

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Approved Minutes for Meeting of November 26, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street, Alstead, NH 03602

SELECT BOARD PRESENT: Joel McCarty, Chair, Gordon Kemp, and Matthew Saxton.

STAFF PRESENT:

Name	Position	In Person	Google Meet
Misty Gratacos	Town Office Administrator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Shelley Steuwe	Recording Secretary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Jesse Moore	Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Julie Bacon	Town Clerk/Tax Collector	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: **In person:** Barbara Viegner, Joe Levesque, Marge Noonan, Judith Willis, Jonathan Landry, Charlie Pratt, Joe Miaski **Google Meets:**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. McCarty called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:00 PM and then proceeded with leading the agenda-based discussion.

GUESTS:

- Charlie Pratt – Mr. Pratt owns a piece of land on Newell Pond Road. There are about 8 dangerous trees there that are dropping branches on his cars and buildings. He talked to Mr. Molesky, Chair of the Zoning Board, who asked him for a deed and map of the land. He didn't have a deed so he saw Ms. Bacon, Town Clerk, who got one for him. In reviewing the map, there's a question about who owns a piece of the property that he previously thought he owned. Ms. Bacon thinks it's part of conservation land. Mr. McCarty asks if this is documented, and Ms. Bacon said that Mr. Rhoades has some documentation for her to look at. Mr. Pratt shows the map he has to the Board, with areas in question highlighted. He states that he also wants to build small garage on this land in question. He wants to know who owns land and who's responsible for taking the

trees down. If he doesn't own it, he'd ask if he can purchase it off the owner and would take care of the trees himself. Mr. Saxton said someone needs to inspect the deed and figure out who owns it. If it is the Town, the Board will probably be interested in selling it to him. Ms. Bacon looked at deed and doesn't think it's his land. She also notes that no one is being taxed for it either. She believes it was acquired by the Town via a tax deed in the 60s. She said it's hard for her to research it any further because part of that land crosses into Marlow. Mr. Kemp suggests proceeding with granting conditional permission to Mr. Pratt to take down the trees if it's Town property, but Mr. Pratt is not interested in doing that if it's not his property. Mr. Saxton reiterates that the first order of business is to find out who owns the land. Mr. McCarty said to let Ms. Bacon continue her investigation with Mr. Rhoades. He clarifies that the Board cannot help with land disputes. He says that Mr. Pratt likely needs to have a surveyor come out. Mr. Saxton suggests that the power company can take care of trees that are threatening wires, regardless of who owns the land.

- Joe Miaski – Mr. Miaski is looking to pour a pad for an additional unit at Well Hill Cooperative, and asks the Board if they need a permit. Mr. Saxton confirms that they do. He asks if there is a limit to the number of units in the park, and Mr. Miaski says they were just told by the State that they can have up to 36 (they currently have 19). Mr. Saxton says they can see the Town Clerk to fill out a permit.

ACTION ITEMS: Review & sign the following: Two (2) Payroll manifest (\$32,037.43)(\$875.57) Bills manifest \$35,708.41; 2 Payroll tax liability (\$6,326.49);(\$133.59);

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 11/12 and 11/19 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Washed-out glass** – Mr. Saxton contacted Mr. Hubbard and updated him on the situation. They've begun taping off the project area. Mr. McCarty asks if Mr. Landry has any idea what the price of the entire project (not just his property) is so they can put forth a warrant article for 2025, and Mr. Landry says he does not know. Mr. McCarty asks the Board if they should have Mr. Hubbard come back to provide an updated estimate for the whole project and not just Mr. Landry's property. Mr. Saxton feels the entire project is a multi-year project and makes more sense to break out into smaller projects. Mr. McCarty asks the Board if after Mr. Landry's project is done can Mr. Hubbard provide a new quote for the remaining work. An answer to his question was not reached.
- Thayer Brook bypass** – No updates.
- Bridge projects** – Mr. McCarty provided updates elsewhere in the minutes.
- Dams** – No updates.
- Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – No updates.
- Model T MOU** – No updates.
- Fire Dept Policies** – No updates.
- 210 Pine Cliff Rd info/updates** – No updates.
- 210 Gilsum Mine Road land merger talks** – No updates.

- J. **Complete Streets info** – Mr. Levesque said the goal is to try to get a few of the downtown projects done with the \$3,000-5,000 of ARPA funds.
- K. **Ambulance Revolving Fund** – Mr. McCarty reports that he signed the final document required to start the fund.
- L. **Department & Board**

NEW BUSINESS: Budget presentation for Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Ms. Bacon is asking for \$83,372.60. The budget was reviewed, discussed, and given to Mr. Levesque to be added to the spreadsheet.

OTHER ITEMS:

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

School Board – Mr. Levesque reports that the Budget Committee met on 11/25 and the committee now has an official budget to work with. Mr. Levesque was asked if the School Board had talked about Walpole withdrawing from the district. He said they went to the last official withdrawal meeting, and anyone not in favor of leaving could stand up and speak (overwhelming number of people not in favor).

Town Office Administrator – No updates.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

Director Moore reports that:

- **Ambulance** – They experienced a catastrophic failure of the new ambulance on Monday. The work to repair it is estimated to cost \$21,656.20. We may be able to get some money back for parts. The truck is out of warranty. The dealership is giving us a free loaner ambulance for the duration of this repair. It will be picked up tomorrow morning. He spoke to First Net, who is sending High Power User Equipment for the loaner ambulance at no charge. Once picked up, they'll restock the loaner ambulance, and since they will have it for more than 21 days it will need to be licensed and inspected. It will also need to be insured. It's going to be over a month for the repairs to be completed. A discussion ensued about potential causes for this issue, and it turns out it is a specific issue linked to 2012 and 2013 Dodge engines. The ambulance is otherwise in great condition. The Board discussed the option of using ARPA funds to pay for the repairs.
- **Parks** – The young resident who raised money to build the skating rink, Lucas Druschel, and his family and friends built the rink this past weekend and it looks great. Director Moore spoke with the community members doing the work and instructed them on how to use the overhead lights. He may give some of the adults in charge access to the storage shed. He was asked to add "Warren Park" to his list of Town properties to maintain. The Board approves.

- Transfer Station – Mr. Lund is almost finished installing the guards. Mr. Saxton asks if there's a bank we can throw brush over. Director Moore says no, since the Town only owns 12 feet beyond the bank. All of the lights have been replaced with high efficiency LEDS and all of the equipment has been serviced. There is a concern with the condition of the roto phase converter. Mr. McCarty said that Reese Acheson is a resident expert on three phase systems and can be consulted if there is interest. Director Moore recently connected with State Forest Fire Ranger and he will follow up with him about the proposed water supply for brush burning. Lastly, they had a staff meeting recently and asked if there has been any public complaints about lack of burning, but they have not heard from anyone.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Kemp – Asks for Board approval to repair the dump truck for \$600; unanimous approval. The Fire Chief Selection Committee now has 5 members 3 alternates, and the first meeting was last night. They start interviews tomorrow, and are down to 4 candidates. They meet again next week on Monday and Wednesday, and possibly Monday the following week, to discuss candidates and will have a recommendation for the Board by the 12/9. Minutes are being taken and posted, minus the interviews (which will be held in non-public session). He met with all Department Heads except for Chief Kercewich to review the updated personal policy. Everyone signed off on it but Chief Kercewich, who he will follow up with. He emailed the policy to all Department Heads to disseminate to staff. There were some concerns from Ms. Bacon about the policy, and Mr. Kemp suggested that they discuss further in non-public. He notes to the Board that the Selectman's proposed budget represents their opinions, and while Department Heads' budget proposals are taken into consideration, they do not have to be honored in the Selectman's proposed budget. Mr. McCarty notes that he wants to work with Department Heads to get the most accurate/reasonable budget.

Mr. McCarty – Peg Sutcliffe passed at home with family and friends by her side on 11/24. When the weather is warmer there will be a service.

He asked Josif Bicja, Project Manager, Hoyle Tanner for a definitive statement as of 12/31 for what we have spent and what we will spend, itemized by bridge. He went through the process with NHDOT of approving Hoyle Tanner to do this work.

Mr. Saxton – updates provided above via old business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS: Mr. Elsessor asks the Board:

- What the Fund Balance amount is and suggests this may be able to be put toward the Drewsville Bridge project. The Board did not have that information.
- For a copy of the MS 535 form, Mrs. Gratacos will forward that to him.
- What the DRA will allow us to do with the two existing bridge projects. Mr. Kemp said they recommended that we make it a non-lapsing warrant article with Bridge Aid Funds offsetting the warrant article. Mr. McCarty has asked Mr. Kemp to email this information

to him so he can follow up with Cory Philbrick, Auditor. Mr. Elsessor says we need to have an idea of the total cost and how much we'll be reimbursed. Mr. Kemp agrees. Mr. Elsessor asks when this goes out to bid. Mr. McCarty says first quarter in 2026. Mr. Kemp said it may be better to put forth a typical warrant article rather than non-lapsing, and he will check with the DRA on that.

Ms. Viegner asks if the PS 67 form was completed this year. Mr. McCarty said it was sent to the assessors but they don't have an update. Mrs. Gratacos will follow up on this. She also asks about a recent change in insurance on page 8 of the budget. Mrs. Gratacos will look into this.

INFORMATIONAL:

EXECUTIVE SESSION/S: RSA 91-A:3 II (c)

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton, ***the Board voted by roll call (Joel – y; Gordon– y; Matt – y) to enter non-public at 6:37 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) reputation.***

On a motion made by Mr. Saxton and seconded by Mr. McCarty ***the Board voted to leave the non-public session at 6:42 PM. The motion passed unanimously.***

On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 6:52 PM.***

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, December 3, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street.
Next FM School Board meeting:	Monday, December 9, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2nd Monday)
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary