

TOWN OF FRANCESTOWN

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN

27 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 5

FRANCESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03043-0005

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2013

Selectmen Present: Chair Betsy Hardwick, Scott Carbee, and Abigail Arnold

Also present: Budget Advisory Committee members Charlie Pyle, Nick Wilder, Bill McAuley, Henry Kunhardt, and Abby Dawson, Welfare Administrator Phyllis Naegeli, Recreation Director Donna Noonan, Lisa Bourbeau, Tom Anderson, Polly Freese, Kris Stewart, and Lisa Stewart

CALL TO ORDER: Betsy called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Appointments

1. Welfare Administrator Phyllis Naegeli – Phyllis stated that she has encountered clients who use the internet or their phone for their job though currently our guidelines do not provide for it. She stated she recommended to the Board that the guidelines allow internet to be paid only if they can prove that they have a source of income for which they need internet. Phyllis will come back to the Board when she has some additional details.
2. Budget & Advisory Committee – Abigail stated she had met with Phyllis and they agreed that based on current trends and caseload the request needs to increase \$15,000. Phyllis stated she currently has three ongoing cases that she predicts will continue throughout the year. The Board discussed with Phyllis the welfare organization contributions – Mike stated Phyllis had only reviewed the requests that had come in prior to the budget creation so she had not necessarily reviewed all of the requests. The Board asked Phyllis to review all of the requests now that that they were received.
3. Maureen von Rosenvinge from the Health Insurance Benefit Advisory Review Committee – Maureen presented the Board and the BAC with an overview of the Committee's findings and its recommendation to switch to a higher deductible plan with lower premiums through NH LGC. The Committee believes this base plan is fair and will save the Town significant money compared to the current plan. The Board and BAC discussed the recommendations and the Committee's report. The Town cannot offer the Committee's recommended plan in addition to the current plan to the same group of employees. The Board directed Mike to meet with the full-time employees to see if they could come to a unanimous choice of which plan they wanted to be offered understanding that the cost above the recommended plan would be at their expense.

4. Budget & Advisory Committee – The Board went through the budget with the BAC and discussed some of the changes to Mike’s numbers that Abigail was recommending. Executive: There was a discussion about the Board creating a Town Administrator position and the Board agreed that it would not result in an addition of staff, just a change of title to more accurately reflect the position. Elections & Financial Administration: Abigail stated in the past the Town had only budgeted 16 hours per week for the Deputy Town Clerk and Tax Collector even though she was working 18. Cemeteries: \$500 from perpetual care will go towards the landscaping contract so that expense line was reduced \$500; there was a discussion about how perpetual care funds can be used. Insurance: rates increased due in part to higher property values and more payroll. Police: Abigail stated she has recommended disbanding the on-call program as she does not feel it is working as the Town anticipated, no one disagreed; there was a discussion about the professional development line which was increased last year for a specific program that was not taken. Emergency Management: Emergency Management Director Kevin Holdredge told Mike he needs to meet with the Board to discuss a grant received for the Police Department at an upcoming meeting. Highway: Abigail stated she recommended some additional hours and merit increases to the full-time employees; there was a discussion about overtime hours and if they could be reduced. Abigail stated she tried to keep to the 3% increase to net appropriations the Board and BAC had agreed to use as a goal from the beginning of the budget process. Abby asked about where the budget could be cut and some of those areas were discussed. There was a discussion about some adjustments made to Solid Waste; Mike stated he had spoken to Bennington and was waiting for a budget figure for the Tri-Town landfill. Recreation: there was a discussion about Recreation payroll and landscaping maintenance. Abigail’s suggestion was for a 2.5% cost of living increase for part-time employees, including Elaine McClary. Warrant Articles: Milfoil for Pleasant Pond and Scoby Pond, Road Grader, \$30,000 for defibrillator for Fire, \$30,000 for Town Hall repairs. There was discussion about the potential generator for the Police Department and whether there was a less expensive option.

The Board and BAC agreed to meet again on 1/22 at 5:30 and invite department heads to attend if they wanted to discuss changes.

New Business

The Board completed the timber valuation for Map 3 Lot 3 and Map 8 Lot 48

Lighting report for Crotched Mountain. The Board discussed how the ski mountain seemed to be running more nights of midnight madness than was previously approved. The Board asked Mike to find the notice of decision and draft a letter notifying them of the issue.

December budget-to-actuals report and cover memo.

Items to Sign

1. Payables Manifest for January 14th
2. Payroll Manifest for January 14th
3. Employment Agreement with Michael T Branley, Abigail and Scott had not read it yet so the Board did not sign this.

Correspondence

1. Letter from the Greenfield Board of Selectmen inviting the Board to a meeting in Greenfield to discuss potential regionalization and/or shared services on January 24th at 2013. The Board agreed to attend the meeting.
2. Weekly Administrative Report from January 12.
3. Letter from the Highway Safety Agency regarding the planning process for federal programs – the Board agreed to send a copy along to Chief Bell.
4. Letter from Greenfield Town Administrator Aaron Pratt inviting the Board to a going away party for Peter Hopkins on January 20th.
5. Letter from the Department of Revenue administration outlining changes to the excavation tax procedures.
6. Letter from Maureen von Rosenvinge to Becky Meattley asking her to resign from the Heritage Commission because she has not attended enough meetings.

Mike reminded the Board that their entry for the annual report needs to be completed soon – Betsy will put together a draft.

Mike stated the Board needs to approve a Town holiday schedule for 2013 – he was recommending that the Town eliminate Presidents' Day and add the day before Christmas. He had spoken to some employees and they generally seemed to support this change. He will present the Board with a draft at their next meeting for approval.

The Board agreed to put off reviewing the building inspector's recommended new permits until its next meeting.

NEXT BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING: January 22nd at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Betsy adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Michael Branley

Approved on January 28, 2013

Board of Selectmen Chair Betsy Hardwick

Selectman Scott S. Carbee

Selectperson Abigail Arnold