

Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, November 22, 2021

Chairman Leslie Babb called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Present were Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernie Day, and Melissa Florio, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded these minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Office.

Also, present were Scott Brooks, Rob Cunio, Kelly McClare, Justin Brooks and Jamie Mullen.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

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

An updated quote received on the salt shed was reviewed. Building is estimated at \$340,000 with adds of \$130,000 for \$470,000 total. ARPA funds available to use toward the project are approximately \$160,000.

Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting and Non-Public Sessions held on 11/15/2021. Les seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting held on 11/17/2021. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Department Head Updates

Highway Department – Road Agent Scott Brooks reported graveling roads continues; Cold Brook Road, Albert Godfrey Road and Scarboro were all completed. The new Mack has an estimated delivery date of May 2022. He followed up with HP Fairfield and the new 5500 is not scheduled to build until January with an ETA of 120-days to get the plow gear. Scott stated the truck has been there since August and should have been completed in October-November as was originally planned. He is waiting for a follow-up call tomorrow but may have to fabricate something to get some weight back on the rear of the F-550 to be able to use it for plowing this winter. He will be short a sander in this case because all controls were removed to install in the new truck.

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio gave call volume for the past three weeks including 1-4 positive Covid cases in town, 15 medical aid, 1 motor vehicle accident, 1 fire alarm, and 1 chimney fire. The battery for Forestry III arrived and it will be going over for service/inspection next week. Rescue and Engine 7 have had their radios installed. Quotes for the new rescue have come in between \$320,000-340,000 and Rob questions if they will be pursuing a lease purchase option? Les responded that they will not know until all budgets have been presented and where the total is at. Ernie stated that there will likely be production delays like with all other vehicles. Rob responded that International has less issue than Ford. The new gear arrived and they were able to purchase 4-sets instead of 3 by going with a different vendor. The monitor replacement is estimated to be \$30,000-40,000 but there are State funds available to assist with the purchase that he will be looking into. Ellen stated that there are ARPA funds available for \$50,000 for emergency essential equipment purchases. Towns are responsible for a 10% matching contribution. Rob reported call volume is 24 calls ahead of 2020. The turbo and other repairs for Forestry I were approximately \$4,300. He believes this can be

absorbed within his budget without having to seek reimbursement from the Capital Reserve Fund since the \$9,200 for the AFG grant for the new radios will be withdrawn from the fund. He will verify this when finalizing his budget request. Rescue is rough, it works but is not fitting needs and additional issues came up after inspection (electrical and other). Ernie questioned if the vehicles are being undercoated annually? Rob responded that there is a line item budgeted but only two vehicles needed touch up of fluid film treatment this year.

Police Department – Chief Mullen reported several more 91-A requests - short-term rental motivated. There has been an email circulated regarding the increase in break-ins in the area primarily unlocked vehicles. The suspects are known and the communities impacted include Madison, Effingham, Ossipee and Wakefield. No known complaints have been received in Freedom. Similar events have been reported over the border in Maine. Jamie stated a department meeting was held last week to work on goal setting and to discuss ongoing issues. A training was also held on use of force. Irwin did get back in touch on the cruiser and they are interested in the F-550 in trade. ETA is still 18-20 weeks for the new cruiser arrival. Pricing is at \$37,631 with an additional \$9,000 needed to outfit for a total purchase of \$46,631. The lightbar can be reused but it will need a new radio due to recurring malfunctions with the present one.

Town Office – Administrator Ellen White reported the tax rate setting was finalized last week. Tax bills were sent to the printer on Thursday and went out in the mail this past weekend with a due date of December 22.

Appointments:

2022 Budget Review –

Emergency Management – Director Kelly McClare stated the Hazard Mitigation Plan update is scheduled to begin with its first committee meeting on November 30th. The grant obtained to complete the update is for \$10,000 with \$2,500 being the town's matching portion. This amount along with \$500 for stipends in the event of an event makeup the budget. The committee established to assist with the Hazard Mitigation Plan update include Kelly, Jane Hubbard from Hubbard Consulting, Courtney Jordan, HSEM Field Rep, Ellen White, Donna Cupka, Alan Fall, and Jamie Mullen. Ellen stated that the \$2,500 was raised in the 2021 budget and could be encumbered bringing the budget back down to \$500.00.

Transfer Station – Justin Brooks presented his budget handout with a proposed 4.89% increase, primarily in part-time wages. There is a need for 2-people regularly especially given recent accident history, no one should be alone at the facility. Melissa questioned if there is any need for increase in utilities with costs increasing. Justin stated there is enough built in to account for increases. The health insurance premium decreased and that has been reflected in the request.

Police Department – Chief Jamie Mullen presented his budget handout noting only an increase in full-time salaries to cover the third full-time officer. Insurance and retirement line items will have to be adjusted accordingly. Training and equipment updates will be focal points this year. The new tasers may need to be updated requiring a data port and dock station. Prices are being researched for these along with new pistols. Melissa questioned if the administrative assistant position has been factored in? Jamie responded that it is included in the part-time wages. Jamie stated he has reached out to

Effingham to get a cost for the radar sign they just purchased and will report more when he has the information.

Ambulance – Calculated on updated prices given by Action Ambulance. Question on call volume used; spreadsheet distributed at regional ambulance meeting showed a decrease in Freedom’s call volume while calculations provided reflect an increase. Ellen will verify the numbers with Action. Rob will check the call volume from his reports as well.

Public Comment

None presented.

Old / New Business / Discussion:

Transfer Station Fees Review/Update – Justin stated that mattresses are the only items that have received a fee increase in his 21-years. Additional suggested changes include increase to \$5/bag from \$2/bag for renters, console (projection-style) televisions to \$50, sleeper sofa couches with metal frame to \$30, asphalt shingles - \$20 for 30-gallon trash can equivalent, \$100 for up to full pickup bed and \$200 for 1-ton pickup, construction debris - \$20 for 30-gallon trash can equivalent, \$100 for up to full pickup bed and \$150 for 1-ton pickup, sheetrock/plaster - \$30 for 30-gallon trash can equivalent, \$100 for up to full pickup bed, and \$200 for 1-ton pickup.

Justin stated it is more of a pain than worth to add a scale that would have to be calibrated, certified, etc. The metal roll off container is in place and will be picked up by Rickers regularly. Scrap metal recycling has generated approximately \$12,000 in revenue this year. As for waste oils, a local vendor will still take it at this time.

A public hearing will be scheduled to review/discuss the proposed fees updates and for adoption.

Non-Public Session(s):

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:44 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e) for legal. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Melissa-yes, Ernie-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:10 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion Continued:

Ernie stated he would like to see all vehicles receive undercoat treatment annually.

An email received from Willie Farnum regarding regional recycling was reviewed. Les stated this approach may be a year too soon with the upcoming contract renewal but he would be willing to go and listen to the discussion.

Les provided a brief recap on the short-term rental discussion at the Planning Board meeting last week.

Consent Agenda

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting Non-Public Session – 11/15/2021	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting – 11/17/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable – Week ending 11/19/2021	Approved
Payroll Manifest – Week ending 11/17/2021	Approved
Winter Road Inspection Report – Pauli Point Road	Approved
Letter of Appointment – Linda Mailhot to Comm District Planning Committee	Approved

Correspondence

Report – 2021 Tax Rate Breakdown – Director-Approved Final Tax Rate	Reviewed
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Being no further input, Ernie made a motion to adjourn. Les seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen N. White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Melissa M. Florio