulk of it is in Sugar Hill but is accessed from Franconia. We do not maintain it. There is an easement already on it.

Why is it okay to go thru the disturbed areas on route 18 but not the shoulder of the highway? DOT can explain better than he can. On the interstate posted speed limits of 70 and perhaps the average speed is higher than that. It is twice the average speed for your smaller roads that we are talking about. Traffic counts are higher and types of traffic are different. The highway is a major truck route for Boston traffic. Traffic control or vibration there is a variety of issues involved with it. They want you to stay on the more local roads where they can manage traffic control better.

Should the town of Franconia – decides to allow this to happen in the town would you pay for an independent engineering consulting. DOT will be on sight. The contractor would have to hire an independent contractor to be on sight. It would depend on the location in town. That is a requirement that DOT will put on the contractor during the construction. The reason they would do that is for quality control on site so they can deal with the public issues that will arise. There will be concerns of abutters. DOT will be providing traffic control. DOT will be watching with a fine tooth comb. Headquarters and two highway districts utilities along with Railroads will be monitoring a lot with the review process. Are there other areas in the country that they have put in this HVAC system. Where are the others? He doesn't know but he will get information. This would be the longest underground installation in this country of this size.

When this project was first proposed the electricity would go to MA & CT. Is any power going to NH? The original project proposal was 1200 mega watts. There were August modifications to our plan designed for 1090 mega watts. We reduced the total megawatt output and part is because of the cable design to commit to put 60 miles underground. This is a regional transmission that would benefit the New England Grid. When the project comes in it will feed New England. New Hampshire is 10 percent of the market. New England will save \$900 million. New Hampshire will save \$80 million per year. We ran some figures for Franconia and based on the bills sent to the consumers and it will save them \$230,000 per year based on the whole sale level. If you are an Eversource user you will get an additional savings. We are all part of the same grid. This is based on usage. The other way to look is the tourist coming from MA & CT using their money up here.

New route was chosen in August. We are considering things to do in this town. If we want to get money right now they are in the process in figuring out the money to be awarded. They are

gathering ideas how the money should be awarded and right now they are all ears. That money will be available after the project is finished.

Why is there so much money for these things? Why can you not bury the other line? \$200 million will bury this section. How much does it cost to bury? It is about \$ 10-12 million per mile. Bids are still coming in for this. We have to look at all the numbers. What are you looking to bury. The project as proposed for 52 miles here and then a few miles in the north. That is all that is proposed right now. The application was filed today. We are anticipating \$30 million tax payments in New Hampshire. We will provide 2400 jobs at the peak of construction. New Hampshire people will be hired first. They will have electrical training classes. Where does that money come from? The spending/savings for electric rate payers? We have funded north country jobs. We are figuring a 5% decrease in rate that is not a lot of money per month. For a small business a little bit more per month. Business owners benefit more.

They have reduced clean energy carbon by 3million tons per year. The grid operates north country electric system. They will get rid of the constraints and move a100 million megawatts, biomass, 3 million with national fish and wild life and land purchases of 5000 acres used for conservation. There will be less kilowatts or lower voltage. They won't have to put bigger towers. They will be able to reduce the height of the towers. They will only have to be 80 feet for the HVAC towers.

The ratings on the Vermont line is 2000 megawatts. Do not know the voltage of that line? They have big towers there. He doesn't know what the voltage is. That line is owned by a different company and was constructed in 1988.

Forward NH Plan -Tax payments. We are on schedule right now and are approved by SEC for 2019 completion. 2019 this shows when we get done we have to report our investment. Between now and when we get done the center column book value the depreciated value will be by 2.5%. This is one of methodology for assessments. This is the one the company has decided to use. Based upon this and the 2013 tax rate this is showing what the tax value would be. That is an equalized tax rate figured in. That would take into account your appraised value and where you are. DRA says you are 90 or 110 percent.

The two columns underneath that are the 2013 rates equalized with 1 percent growth rate. This is only a model. Any unforeseen circumstances early on the taxes adjust this it is just a sample to give us an idea. The project will be for abatements. He didn't check to see if we could get an abatement from Eversource. The project signed an agreement and have secured with the SEC. Use this center column of the depreciation. With the value above that we could file for an abatement. What would be the basis for us to dispute this if we were a higher value? We could and it means we decide if we will abate. We would not abate over that period. This is 20 years. And it is a 40 year project. They will sign a 20 year agreement. We sit and talk again with the next bunch of selectmen.

Have you considered what the details would be if these lines fall to disuse? We never know what will happen. Would you include something in reserve should they be have to be removed if they were not longer used? Our town says any tower will have to take them down at their expense if they were no longer being used. We want to completely re-use the road base and the disposal of those things. If they were decommissioned we don't know if John can address that but we can get back to you.

John, where all of the route is under DOT roads if this project is every impacted or if it needs to be moved or DOT has design standards Northern Pass would have to remove them. Is there a reserve for that? He is not aware of that ever happening. During construction it is not typically required.

If the state wants to widen the road, the utility has to move the poles. They have to go by the premise of legal highway use. They are conveying just like telegraph or fuel. They are subject to everyone else's rights.

We definitely appreciate the discussion and our input. They will follow up on questions that have been asked. They thanked us for participating in the process. This is the first day of a 14 month process. We look forward to the continued dialog. The Department of Energy (DOE) said the end for the comment period is 31 December 2015. They will host public info sessions for public to provide comments. They are welcoming comments thru email, letters and the NH SEC process. The public will remain open independent from the DOE. Contact person will be Scott Mason on Northern Pass issues.

The board may have questions re: Eversource they can contact Scott Mason.

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| TO DISCUSS/REVIEW: |
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Items to Revisit – See List

Town Organizational Chart

Library Foundation Work Proposal – Laura's Concerns – Sally handed out the concerns.

2012 Outstanding Taxes – We agreed last time. We voted that taxes were less than \$1000 not worth pursuing unless they were repeat offenders for the back taxes for about three times.

Chamber of Commerce Dinner – Eric & Bob will go and Bernie will let Sally know by tomorrow. October 28th – Indian Head Resort – Last year all selectmen went.

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| ITEMS TO REVISIT |
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| FOR YOUR INFORMATION: |
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Lafayette Regional School Letter of Thanks – FD

Minutes of Cemetery Trustees

There May Be a Closed Session at the next meeting.

Bernie made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Eric seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbie Bartlett
Executive Secretary