

**Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, December 13, 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 Hall.

Also, present were Renee Wheaton, Scott Brooks, Justin Brooks, Chris Libby, Darwin Moulton, Rob Cunio, Miranda Sandahl, Ned Kucera, Bill Elliott, Rick Davison, Robin Waters, Chuck Brooks and Gary Williams.

Les called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and immediately opened the Public Hearing on Transfer Station Fees Review/Update.

Public Hearing

Handouts showing the suggested changes in the fee schedule were distributed. Les opened the hearing to public comment.

Darwin stated is his concern with the increase may lead to additional illegal dumping at the gate. He questioned if cameras can be installed? Les responded that cameras have been installed in the past and they could look into it. Darwin stated that with better technology today, offenders may get caught. An increase in cost for disposal may create more temptation for illegal dumping.

Justin reported this is the first increase in 20-years.

Being no further input, the public hearing was closed at 6:36 PM.

Les made a motion to adopt the fees as listed. Ernie seconded. All in favor., the motion passed.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

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

Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's Meetings held on 12/6/2021 and 12/10/2021 and the non-public session minutes from 12/6/2021. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Department Head Updates

Transfer Station – Justin Brooks reported the new steel dumpster is working out well although they are still monitoring items that are being put in the wrong bins. The Transfer Station was closed on Saturday due to icy conditions. The Highway crew was busy keeping the roads safe for travel and the decision was made to focus on those and not the Transfer Station.

Highway – Road Agent Scott Brooks stated he and Lance took a trip to HP Fairfield last Thursday regarding the truck build. The new 5500 should be complete by the end of the month. Scott reviewed

the budget figures with Ellen and the general expense increase was overstated. The anticipated increase of \$22,000 is actually only \$7,952. Plenty of sand and salt is stockpiled. With 20-degree temps and rain Saturday, it was difficult to keep the roads safe which is why they made the decision to keep their focus there.

Melissa questioned when the new Transfer Station fees will go into effect. The brochures will be updated with new pricing and will be handed out with the new 2022-2023 permits.

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio reported call volume including 2 medical aid, 1 fire alarm, 1 service call and 11 positive cases of Covid. The AFG grant has been resubmitted to replace Engine 2 and the grant application for the new cardiac monitor is in processing. The Ice Derby is scheduled for January 22 with an alternate date of February 5, pending ice conditions. They will be auctioning a hunting rifle again as it was very successful last year. Tickets are being printed and will be available for sale soon.

Cunio informed the Board of a complaint received regarding response time for a 911 call and disappointment that a member from the Fire Department did not respond. Cunio explained to the complainant that the station is not manned 24/7; it is staffed by him during the day Monday-Friday and by volunteers otherwise. He contacted dispatch to retrieve the response times; pre-tone at 10:17 PM, first tone at 10:20 PM and the ambulance was on scene at the medic level in 10 minutes with arrival at Huggins at 11:26 PM. The complainant suggested more staff be hired or more volunteers be recruited as a solution. Cunio stated his satisfaction with the response time and coverage provided by the ambulance provider.

Senior Resource Coordinator Renee Wheaton reported that the Stay Safe & Warm program will be rolling out January 1. The Gibson Center will be picking up the cost of insurance. This program will provide assistance in safety measures such as installing grab bars, etc. USDA funds are being utilized to reimburse costs. Transportation assistance is now available on Mondays. Interested persons should contact Renee by Friday to schedule. Transportation to scheduled appointments should be booked a few weeks in advance. Renee is working on activating hyperlinks to resources on the new website.

Appointments:

2022 Budget Review:

Aquatic Invasive Species Committee – Chairman Ned Kucera provided a handout. The Lake Host is proposed to stay the same with funding of \$2,500. Bids have been circulated for weed removal. Herbicide treatment is being proposed for 12.9 acres versus the 30-acres proposed for 2021. The diver assisted suction harvesting (DASH) cost per day has increased from \$1,200 to \$1,400 from Aqualogic and another vendor quoted \$2,000/day. The percentage of award is yet to be determined for the state grant. The past few years has been a 40% match. The estimated treatment total proposed is \$35,950 and will be reduced by whatever percentage the state kicks in. Ned hopes to know what this percentage will be in the next few weeks. There is no change proposed to the \$750 in operating expenses. Ned provided copies of contracts for both the herbicide treatment and DASH for review. The permit for herbicide treatment is the only document requiring a signature to start. Ned commented that although they prefer to use the DASH method the herbicide treatment has been proven effective. The figure needed for the Warrant Article will be needed by the beginning of February.

Cemeteries – No one was present with a budget request.

Library – Library Trustee Chuck Brooks provided a handout and introduced new Library Director Chris Libby. The town appropriation being requested is for \$111,140, a \$9,000 increase from 2021. Chuck explained that they have received guidance from Terry Knowles that they cannot use a volunteer to perform the same duties as a paid employee so they have to reconfigure their staffing. The current employees work the same hours but do very different jobs so their pay has been adjusted to the same amount. In addition, they would like to hire a program director, primarily for summer activities, so Chris can focus on Library operations.

Chuck reviewed code compliance issues present at both entrances of the library and quotes he has received to rectify them. The first estimate is to demo the existing ramp, salvaging the railings, and install a new commercial grade cement ramp to the door. The potential grade may be shallow enough to not require railings. This estimate is in the amount of \$11,500. The second project is to replace the front granite steps currently not up to code with a 3x5 or 5x5 granite slab at an estimated cost of \$1,800 or \$2,200. The third is to install electronic door openers to both entry doors at \$4,000 each for a total of \$8,000. This would be a special warrant article request for \$23,300 or \$23,700 and can be finalized prior to the February deadline. Chuck is researching the funds they have available to see if they can offset some of the expenditure while still being able to address the HVAC needs at the library. Les stated that the entrances are non-compliant with current ADA regulations but questions if they were compliant at the time the addition was put on and explained that compliance is not necessary until there is an issue. He questioned if there is anything wrong with the entrances requiring the change. Chuck stated the doors could be rehung. Chuck stated that wheelchair access is not possible presently because there is a lip from the ramp up into the building. Ernie requested firm figures before February. Les questioned if there are any plans for future remodel? Chuck responded that there is not.

General Assistance – Ellen stated that she invited Renee and the Advisory Committee on the Aging to attend because the Sr. Resource Coordinator position received two years of support by Warrant Article and with Renee doing such a great job in her position, this would be the appropriate budget to incorporate the position in to. Ernie confirmed how successful the position has been and questioned if the amount raised in the past (\$11,150) is sufficient. Rick and Renee confirmed. Rick suggested adding in \$100-200 for increased mailings, etc. The Board agreed to move forward with adding the position into this budget. No other changes were proposed to the General Assistance budget. Les suggested this budget be reviewed again in a few weeks before it is finalized.

Health Agencies – Melissa stated that all agencies provided statistics on the number of Freedom residents benefitting from their services except for Children Unlimited and questioned if we can get this information. Ellen will reach out to them.

Public Comment

None presented.

Non-Public Session(s):

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:58 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) for personnel. Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Ernie-yes, Melissa-yes. All in favor

the motion passed. Les made a motion to reconvene public session at 7:39 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:40 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) for reputation. Ernie seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Les-yes, Ernie-yes, Melissa-yes. All in favor, the motion passed. Melissa made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:25 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Old / New Business / Discussion:

Melissa announced she met with Anne Cunningham to review thoughts on the short-term rentals.

Consent Agenda

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Session – 12/6/2021	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting – 12/10/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable – Week ending 12/10/2021	Approved
Payroll Manifest – Week ending 12/8/2021	Approved
Letter – Acknowledge Donation Received from Bruce & June Howlett	Approved
Letter – Acknowledge Donation Received from Camp Huckins	Approved
Employee Time Off Request	Approved

Correspondence

Application – NH DES Standard Dredge & Fill Wetlands Permit (Berry Bay Dam)	Reviewed
Notice – 12/14/2021 Public Meeting – Hazard Mitigation Plan Update	Reviewed
Email/Letter – LRPC FY22 Solid Waste Program Request for Support	Reviewed
Email – Ted Hennessey re: Clarification Request on Transfer Station Fees	Reviewed
Report – Facilities Update – 12/13/2021	Reviewed
Receipt – Donation from Bruce & June Howlett for Milfoil Control Efforts	Reviewed
Notice of Decision – Zoning Board of Adjustment	
Case No. 12-19-1-21 – Variance Granted	
Case No. 22.80.21 – Variance Granted	
Case No. 9-5-1-21 – Variance Granted	
Case No. 9-5-01-21 – Variance Granted	
Case No. 33-38-21 – (2) Variances Granted, (1) Special Exception Granted	
Case No. 26-4-21 – Variance Granted, (3) Special Exceptions Granted	
Case No. 22-24-21 – Variance Granted	

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 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