

**TOWN OF FRANCESTOWN**  
OFFICE OF SELECTMEN  
27 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 5  
FRANCESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03043-0005  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**

**December 9, 2013**

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

Staff Present: Town Administrator Michael Branley, Road Agent Gary Paige, Police Chief Steve Bell

Also present: Polly Freese, Larry Laber, Lisa Bourbeau, Betty Berhsing, Lisa Stewart, John Arnold, Jan Hicks, Lindsey Aereci from the Ledger Transcript, Donna Noonan, and Budget Advisory Committee members Nick Wilder, Abby Dawson, and Charlie Pyle

**CALL TO ORDER:** Betsy called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Betsy stated the first item is a Public Hearing regarding accepting \$59,663.01 from the ConVal School District for the Town's share of the HealthTrust. Betsy asked if there was any public comment.

Polly Freese asked and Betsy answered it would go into the General Fund. Larry Laber asked what the funds were going to be used for. Scott stated we did not receive it in time to apply it to the tax rate this year. Abigail said the intent is that the voters can vote to apply it towards some of next year's projects and expenses.

**MOTION:** Scott made a motion to accept the \$59,663.01 and to deposit it into the General Fund. Betsy seconded the motion. All in favor.

**Appointments**

1. Larry Laber – Larry asked the Board what the difference between a denied variance and the result for Crotched Mountain Ski & Ride. There was some discussion between the Board and Larry regarding the differences. Larry suggested the Board tell the Mountain to put the shields up or no lights on because otherwise they will never put them up. The Board took that under advisement.

**Items to Sign**

1. Payroll Manifest for 12/9/13
2. Payables Manifest for 12/9/13
3. Intent to Cut for Map 6 Lot 59

4. Application for payment from the Road Capital Reserve Fund for \$179,970.64 for Warrant Article 4 for Pleasant Pond Road
5. Application for payment from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for \$840.95 for Warrant Article 6 for the grader
6. Application for payment from the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund for \$30,745.35 for Warrant Article 7 for Town bridges

### **Correspondence**

1. Letter from State of NH Liquor Commission regarding Francestown Village Store and Wohle application.
2. Letter from Contoocook Valley Transportation Company regarding joining their program. Mike stated a representative is attending the Board's meeting next week.
3. Letter from Charles Blattman requesting to be a member of the Solid Waste Committee. The Board agreed there was an opening but that since it was not posted they wanted it to be posted before considering applicants.
4. Reports of the Treasurer for August, September and October 2013.
5. Copy of a letter from Federal Emergency Management Agency to Linda Roche requesting information on whether or not their building was in a flood plain zone.
6. Letter from Phyllis regarding Senate Bill 146 and how it pertains to the Town of Francestown Public Assistance Guidelines. Phyllis is requesting a change to IX. Determination of Eligibility and Amount, B. Legal Standard and Interpretation, and 3. Eligibility for Other Categorical Assistance, starting with "no person...". Mike stated Phyllis would like the Board to consider inspections for the rental housing as well. The Board agreed to have Mike review and present them with a revised policy.
7. Letter from Southwest Regional Planning Commission stating that the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved by Homeland Security. The Board agreed to have Mike get a copy of the finalized plan and schedule a public hearing so it can be approved.
8. Update from Sulloway & Hollis regarding the PSNH tax appeals.

### **Budget Appointments**

1. Recreation Commission Budget – Donna said the budget has gone up a small amount. She said last year the baseball budget had been cut but ended up coming up short in that line and the fishing derby was raised slightly for a cost increase. Mike stated he combined some of the smaller lines into one line called "Programs" and the landscaping budget will need to go up some as well since we now have new figures for next year. Donna said she would need \$1,000 in the programs budget line. Scott said this year the first floor of the Town Hall will be available for theater and other programs. Donna stated she will definitely be utilizing that space and is looking to do the summer programs from 9:00 to 12:00am. There was a discussion regarding the trash cans at the recreation fields.

Mike informed the Board that he had more information on legal costs which are as follows:

FairPoint: Sansoucy \$5,000  
 Upton & Hatfield \$1,000

PSNH: Sansoucy \$10,000  
 Upton & Hatfield \$5,000 to \$7,500

Mike said this brings the legal budget up to \$43,000.

2. Highway Department Budget – Gary stated that he increased paving by \$5,000 trying to preserve the pavement that we have. He said there is an increase to the bridge line to disassemble the temporary bridge on 2<sup>nd</sup> NH Turnpike. Mike said we are recommending deleting the blasting line and increasing streets and traffic signs by \$500 and equipment rental by \$500. Gary said there is a new sign standard, which does increase the cost and we have street signs being taken that need to be replaced. Gary said the building maintenance line has increased by \$500 due to expenses related to the garage doors. Scott asked if the tree cutting line was high enough because there are many standing dead trees in Town and Gary answered that he was doubtful \$1,500 would cover everything that needs to be cut but he has spoken to someone who can cut the trees and leave them for Highway to clean-up which would have less of a cost. Scott asked if a drive-thru shelter would be needed for the grader and Gary answered that he had not thought about it but was open to suggestions. Scott said he would like to see some type of a shelter or pole barn in the area where the grader is currently parked. Abigail asked if we need to add money for that and how much? Gary said the department could assist in building it and the lumber would cost at least \$5,000. There was a discussion regarding a shelter for the grader. The Board agreed a shelter was something they should consider for an upcoming year. There was a discussion regarding maintenance of roads. There was a discussion about the Tri-Town gravel pit. Scott asked about sidewalk plowing and Gary stated the tractor is currently out of commission, but he hopes to have it back tomorrow. Abigail asked Gary if he was able to come up with a solution for the plowing of Cemetery 1. Gary answered that it has been an issue for years and George tries his best to just get the snow to go over the wall itself. Gary said he will look into it further.

## **Liaison Reports**

Abigail asked Scott how the ConVal Study Committee is going. Scott stated it is part of the program of the Mini Study Committee that is looking at efficiencies and growth in population. Scott said the buildings and grounds director has done a great job saving, especially with fuel costs. Scott said a critical area they are looking at to be reduced is transportation. There was a discussion regarding the schools.

3. Police Department Budget – Chief Bell gave an update for the Prosecutor and stated the cost is going up next year and said any line items that have increased are due to the cost of things going up. Chief Bell stated he is asking for an increase in payroll for a weekday night shift fill some gaps. Mike said he and Chief Bell looked at other lines that could be reduced to help offset the cost of another night shift and they have reduced or eliminated some lines. Chief Bell said he will need to replace an officer who resigned and he needs the increase in the uniform budget for uniforms for the new officer. Charlie asked if there have been problems that are causing him to feel he needs an additional 6 hour shift and Chief Bell answered yes, because it is known that there are certain times when an

officer is not on duty. There was a discussion regarding reasons for needing the extra shift. Chief Bell said he is still in the process of exploring options for a traffic counter but he thinks the Town has a good chance of securing a grant. Abigail asked and Chief Bell answered that he would still need all of the money in the payroll line item he requested even though it wasn't all spent this year.

4. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Elaine McClary and Deputy Pam Finnell – Elaine stated she and Pam agree they would like to purchase Avitar Town Clerk software and said they would like to do the 3 year pricing option with the first year being \$3,979 and includes installation, software and training. Pam stated based on an additional review of the Avitar proposal it is much more comparable in terms of cost to Interware if we go with a three year contract and pricing structure. Pam stated she thought it was an additional benefit dealing with Avitar who they already work with. Abigail stated she calculated the difference between the two to be closer to \$3,000. Abigail stated in addition to the software the Town would need to purchase a file server at roughly \$7,000 to purchase either software program. There was a discussion about the need to purchase a file server within approximately a year regardless of Town Clerk software. There was a continued discussion regarding whether to purchase a file server and which software was more cost effective. There was a discussion about potential efficiencies with either software. Abigail asked Elaine to look into whether the software will save any staff hours. Abby asked if the Town has considered doing remote deposit. Nick didn't think that TD Bank has the capability to do that but he will check and to see if they do it now. Abigail said before making a decision on the server or the software, they need to look at the whole budget first and see where it is ending up.

Mike informed the Board that Tom Clark wanted the Board to know that Gary lied in the newspaper that he didn't get any complaints regarding Pleasant Pond and about the depth he dug down in the road bed.

Abigail said Lindsey from the Monadnock Ledger has said she is having trouble reaching Chief Bell and hasn't received any police reports for months.

The Board and Budget Advisory Committees agreed to meet separately to discuss the budget and meet again together after the holidays.

The Board agreed to not to meet on December 23, 2013.

**NEXT BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING:** December 16<sup>th</sup> 6:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Betsy adjourned the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Wendy Brien-Baker