

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2015 6:00 PM
CASCADE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Gorham Selectmen present: Jeff Schall, Grace LaPierre, Terry Oliver

Also present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Kirstan Lukasak, Berlin Daily Sun; Chad Miller, EMD; Dennis Arguin, Pat Lefebvre

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Schall.

2. Appointments:

3. New Business

a) Award Bid for Tinker Brook Bridge Replacement: TM Frost presented the Board with a list of bidders and bid amounts for the Tinker Brook Bridge Project. All bids that were received are higher than anticipated by the Engineer. At this time, the Town is short a small amount of money to pay the project in its entirety. Chairman Schall asked if this project might be completed in house between the Public Works Department and the Water and Sewer Department. TM Frost stated that she felt it was not feasible to complete the work in house. Chairman Schall stated that he would like TM Frost to reach out to PWD Holmes and WSS Patry to discuss this possibility. The Board and TM Frost further discussed the fact that the project will not be started until next spring. TM Frost will have PWD Holmes look at the area to make sure it is safe for travel and to keep an eye on it throughout the winter months. The Town raised an appropriated \$175,000 for the work. The balance that is needed to complete the work will be placed in a Warrant for Town Meeting. The Board tabled bid awarding until TM Frost speaks with Messrs. Holmes and Patry.

b) Preliminary Tax Rate Calculation: TM Frost presented the Board with information along with options for the preliminary tax rate. At this time, the fund balance is approximately \$1,163,000. If the Town uses \$300,000 from fund balance, it will bring the tax rate down to \$29.63. If \$350,000 is used from the fund balance, the tax rate would be \$29.45 and the fund balance would equate to 8.35% of operating expenses. If \$375,000 is used the tax rate would be \$29.36 and the fund balance would equate to 8% of operating expenses. TM Frost stated that at this time, the overlay account will stay at \$300,000. She recommended to the Board that \$375,000 of the fund balance be used. It will still stay within the recommended percent balance that DRA recommends and will lower the tax rate by \$1.32. At this time, the Town is in a good position and the fund balance is the highest it has been in a few years. **Selectman LaPierre made a motion to take \$375,000 from the fund balance to reduce the tax rate, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted unanimously.**

4. Old Business

a) 2016 Budget Review Schedule: TM Frost stated that budget review is still on track and will begin November 9th. The only change to the schedule is that FC Eichler asked to move his budget review to November 9th from November 16th.

b) Paramedic Update: EMD Miller stated that two candidates for the position will be interviewed before a committee on Friday. Both candidates are now certified.

c) New Ambulance: EMD Miller stated that that he hoped to have the final paperwork for the new ambulance this week for TM Frost's signature. The new ambulance's engine will be a Ford V-10 gas engine instead of a diesel engine. The final price of the new ambulance is approximately \$129,000. EMD Miller stated that the Water and Sewer Department has offered to do some painting and decaling on the new ambulance.

5. Public Comment:

Dennis Arguin stated that he missed the meeting that Mike Scala attended and wondered if he missed anything. The Board stated that Mr. Scala did present some leads, but they were not applicable to the situation. EMD Miller stated that at a recent meeting with State officials, it was expressed that the matter is a high priority for the Board. However, the reality of receiving public monies to address the area is slim. EMD Miller stated that the Town will need to look at other funding means.

6. Other Business

a) Town Manager's Update: TM Frost informed the Board that she has a meeting with Easter Seals on November 4th to discuss the upcoming Ride-In. TM Frost stated that the snow road is an issue for one Main Street business as it affects their lack of parking. The Board discussed other options for the snow road which included using the other side of the street as well as by-passing that portion of Main Street by going up Church Street to Railroad Street and then the Common.

TM Frost stated that Lucy Remillard had contacted her and stated that she is looking to sell her house/property at 20 Main Street and wondered if the Town was interested in purchasing it. Ms. Remillard's asking price is \$90,000, and the property is currently assessed at \$78,500. At this time, the Board didn't think that they are interested, but asked TM Frost to check to see if it was something that PWD Holmes thinks that it is needed based on its location. The Board tabled the matter until TM Frost speaks with PWD Holmes.

b) Selectmen's Update: Selectman LaPierre asked TM Frost where the Town stands with Bank of NH and Joelle Losier. TM Frost stated that the Bank feels that they are being over assessed and is hoping to be able to settle the matter. BTLA has continued the Losier matter until March.

The Board asked if TM Frost had heard anything from the Historical Society. TM Frost stated that she had sent out the letter but has not heard anything back from them.

Selectman Oliver asked if the Town has heard anything on the playground for the Cascade residents. TM Frost stated that she has still not heard anything from the Mill.

Chairman Schall asked TM Frost about the odor issue with the asphalt plant. TM Frost will make an effort to have CEO Scarinza look into the matter.

c) Approval of Minutes (September 21 and September 28, 2015): The Minutes of the September 21 meeting has a duplicate paragraph that should be removed. **Selectman LaPierre made a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 21 and September 28 meetings, seconded by Selectman Oliver, voted unanimously.**

d) Sign Manifest: All manifests were signed.

e) Sign Abatements and Exemptions (if necessary): All signed.

7. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-a:3, II e: Not necessary.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 PM.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

Jeff Schall

Grace LaPierre

Terry Oliver