

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, August 17, 2020**

Present were Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernest Day, Jr., and Alan Fall, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded the minutes. Also present was Bill Elliott, Scott Brooks, Rob Cunio, Paul Elie, Don Johnson, Pat McCoy, Chuck Brooks, Daniel Brooks, Justin Brooks, Josh Shackford and Carol Stansell, and Susan Marks and Melissa Florio via Zoom. This meeting was held at the Town Hall.

Chairman Babb called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

The accounts payable and payroll manifests were reviewed as well as the red folder containing correspondence.

Fall made a motion to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting held on 8/10/2020. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Public Comment:

Paul Elie reported that cyanobacteria blooms have been detected in Danforth Pond. NH DES has been alerted and an advisory is in effect. Green Mountain Conservation Group is also on the issue. Elie stated that its presence is weather-related and also due to low water/lack of rainfall and minimal water flows.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio presented the Board with a copy of a letter of appreciation addressed to Matt Tyler for his assistance with storm debris cleanup. Cunio reported a busy week; five calls for medical aid including one with transport, one motor vehicle accident, one mutual aid for a structure fire in Tamworth, one fire alarm activation, and one outside fire. The pump on Forestry 1 overheated and shut down during the mutual aid call and is in for service, flow testing was conducted last Thursday- all passed, most vehicles have been serviced and inspected with only a few remaining to complete, and there are no new positive cases of Covid-19. Call volume is up 50 over last year. The State Forestry Grant will be used to pick up necessary items.

Cunio announced the 2019 Assistance to Firefighter's Grant that has been applied for to purchase new extrication tools has been awarded in the amount of \$38,095.24 with a town-match amount of \$1,904.76 for a total of \$40,000. Cunio originally applied for \$68,992.00 but the amount awarded will suffice for the items needed. Babb made a motion to accept the grant as awarded. Fall seconded. All in favor, the motion carried.

Highway Department – Road Agent Scott Brooks reported heavy tree damage cleanup from the storm, a large task for a 3-man crew. Rust repairs have been completed on both the grader and loader and the chipper will receive new fenders and battery box, and paint. Brooks announced that he does not anticipate getting any further winter sand or gravel from Watts Pit as there is nothing to fill in what has been excavated out. Ambrose has completed the gravel crushing and an invoice is in for processing.

Transfer Station – Justin Brooks reported it to still be busy at the Transfer Station. Four large loads

of brush were hauled out last week for \$1,200 due to being too dry to burn. Discussion on setting fees for disposing of brush. Brooks responded that it is weather-dependent as to whether brush will have to be hauled out again, this was a first in his 19-years, and it will be difficult to setup a fee as it is hauled in a variety of ways.

Police Department – Chief Josh Shackford presented the current fine schedule for review and proposed recommended changes. The Board agreed with the changes and requested a public hearing be scheduled for review and enactment.

Agenda Items:

Heating & Fuel Oil Bid Opening: Babb announced the opening of bids and read them as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1.) Irving Oil | Fixed Heating Oil | \$1.641/gal. |
| | Variable Diesel | \$1.487/gal. |
| 2.) CN Brown | #2 Heating Oil | \$1.639/gal. or rack plus \$0.21 over CNB low |
| | ULSD | \$1.679/gal. or rack plus \$0.18 over CNB low |
| | Mix K-1/#2 | \$1.819/gal. or rack plus \$0.21 over CNB low |
| | Gasoline | Rack plus \$0.29 over Citgo rack |
| 3.) Eastern Propane | #2 Heating Oil | \$2.099/gal |

Babb stated that CN Brown was the only company to bid all four items requested. Day made a motion to award the heating and fuel oil contract to CN Brown. Fall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. Fall made a motion to proceed with the fixed pricing. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Propane Bid Opening: Bids received were opened as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.) Eastern Propane | \$1.499/gal. |
| 2.) Suburban Propane | \$1.35/gal. or \$0.52 over Selkirk |
| 3.) White Mountain Oil & Propane | \$1.14/gal. or \$0.39 over wholesale |

Fall made a motion to award the propane contract to White Mountain Oil & Propane at the fixed price of \$1.14/gal. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Old Business:

Day discussed the Fireworks Ordinance and concerns that have been received about the extension of days before and after the holiday when fireworks are allowed without a permit. Shackford is in favor of an amendment to reduce the number of days as was Cunio, both based on general safety concerns. Fall stated no problem either way. Further discussion ensued. The Board requested proposed updates to the Fireworks Ordinance also be presented during the Public Hearing on the fine schedule update.

Discussion took place on updating the Transfer Station fee schedule. The fee for mattress disposal was just updated in July and following discussion, no further changes are necessary at this time.

Agenda Items:

Don Johnson – Election Planning: Johnson announced that the School Board has welcomed the elections to be hosted in the school’s gymnasium with a few provisions to include setup, teardown

and cleaning to be the responsibility of the Town, and mandatory mask-wearing inside the school. Johnson then reviewed the steps that have been taken to get the word out to the public about the request for mask wearing to vote, and the option to vote by absentee ballot for those unable to wear or refuse to wear a mask. Announcements have been posted to the website, community bulletin board and in the Conway Daily Sun. Johnson then proceeded to review how the voting process will take place including a “curbside voting” option for someone who shows up on voting day and is unable/unwilling to wear a mask. Many challenges presented during inspections by the Attorney General’s Office at past elections held at the Town Hall are being rectified with relocating to the school. The Selectmen confirmed a quorum will be present on the day of election. The Selectmen also agreed to assist with transporting tables and chairs from the Town Hall to the school on the Friday prior to the election following the close of the school day and assistance with setup and takedown will also be available from staff. Babb presented wording for a sign that will be placed at the entrance regarding the request for mask wearing. Supervisor of the Checklist Pat McCoy stated the need for electricity for computers when considering the setup of the gym and Carol Stansell stated the need for a secure WIFI access. The plan for meals for election workers was also discussed. A meeting of election workers will be held on Labor Day at 5:30 PM to finalize the details for the election day setup.

Many challenges presented during inspections by the Attorney General’s Office at past elections held at the Town Hall are being rectified with relocating to the school. Brooks announced the culverts for Loon Lake Road have been delivered and will be installed upon Brooks return to work.

Discussion:

Cunio requested proof of the Board’s acknowledgement to accept the Firefighter’s Grant. White will provide a draft copy of the Selectmen’s Meeting minutes.

Non-Public Session:

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:58 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (b) for hiring. Day seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Babb-yes, Fall-yes, Day-yes. All in favor, the motion passed. Fall made a motion to resume public session at 8:06 PM. Babb seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion continued

Discussion took place on budget reductions made in preparation for the anticipated effects of Covid-19 on revenues as well as funding for highway-related articles for paving and seal coating. The Board affirmed that the only cuts made were for the Swett Hill Road reclamation and the sand shed, both of which will be encumbered at year-end.

Discussion on the moratorium in place on hiring. Babb stated that it has been reviewed on a case-by-case, and position basis up until this point. Initial concerns were of the impact of Covid-19 on this year’s budget but now the concern appears to be future budgets. Babb made a motion to rescind the hiring freeze. Fall seconded. Day suggested it be held in place until November 1. Brooks stated that he is unable to complete necessary road work without hiring flaggers needed for safety. The motion carried by majority vote, 2-1. White will draft a notice that the hiring moratorium has been rescinded and a return to staffing levels can resume.

Non-Public Session:

Day made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:14 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) for personnel. Fall seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Babb-yes, Fall-yes, Day-yes. All in favor, the

motion passed. Fall made a motion to resume public session at 8:22 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion continued:

A review of the current meeting requirements took place. Fall made a motion to eliminate the Zoom option as the meetings are able to be held safely in-person and can be relocated to the Town Hall when capacity or further social distancing is a concern. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

S. Brooks informed the Board of a follow-up appointment scheduled for next week at which time he should have a better idea of a return to work date.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting – 8/10/2020	Approved
Payroll Manifest – week ending 8/12/2020	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 8/12/2020	Approved
Three Applications for Veteran’s Tax Credit	Approved

Correspondence:

Report of Unpaid Lien Receivables	Reviewed
Lien Status – Payment received to fulfill 2017, 2018, 2019 liens and partial 2020	Reviewed
NH Dept. of Safety – Information request regarding application for transporter registration	Reviewed
Wetlands Permit Application – Std. Dredge & Fill (Map 28A, Lot 63, Spindle Point)	Reviewed
Action Ambulance – Activity Report, 4/1/2020-7/31/2020	Reviewed
NH Dept. of Revenue – Community Action Report, cyclical monitoring 7/16/2020	Reviewed

Being no further input, Day made a motion to adjourn. Fall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Alan G. Fall