

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

**June 22, 2015**

Selectmen Present: Chair Abigail Arnold, Brad Howell, and Scott Carbee

Staff Present: Town Administrator Michael Branley, Town Clerk & Tax Collector Pam Finnell, Officer-in-charge Steve Campbell, and Administrative Manager Fred Douglas

Also present: Pat Sullivan, Betty Berhsing, Susan Cripps, James Gann, Michael Tartalis, Lisa Stewart, Lisa Bourbeau, Herb Bromberg, Ben & Robyn Haubrich, Joe & Shirley Ludwig, Tom Anderson, Marcia Tripp, Ted Graham, Polly Freese, Charlie & Sarah Pyle, Ashley Saari, Guy Tolman, Ethel MacStubbs, Daniel Lewis, John Arnold, Sue Jonas, Isabella Britain Hill, Chris & Deb Rogers, Scot Heath, Judi Miller and Gerri Bernstein

**CALL TO ORDER:** Abigail called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Abigail stated the first item is to swear in Fred Douglas as a part-time police officer. The Board approved and signed the appointment form. Town Clerk Pamela Finnell swore in Fred as a part-time officer. Fred stated it's an honor to serve the community of Francestown and he looks forward to it. The Board signed a deed waiver and a tax payment agreement and Pam notarized the agreement.

**Appointments**

1. Retired Chief Pat Sullivan from the NH Chiefs of Police Association. Mike contacted Chief Sullivan concerning posting the part time Police Chief job opening on their website and Chief Sullivan explained that the Chiefs' Association has a program where they will assist with the preliminary recruitment process for the Town. The Chief explained how the process works and the steps that are taken. There is no cost for this service except to cover any expenses which would have to be paid by the Town. Mike indicated that he has created a job description and recruitment documents for the Chief position and Primex has reviewed them. Abigail asked Chief Sullivan how long the process usually takes. The Chief replied that it can be done in two months. Mike will discuss what paperwork is necessary with the Chief and create a letter of engagement. Mike asked the Board if they had any other suggested changes for the chief recruitment documents and the Board asked that the mileage language be changed to indicate the Town would "prefer" a candidate the lives within 20 miles of Francestown. The Board approved the recruitment documents for posting and agreed Mike would be the point of contact.

### **Items to Sign**

1. Payables Manifest for 6/22/15
2. Payroll Manifest for 6/22/15
3. Abatement Recommendation regarding Crotched Mountain Golf Club – Denied because the BTLA case regarding the 2013 value is still pending.
4. Timber Tax Bills for Map 8 Lot 22, Map 6 Lot 65, Map 6 Lot 79, Map 3 Lot 31 and 31-1
5. Report of Cuts and grading for Map 6 Lot 27, Map 6 Lot 59 and Map 9 Lot 3
6. Letter from the Board supporting FIHS's LCHIP grant application for the restoration of the Beehive – Charlie stated that the State would like to ensure that FIHS's efforts have public support. It was felt that a letter from the Selectmen would indicate Town support. The Board approved the letter of support.
7. Selection of an attorney to continue representation of the Town in the litigation with Fairpoint and PSNH. Mike said he checked with the other towns involved in the suit to see what they were doing and it's a mix. Some towns are going with Serge, some use other counsel, and some are staying with Upton & Hatfield. Mike recommends staying with Upton & Hatfield. The Board decided to stay with Matt Serge.

### **New Business**

#### **Public Hearing**

1. Abigail stated this is the second Public Hearing for the purpose of discussing if the Town should accept the partial donation of 7.9 acres of land from the Taylor family across from the existing cemetery. This hearing is being held under RSA 41:14-a. Abigail gave the specifics of the proposed donation. Scott Carbee said that he thinks the land should not be taken off the tax role and the decision whether or not to accept the donation should be made at Town Meeting. Polly Freese stated she is opposed to accepting the gift due to the restrictions and the costs related to developing it for use as a cemetery. She talked about the number of spaces still available at the cemetery and feels that more land is unnecessary. Scott complained that he hasn't seen anything in writing and feels unsure of exactly what the deal is. Brad said that it isn't unusual to have several preliminary discussions before a written agreement is prepared. The information being revealed at these hearings is what has been learned from the discussions between the Town Administrator and counsel to the Taylor Family. Ethel says she knows the Taylor's and there is no reason to doubt anything they say. She went on to say that as a cemetery commissioner she walked the area and she thinks the Town should accept the donation. She indicated that it may be perfect for either a green cemetery or garden cemetery and felt that less work would be necessary to turn it into a cemetery. Sarah Pyle said we have funds set aside for future cemetery land that could be freed up for other use. She is in support of the Town accepting the donation and agrees with what Ethel said. Guy Tolman said that he has the longest border on this property. He said it will benefit him for it to not be developed but still doesn't like the way it is being presented and asked why the Taylor family doesn't just give it to the Town. He said that Tim Taylor purchased the property to prevent a school from being built on that property and questioned the way the donation has been presented. Abigail said she objected to the dispersions being cast on the Taylor Family. Brad said that how the offer has been presented should not enter

into the decision. Sarah asked for clarification of Mr. Tolman's comment that it would be costly to develop the cemetery and asked why the same costs wouldn't exist if land was later purchased for a cemetery in the future. Daniel Lewis commented that he didn't think Mr. Tolman cast dispersions on the Taylor family and asked if the Board accepted Polly's figures of available plots and that there was no eminent need for a new cemetery. He went on to question if it is typical for donations to be made with strings attached. James Gann said that he doesn't think the Town needs to acquire more land and it shouldn't be taken off the tax role. Ben Haubrich said that the Taylors could get the land back into current use if they don't want it developed and said that there's no guarantee that the land would have a high tax value. He said it seemed to him that the objections aired at this meeting are an effort by some to discourage the Board from moving forward with the donation at all. Herb Bromberg said that he wants to echo Mr. Haubrich's point and said it's best to accept the donation and go to a special meeting. Polly said she walked the land and it would make a strange cemetery and that the land does not conform to normal cemetery standards even if it were a green cemetery. Isabella Britain Hill asked if the land was developed into house lots wouldn't the cost of building houses there bring the echelon of the median taxpayer up because it would cost so much to build there because of ledge. Abigail said that soil classification for Francestown is quite good and doubts there is ledge there. Scott said that there are wetlands on the property and the north bowtie of the lot did not pass for a school. Marcia Tripp said she is interested in scattering ashes in a woodland setting and asked Polly if a hole has to be dug in order to do that or if that setting would work for that purpose. Sue Jonas said she thinks there are plenty of people who may be interested in woodland sites for future burial. She said it may expand the concept of what a memorial site should be and thinks the Town should accept the donation. Betsy Hardwick added that there is only one wetland on the lot located on the very edge in the back of the property. Sue asked if the property could be used just as undeveloped land. Abigail said that until it is used as a cemetery it would remain as open space. Chris Rogers asked when a new cemetery would be needed and thinks the location is appropriate. He said he thinks it's a wonderful opportunity. Tom Anderson said he supports this concept because of the open space provision. He asked if the Taylor offered it as a straight out donation, with no strings attached, would the process be the same. Scot Heath said the lot meets the criteria of the Conservation Commission for open space and their approval was based on that. Dennis Calcutt said he finds it to be an interesting debate to be having when someone wants to give the Town a gift. He would like to go forward with the process and accept this donation. Lisa Stewart said she agrees with Dennis and added that many offers of donation come with stipulations. She is happy to see that the residents are being given the opportunity to debate the issue and have a voice. Gerry Bernstein said she doesn't think it's appropriate to second guess what the Taylors have offered, it's a generous gift. She urged the Board to accept the gift. Polly said that she doesn't think it's a very welcoming to have a cemetery on each side of the road at the entrance to the Town. Sarah asked about the time frame the Town has to accept the offer fearing that the Taylors would not be willing to wait until Town Meeting in March of next year. Abigail stated Town Counsel has been busy with other matters so he has not yet been able to speak to the Taylor's Counsel.

MOTION: Scott made a motion to close the Public Hearing pursuant to RSA 41:14-a, seconded by Brad. All in favor.

## Correspondence

1. Weekly administrative report for June 19, 2015
2. Memo from Steve Campbell regarding the status of the Town's prosecutor contract with Goffstown
3. Fred Douglas's Weekly Report dated June 22, 2015
4. Correspondence and Motions regarding *Orsi et al v. Town of Frankestown et al*
5. Planning Board's Notice of a Decision on the lot line adjustment between Little and Anderson
6. Letter from DES regarding deficiencies at Map 19 Lot 25 – deficiencies corrected
7. Letter from DRA regarding 2014 Assessment Review – finding was that the Town complies with the standards
8. Memo from FEMA regarding upcoming Risk Mapping Assessment and Planning meetings
9. Health Insurance Renewal Documents with increased rates for health coverage starting July 1
10. Letter from Primex regarding *Orsi et al v. Town of Frankestown et al* stating that the Town's legal fees will not be covered by Primex because the plaintiffs are not seeking damages
11. Email from Bill McAuley regarding proposed landscaping in the front area of the Thulander Building if the Highway Department will no longer pile snow in front of the building. Scott stated he would like to take advantage of the opportunity. The Board agreed they would continue the discussion about snow removal with Gary soon however were not ready to make a commitment yet.
12. Email from Allan Treadwell with sound system options. Mike stated Alan assessed the school gymnasium and the town offices meeting room and the options were for portable systems that could be used in both locations. The Board discussed portable versus fixed systems and the number of microphones needed.

## Approval of Minutes

**MOTION:** Abigail made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for May 4, May 6, May 11, May 18 and June 1, 2015 as written, seconded by Scott. All in favor.

Mike asked about the July 4, 2015 holiday which falls on a Saturday and is observed on Friday. The Board said employees should be paid or get the time off. Mike asked about a salary range for a part time Chief position. The Board agreed to a range of \$25-\$35 per hour.

James Gann asked what the Board didn't understand about portable systems and said no one would put a ceiling mounted system in this meeting room.

**NEXT BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING:** June 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Abigail adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Michael Branley