

TOWN OF FRANCESTOWN

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN

27 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 5

FRANCESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03043-0005

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

April 29, 2013

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

Staff Present: Town Administrator Michael Branley

Also present: Skip Sansoucy, Judi Miller, Betty Behrsing, Polly Freese, Tom Anderson, Charlie Pyle, Lawrie Barr, BJ Carbee, Kitty Houghton, Lisa Bourbeau, Henry and Kerri Camirand, Becky Moul, and Ethel MacStubbs

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

Appointments

1. George "Skip" Sansoucy regarding – Skip gave the Board a brief overview of his company, which specializes in utility valuation. Skip gave the Board a brief history of utility valuations, including New Hampshire changing from IRS book utility values to fair value. The utilities are trying to have values changed back to book value as opposed to fair value. Francestown is one of 35 PSNH appeals. The PSNH trial is scheduled for December 2013 and Skip stated Francestown does not want to be a lead case. The Town had a mediation session with PSNH. PSNH is still standing at the book value, which for Francestown is \$1.4 million and has a fair value of \$3.1 million. Skip estimated the Town's costs for the rest of the year related to PSNH is about \$2,000. There was a discussion about the values of the ski mountain and cell towers; the Board discussed the possibility about sharing the cost of the property value for the ski mountain with Bennington. Skip stated the 139 FairPoint appeals have been consolidated in Merrimack County Court. Skip discussed some of the facts at issue in the FairPoint court case. There was a discussion about the Town's franchise agreement with Comcast and the Town's need to tax Comcast in 2013. Skip estimated the Town's costs for the rest of the year related to FairPoint will be well under \$2,000. Skip recommended the Town join an amicus brief being filed by other municipalities regarding the taxation of right-of-ways.
2. Charlie Pyle – Charlie asked the Board about their thoughts about accepting funds from FIHS to plant a replacement tree on the Town Common using donated funds from the Eggert family. Charlie stated FIHS wants to purchase three new park benches for the Town Common, possibly with brass plaques recognizing residents who have passed away recently and donated to FIHS – the Board agreed this was a great idea. Charlie stated FIHS has about \$1,000 for a Christmas tree; the Meadys have a tree they are willing to

donate if someone else is able to relocate it to the Common. The Board discussed this option and the possibility of using a smaller tree; Scott stated he would measure the tree on the Meady's property. Charlie stated he had forwarded his response to Alan's questions regarding the vehicle museum. The Board agreed to consider the questions posed at a meeting in the near future. Charlie asked if Town Hall would be useable by Labor Day and the Board stated that was Maureen's goal, he should talk to Maureen.

3. Becky Moul – Becky asked the Board if some blue trash bags could be brought to the Transfer Station and Betsy agreed to give some to Mike for George to pick. Becky asked about the bidding policy in regards to the household hazardous waste day, the Board agreed that the past practice of mailing requests to selected vendors provided by DES was appropriate. Becky discussed the renegotiations for the MSW hauling with Shaw; Mike stated he was interested in working on the renegotiations and Becky agreed to work with him. Becky asked why the Town was doing business with residents who owe backed taxes and why the Town doesn't offset the taxes off invoiced amounts and Betsy stated it was her understanding that doing so is illegal. Becky asked if the work on Pleasant Pond was put out to bid and Betsy stated that the Road Agent had gotten hourly rates. Becky had asked why the Town gets hourly rates rather than set contract amounts. There was a discussion about how the Town gets hourly rates for some projects and flat rates for others. Becky stated she feels the Town should not hire people as contractors if they are in arrears of taxes and Betsy stated the Town cannot discriminate based on that factor.
4. Janet Quilty – Lisa Bourbou stated Janet is sick and asked her to speak for her. Lisa stated she felt competent bidding companies should be able to provide flat rates for projects as opposed to hourly. Lisa stated Janet wanted to ask why the grader was not bid even though the Town has a policy that requires bidding. Lisa stated she has looked at the two quotes the Town got and that it is clear that they are not an apples to apples comparison. Lisa stated the elements on the bid from Nortrax are not comparable to what is being paid by other municipalities. There was a discussion about what is required by the warrant article and what a bid is defined as.

Betsy stated Melissa Gallagher sent a letter asking for permission to put a sign on the Town Common for the Grapevine's upcoming event. The Board agreed to allow them to place the sign on the Common.

The Board reviewed and approved the following requests for proposals for the Highway Department:

- Pleasant Pond Paving
- Pleasant Pond Reconstruction
- Crushing of Sand and Gravel
- Crack Sealing
- Sand Sealing
- Calcium Chloride

MOTION: Scott made a motion to approve payroll in advance next week. Seconded by Betsy. All in favor.

Items to Sign

1. Payroll Manifest for 4/29/2013
2. Payables Manifest for 4/29/2013
3. Yield Taxes for Map 6 Lot 42-2
4. Timber tax rating for Map 5 Lots 32, 33, and 34
5. Building Permit for an addition for Map 8 Lot 35

Correspondence

1. Weekly Administrative Update
2. Letter from St. Jean's regarding a surplus auction
3. Notice from the Francetown Zoning Board regarding a hearing for George Cilley Jr. on May 9
4. Email from Gloria Normile regarding the bridge update letter
5. Notice from Hillsborough County about their FY 2014 Budget
6. Notice from LGC about final health insurance rates – Mike stated they came in slightly below what we budgeted
7. Notice from Town Counsel regarding Giza – Mike stated he was going to pass it along to Ed for enforcement
8. Notice from SWRPC regarding upcoming meetings
9. Letter from DOT approving an engineering study submitted from CLD – the paving approach has been shortened slightly so it will be slightly less expensive than previous estimates
10. Note from Comcast about an update to their changes
11. Information from a Selectman from Harrisville dropped off regarding bridges – the Board agreed these documents did not need to be kept
12. Copy of memo sent to Pat Long and Becky Lambert about moving to the summer biweekly cleaning schedule

New Business

Mike told the Board he had put together a brief summary of some building projects to potentially do this year out of the operating budget building line. The Board discussed these projects and agreed that we should try to determine the reason paint has not been staying on the Annex before painting the gable ends. They felt the windows on the Town Office were a high priority so we can improve the building's energy efficiency. The Board agreed they had committed to the Solid Waste Committee to purchase the paint for the Transfer Station and should fund the prisoner labor to paint it if the program was reinstated.

There was a brief discussion about board and committee appointments and areas where the Town is short applicants. The Board discussed the Highway Safety Committee, including the charge and the terms. Betsy stated she was going to see if she had anything on file.

MOTION: Betsy made a motion to appoint Sue Jonas as a member of the ZBA until 2015. Seconded by Scott. All in favor.

The Board agreed to wait to decide on the other openings.

Kitty Houghton asked if the Town had included Town labor in the \$55,000 quoted in the bridge update letter. The Board stated that Highway Department staff time already in the operating budget was not included in that figure. There was a discussion about what was and was not included in that amount. Henry Camirand stated his understanding was that Kris's figure would have been reduced by the amount of Town labor provided.

BJ Carbee stated it would make sense for the Town to try to find a plan from when the Annex was renovated to show to contractors so they could determine the issue causing the paint to flake. The Board agreed this was a good idea.

NEXT BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING: Tuesday May 7th at 4:30 p.m. at Pleasant Pond Road

ADJOURNMENT: Betsy adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Michael Branley

Approved on May 13, 2013

Board of Selectmen Chair Betsy Hardwick

Selectman Scott S. Carbee

Selectperson Abigail Arnold