

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, OCTOBER 24th, 2022 AT 6:00PM AT TOWN HALL**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jill Brewer, Dan Walker, Eric Meth

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Cowles, Larry Plate, Mike Betley, Dawn Steele, Mary & Peter Grote

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm.

APPOINTMENTS/WORK SESSIONS

6:00pm – Franconia Area Heritage Council – Tim Brown

NH Register of Historic Places: Tim said the Heritage Council recently discussed applying to the NH Division of Historical Resources to have the Heritage Museum listed on the NH State Register of Historic Places. Because the property and its contents is owned by the town, the FAHC needs permission from the town to proceed with the application process. Tim said the FAHC feels there could be some benefits to the museum being on the historic register, such as possible access to grant funds for its preservation. He said the FAHC feels the home and its contents is most representative of around year 1938 and that would be what they would reference on the application and the period they endeavor to preserve.

Town Administrator Cowles suggested that the restrictions involved with being on the register should be determined and some residents commented on the potential for being limited in how certain repairs or maintenance could be completed. After a brief discussion, the board agreed to support the application for the historic register and get additional information from the FAHC once eligibility criteria are received in response to the application.

Commemorative Coins for Franconia's 250th: Tim said the FAHC would like to repurpose the leftover coins that were made for the town's 200th anniversary in 1972 by selling them and using those funds to have coins created for the town's 250th celebration taking place next year. He said the FAHC has 48 bronze coins and 226 sterling silver coins and had them examined at Littleton Stamp and Coin company for purity and value. Based on the current value of silver the 226 silver coins are worth about \$3,380. There are 33 additional silver coins and two bronze coins stored at town hall. Tim said the museum would keep some of the original coins as historic artifacts at the museum.

The board discussed and decided to consider this issue and decide what to do with the coins at a later time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was taken from Mike Betley, Larry Plate, Mary Grote, Peter Grote and Dawn Steele.

TO SIGN/APPROVE

The October 24th, 2022 transaction report was reviewed and signed by the selectmen.

The minutes of October 17th, 2022 were approved as amended.

A sign permit application for map 14, lot 78 was approved by the board. This was an amendment to a previously approved sign. Chairman Brewer recused herself from this application due to conflict of interest.

TO DISCUSS/REVIEW

Mediation with Franconia Soaring Foundation, Inc.: Town Administrator Cowles said she, Selectmen Walker and Selectmen Meth attended mediation with Franconia Soaring Foundation, Inc, representatives at the offices of Mitchell Municipal (the town's legal counsel) in Laconia this past Friday. She said the FSF applied for tax exemption in both 2020 (educational) and 2021 (charitable) and were denied for exemption both years. She said an offer was discussed to provide the FSA with a 10% rebate in property taxes for 2020, a 30% rebate for 2021 and a 50% rebate for 2022 with the agreement that they will not contest the second tax bill for 2022. Town Administrator Cowles said the FSA could appeal another denial to the Superior Court and continue to cost the town significant legal fees. It was revealed during the mediation that the FSF's attorney is representing them pro bono and would continue to pursue the exemption annually if needs be. Town Counsel advised that they may get a 20% tax reduction if the matter were to go to court due to their income status. The board felt the agreement was the most economical solution at this time. After a lengthy discussion with the public, Selectman Walker made a motion that the town approve and accept the agreement with the Franconia Soaring Foundation, Inc., that was reached at the mediation appointment on October 20th, 2022. Selectmen Meth seconded the motion with all voting in favor. **Motion passes.** The selectmen then signed the agreement.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Brewer made a motion to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 7:06pm. Selectman Walker seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

The board left non-public session at 7:47pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer with a second from Selectman Walker with all voting in favor.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47pm on a motion from Chairman Brewer and a second from Selectman Meth with all voting in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan
Administrative Secretary