

Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, October 30, 2023

Chairman Ernie Day called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Present were Selectmen Ernie Day and Melissa Florio, and Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator, who recorded these minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Hall.

Also in attendance were Rob Cunio, Scott Brooks and Jamie Mullen.

Public: Rob Cunio, Gary Williams, Peter Keenan, Paul Mathieu, Chris Libby, Linda Mailhot, Jeff Nicoll, Anne Cunningham, Ned Kucera, Sam Porter and Paul Elie.

Annual Public Officials Meeting

Selectmen Day opened the Annual Public Officials meeting at 6:00 PM.

Planning Board Anne Cunningham- Anne introduced Linda Mailhot first and explained that Linda is the Vice Chair and served as Chair for Old Orchid Beach, ME.

This past year has been very busy for the planning board. The board has seen variety of applications this year. They include agritourism, solar, and cell tower applications. There have been a number of lot line adjustments and sub-divisions as well. The rules and procedure, sub-division, and site-plan review have also been updated because they needed to be cleaned up. There is still work to be done because of legislative updates.

Anne said the planning will need more support in the future. Anne's last planning board meeting will be in February of 2025, as she will not run again. Anne explained a lot of the extra work she does will need to be picked up by the town office. Linda asked Anne to make a list of everything she does. The applications that are coming before the board are more complicated and often will require a third-party review. The board will work on finding a third-party reviewer next year. Linda is also organizing training for the board on how to read plans.

Ernie asked if the short-term rentals are getting easier or more compliant. Anne responded it's easier getting those applying approved, but there are short-term rentals who have yet to apply that are a part of the pending court case with the housing appeals court's decision.

Melissa asked where we are with the Capital Assets Plan. Anne said the board needs to start it.

FAISC Ned Kucera- Ned reported that they had a good year. This year's budget included ten days of diving and twenty acres of harvesting. What happened was five days of diving in Huckins ponds and Upper Danforth. With all the rain, the water was tea-colored. In the late summer, the DES survey revealed Huckins pond had grown quite a bit and was spread out that required an herbicide treatment.

Ned stated he doesn't know how this year's rain will affect plant growth next year. They will request ten days of diving and twenty-five acres for harvesting. The State needs develop a new funding plan for the Lake Host program. He will know in late November what the plan is. Finding Lake Hosts has been a challenge for the last couple of years. There will not be a warrant article for a lake host, but they will try to hire one for next year.

Fire Rob- year to date, the fire department has done 350 calls, and due to the rain, they could not do the dredging of the fire pond but will reprice it for next year. The boat they got from the surplus program went into service this past spring, and they had one call for it. The new rescue was put into service at the end of August and the old rescue was auctioned off for \$20,000.00. Rich Ulrich is now an EMT. A grant has been submitted for new fire hose, which the department has been reviewing demos for. The grant for engine two did not go through, but they will continue trying to get it through. Rob and Gary have been working closely on short-term rentals.

Ernie asked how much it costs to upgrade the hose. Chief Cunio said the hose on the engine 7 and the tank truck, it's about \$5,000. The hose is lighter and has 90° kinks to maneuver through houses better. Call numbers are not that far off from last year.

Zoning Officer Gary Williams- Gary reiterated that he and Rob have worked well together, and have instituted shut offs for generators, and have been reviewing projects together. Currently, there are one hundred fifty-four building permits issued, one hundred and ten electric permits, forty-two plumbing permits, seventy-one gas permits, thirty-two occupancy permits, twelve foundations, demolition, and a couple of swimming pools. He now requires building plans for inspections, and he and the fire Chief review commercial plans.

Zoning Board Peter Keenan- Peter gave kudos to Lindsay and said membership is strong. The meetings, like the planning board and Zoning officer, have been busy.

Library Paul Mathue- Paul reported the library is still recovering from the COVID years. Chris is trying new approaches to draw people in. The ramp has been built. The furnace is aged but in good shape. They can still get parts for it.

FCC- Jeff Nicoll- Jeff announced the FCC and the FAC will be meeting to discuss overcoming some recent administrative challenges. Two members have resigned from FAC. Jeff will report back to the board on the outcome of the meeting. There has been some restructuring with Green Mountain regarding water testing. All testing costs will be submitted prior to budget seasoning.

Timber Harvest- Barry Keith's contract is in place, so is the scope of work. Barry is collecting bids according to the town's purchasing policy, and a communication plan is being worked on so information regarding cuts gets communicated to the public. In the plan will be maps of the impacted cut area, the reason for the cut, and wildlife restoration plan. Signs will be purchased to warn hikers if they are entering an impacted cut area. The Towns website was also suggested as a means of communication regarding cuts.

There was a brown tail moth infestation that impacted 200-300 acres of the town forest. Some of the areas of impact may be salvageable. Barry has been looking at news plate grants for FAC This grant could offset burn and mowing costs. Cold Brook beaver crossing is still a chronic problem. In doing some research, Jeff found out the brook had a survey done by the State, and it is a trout brook fishery, so there may be grants available to improve the area for a wildlife crossing to help save the road. The State has been notified the FCC is interested. Forest signage is all in, but the work group needs to get back together to get the signs up.

The water quality report is in, and the town is looking good, with the exception of one area that has a high salt content located at the Squarebrook crossing. The Danforth Brook area was fine.

The funds for the road will have to be encumbered. Scott said the salt content has always been high in the Squarebrook crossing and he requested the State look at contamination up stream that might be coming from the State garage.

Tax Collector- Sam compared numbers to last year and we seem to be on par if not a little better than last year for collecting taxes. Minuteman press has been sold but she confirmed printing cost is not going up next year. There were some properties deeded but they have been redeemed.

Road Agent Scott Brooks- The Town has obtained the wetlands permit for the Watson Hill culvert replacement. The culvert will be replaced next year. Huckins Rd. is on the list to do road improvements next year. The highway crew is getting ready for winter. Ernie stated the highway crew did a great job maintaining the roads preventing washouts.

Police Jamie Mullen- the department will need a new cruiser next year and the police department has a K-9 program and the dog is doing very well. She alerting to heroin already. Boca has also been at the school socializing with the kids. The department is sufficiently staffed right now.

Town Office Stacy Bolduc- Stacy reported her focus next year is upgrading the IT network. She gave an overview of the last year and the challenges that came with being new to the position. One challenge was the second floor becoming unusable due to the fire escape not being safe to use. She said it has worked out well having the tax collector down stairs so public doesn't have to use the stairs. Stacy complimented Sam for learning the tax collector position and also stated how happy she is with the office dynamics between all of the office staff.

Ernie said Libby could not be here tonight but wanted to let the public know how grateful she is for Kali Eldridge being her deputy and that is working out really well .

Transfer Station Melissa- Melissa recapped all the challenges of the past year from the safety audit by State to having to apply for a permit to be able to take all the bulky items that we currently take. The highway crew has been helping with site improvements. Melissa explained there will not be any more burns done at the transfer station. Scales are also included in the redesign. Melissa is working with Jim Stone on getting a grant for the scales.

Chief Cunio explained the reason for no more burning at the transfer station is due to ash and debris covering cars and the home across the road from the transfer station. The brush will be hauled off next year. Paul Elie asked how many people are licensed at the transfer station. Melissa responded three.

Selectmen's Meeting

6:50 PM Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes:

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

Melissa ***motioned to approve the Selectmen's Meetings and Non-Public Session minutes October 23, 2023, as written.***

Ernie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Department- Rob reported two fire alarms, one tree down, one propane furnace issue and a smoke odor at the school. The boat is going to be winterized. The heater at the transfer station was discussed if it could be used to replace the furnace at the village fire garage. Scott said he salvaged it to put it up at the garage at the transfer station in case they had to work on the loader. Stacy asked Jarod if he could use the heater at the village fire and he said no because it is used. He does not install used equipment because of his license.

Ernie made a motion to hire Jarod Hurd to replace the furnace for \$5,500 at the old village fire station, motion seconded by Melissa; Motion passed 2-0-0.

Rob requested that Jarod coordinate the furnace with Charlie who will be covering for Rob while he is on vacation.

Scott said he needed a copy of the wetland permit for Watson Hill. Stacy will put it in his box.

Highway Department- Scott reported there is a recall on the Mack for directional and a recall on the 5500 chevy for a break censor. The recall for the Mack has not been made available to the dealership yet and the 150 pickup needs a rearend.

Highway is working on getting ready for winter.

Police- Jamie stated the town attorney has reviewed his internal affairs policy and she gave good feedback. The shooting in Lewiston was briefly discussed and how everyone was on alert. Chief Mullen recognized the county attorney's office for their tenacity in handling a mutual case in getting a conviction. No names mentioned because of the nature of the case. Drug take back day was Saturday and they had a good turnout.

Halloween trick or treating was briefly discussed. Jamie questioned who set the hours.

The police department is still experiencing people that should not be there at the beaches. Most of the interaction are at Alfred Godfry beach. They are enforcing that they need to have a transfer station sticker. A lot of these people are a part of the addicted community. Jamie has taken complaints about people walking three abreast in the road in the village.

Transfer Station – Scott asked what the highway department is supposed to do with tires at the transfer station. The tires need to be taken to Northern Tire where we have an account and they will have them hauled off.

Office- Stacy informed staff that Health Trust will be at the town hall to review health plans. There was a brief discussion around offering a better retirement plan to town staff. Scott supports offering NH State retirement though it would not benefit him or Lance because they would not be vested.

Mark McKinley- Updated the board that the buildings are in good shape and he has been working with Ed White on getting the town generators serviced. The fire escape is coming along at the town office. Mark supports replacing the furnace at old village fire station. Mark will look into who would install the salvaged heater at the transfer station. Stacy asked Mark to discuss his concerns regarding the wiring at the town office. If the town does not pass the warrant article to replace the town office, the wiring needs to be replaced and the furnace needs be replaced. If it comes down to rewiring the office Mark asked how selectmen felt about closing the office or staff working from home like they did during COVID. Whether to redo the existing office or rebuild it will take 2/3 majority vote. Ernie said we need to see what the public wants to do with the building first.

Appointment- None

Melissa reported that she was approached by the Freedom Village Store to attend their board meeting and discuss ideas on how the town could take over their property. Melissa explained she has no authority as a board member to attend or enter into any discussions. She told them she could bring the question to the selectboard.

Public Comment

Non-Public

Ernie made a motion to enter a non-public session at 7:30 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c), Reputation, Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Ernie-yes, Melissa-yes; All in favor, the motion passed. Ernie made a motion to resume the public session at 7:35 P.M. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Ernie made a motion to seal the minutes due to pending litigation, Melissa seconded the motion; Motion passed 2-0-0.

Ernie made a motion to enter a non-public session at 7:35 P.M. pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), Employee, Melissa seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Ernie-yes, Melissa-yes; All in favor, the motion passed. Ernie made a motion to resume the public session at 7:40 P.M. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Ernie made a motion to seal the minutes due to employee matter, Melissa seconded the motion; Motion passed 2-0-0.

There was a brief discussion around a complaint from Squarebrook that a meeting was not posted. The town did not error in the posting. The posting stated in the complaint is in regards to the association not contacting all members regarding a meeting that was held where it was discussed not being able to use their snowmobiles on the road to get to the snowmobile trails. The vote to retain the town to plow was not held at a selectmen's meeting but at the associations annual meeting.

Adjournment:

Being no further input, Ernie made a motion to adjourn. Melissa seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Consent Agenda:

Accounts Payable – Week ending 10/27/2023	Approved
Payroll Manifest – Week ending 10/25/2023	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Sessions– 10/23/2023	Approved
Request for Abatement –	N/A
Supplemental Property Tax Warrant- Intent to Cut	N/A

Correspondence:

Newsletter –	N/A	
Kristin Bouchard Letter Squarebrook Estates		Reviewed
Richard Doucette email Re: Groundwater Protection	Reviewed	
Frank Lalumiere Re: Grant	Reviewed	
Jeff Nicoll email Re: FAC/FCC Janet Johnson and Janet Meyer resignation	Reviewed	
Daily Sun Effingham Gas Station Story	Reviewed	
Mt. Washington Valley Economic Council	Reviewed	

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Melissa M. Florio