

**Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, December 12, 2022**

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

Also in attendance was Scott Brooks, Justin Brooks, Christopher Libby, Maureen Elliott, Fred Watson, Robin Waters, Anne Pierce, Luane Genest, Rob Cunio, Paul Mathieu, Ned Kucera, Karrie Buttrick, and Anne Cunningham.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes:

The accounts payable and payroll manifests, and red folder including correspondence was reviewed.

Ernie made a motion to approve the minutes of the Non-Public Sessions held on December 5, 2022. Les seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. Melissa commented that the first paragraph on page 2 of the meeting minutes from December 5, 2022 require clarification; it is the fire pond on Jerry Brooks property that Rob is trying to obtain grant funding for. Les made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

The Management's Discussion and Analysis of the 2021 Financial Statements was reviewed and briefly discussed. Ellen commented that the town is in a better financial position with the closure of the Ossipee Lake Road Bridge at Danforth Bay Outlet project. All monies have been expended and reimbursed from Trust Funds and State Bridge Aid. Ellen recommends proceeding with Vachon & Clukay for the 2022 audit so the review can be completed within the first quarter as scheduled. A request for proposals for audit services will be issued in 2023.

Department Head Updates:

Transfer Station – Supervisor Justin Brooks presented two quotes received to replace the garage door: JGS Overhead Doors for \$4,365 and Always Accurate Garage Doors for \$5,738.26. The third contractor contacted did not respond. Of the two quotes received, JGS came out to measure and the other did not. Justin would like to encumber the funds from his 2022 budget since there is an ETA of 6-weeks for the door once ordered. ***Les made a motion to authorize Justin to enter into an agreement with JGS Overhead Doors in the amount of \$4,365. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.*** Justin stated he will have to get an electrician to run the wire to the garage door opener.

Highway Department – Road Agent Scott Brooks reported the crew is now in winter mode. With any money leftover in the highway budget, Scott requests consideration for the purchase of box culverts from Mitchie Corp. for Watson Hill and Durgin Hill, for approximately \$100,000. He will have the exact amount next week. He will also be looking to have CMA engineer a new retaining wall on Ossipee Lake Road near Danforth Bay. A quote to complete the engineering work is in progress. No pricing has been received on the sweeper although he is staying in contact with HP Fairfield with no return calls. Scott will also provide an installation price for the culverts and questioned if it will have to be a separate warrant article? Les responded that they will have to finish their review of the operating budget to determine.

Town Office – Administrator Ellen White reported the operating budget is in the final phase with the last of the budget review taking place next week. The new phone system has been installed. Training will take place this Friday, and the system will go live on Monday, December 19. There is a period of time during the phones will be down on Monday while the new system is activated.

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio reported 2 calls for medical aid, 2 fire alarms, and 1 fuel spill. Rob spoke with Chief Mullen and he would like to stay as planned with the cruiser rotation. Rob has reached out to MacMulkin for a quote on a new Tahoe using the State bid and presented a quote for consideration. Electronics will need to be configured. MacMulkin reportedly ordered 200 Police and Special Service Tahoes in May so availability is good.

Appointments:

Budget Review: Cemeteries – Fred Watson is present representing Lakeview Cemetery with a request for increase from \$4,000 to \$5,000 to cover increasing costs in gas and labor. Ellen stated the remainder of the cemetery budget is requested for level-funding per Alan Fall.

Library – Trustee Robin Waters presented the proposed budget and revenues. The town appropriation requested is \$128,127 up from \$111,140. Les questioned the patron usage? Christopher responded that he can provide that information. Les requested the numbers pre-Covid and for the last three years. Paul stated that they have contracted with GW Brooks for the entrance upgrades to take place next year and requests the money be encumbered. Paul also requests a Warrant Article in the amount of \$15,000 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund to cover the anticipated HVAC replacement. He then explained that the system is irreparable and when it fails will require replacement at approximately \$11,000 since the ductwork is already in place. The system provides both heat and cooling. Melissa reviewed the funds currently available in the Trust Funds including the Myers Wood Library Fund for \$16,926. Paul explained that there is a list of items to be addressed overtime that Chuck Brooks had compiled. Les questioned if there has been any consideration given for mini-split units instead of replacing the HVAC system? Paul will take it under advisement. Les stated once they compile all numbers they may be back in touch and suggested researching grant availability opposed to funding by taxation. Paul discussed the methodology for funding the Library by Warrant Article and stated it is advised against due to the fact it could be voted down and the Town would be required to fund library operations. Les explained that the Selectmen have no oversight over the budget and that is why it is a standalone request. Paul researched other towns and there are different approaches used. Some do only payroll, others do all, and others are completely independent. Les questioned if the other libraries researched are also working with a lump sum to operate?

Aquatic Invasive Species Committee - Chair Ned Kucera presented the budget request for administration level-funded at \$750.00. The Warrant Article for weed control is dependent on the grant matching contribution which should be received from the State of NH DES by the end of the year, anticipated between 25%-40%. Treatment areas are similar to what was proposed in 2022 with noted increases in cost for service. Preliminary requested amount is \$39,300. Ned reviewed the treatment completed in 2022 and the actual expenditures. Conditions are noted to be good thanks to this great program. Les commented that when you lose the quality of the water, you lose the value of homes.

Health Agencies – Total of all requests received from outside health agencies calculate to an 8.77% increase for a total of \$19,209.

Welfare – Ellen reported the general assistance line item has been reduced by the \$25,000 that was raised to clean up tax-deeded properties. The total budget is down 49.74% for a total of \$23,750.

Town Office Advisory Committee Update – Anne Cunningham stated three building renovation options were presented to the committee of which they have requested pricing for an amended option no. 1 after much review and consideration. There is not enough time between now and February 1 to propose a Warrant Article for Town Meeting so the Committee decided to wait and keep their focus on the option of renovating the existing building. They also want to know what the cost may be for a new building for comparison. This would require a Warrant Article to consider a similar square footage, single floor building on a more accessible lot. Additional money will be needed to further explore other options. There is \$140,377 available in the Town Office Capital Reserve Fund. Ellen stated that amount will be reduced once the Trustees reimburse the invoices already expended to Bergeron, approximately \$19k. Anne should have a number on option no. 1 in the next few weeks. Melissa questioned if an assessment has been completed on the exterior conditions of the current Town Office site for impact on water and salt runoff on the hill versus a flat surface. Anne responded that their scope was narrowed to the building only. The FCC has a test site established for the runoff at the present location that should be reviewed when considering other options.

Public Input:

Justin stated he reviewed the Town Personnel Manual and requests permission for the sale of Rubber Ducky and Fishing Derby tickets to take place at the Transfer Station as they have done in the past. All were in agreement to proceed.

Old / New Business / Discussion:

Les reviewed a discussion the Board had with legal regarding keeping the library budget separate if the Selectmen are not writing the checks. Scott questioned what happens if the money is not raise to fund the library? Ellen responded that the amount would need to come from the Town's operating budget.

Inspections/Permit Fees – Ellen presented recommended increases to the permit fees suggested by Zoning Officer/Building Inspector Gary Williams as well as a compilation of fees charges by surrounding towns. Les likes the way Ossipee charges by square footage for their electrical and plumbing permits. Gary suggests \$60 for electrical, plumbing, gas and oil-burner, and \$75 for tree removal, all with an effective date of 1/1/2023. The goal is to have the permit fees cover the cost of the position. Les would like to increase to \$50 initially. Melissa stated that Gary has conducted his own research and if \$60 is his recommendation, she agrees. Ernie does as well. ***Melissa made a motion to accept the fees proposed: \$75 for tree removal permit, \$60 for up to 5,000 square feet, \$120 up to 10k square feet ,and \$180 over 10k square feet for plumbing, electrical, gas, and oil burner permits, all effective January 1, 2023. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.*** Rob asked for clarification on the oil burner permits. These are now included for a \$60 permit fee.

Finalize 2021 Financial Statements – Previously discussed. All were in agreement to finalize.

Melissa questioned the advertisement of the water main issue last Friday. Emails were sent by the Freedom Village Water Precinct to all users on the water system. Ellen contemplated noticing on the

town's website but chose not to since it is a private entity and there are other private water suppliers in Freedom. The Board was in agreement with this decision.

Ellen reported that only one application has been received for the Tax Collector position so far.

Non-Public Session(s):

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:02 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), personnel. Ernie 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 8:06 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:06 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c), reputation Ernie 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 8:16 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Les made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 8:16 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c), reputation Ernie 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 8:55 PM. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion continued:

Les wants to have debit cards accepted at the Transfer Station even if the town has to absorb the fee. Ellen explained that it will be additional bookkeeping to reconcile the credit card processing.

Adjournment:

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Consent Agenda:

Accounts Payable – Week ending 12/9/2022	Approved
Payroll Manifest – Week ending 12/7/2022	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Sessions – 12/5/2022	Approved
Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Map 4, Lot 24, Route 25	Approved
Snowmobile Trail Permission – Scrub Oak Scramblers	Approved
Timber Tax Levy – Jason Ferry, Map 14, Lot 50	Approved
Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed – “ ”	Approved
Employee Time Off Request	Approved

Correspondence:

