

TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Select Board

Approved Minutes for Meeting of May 29, 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 Administrator	•	•
Shelley Steuwe	Recording Secretary	•	•
Julie Bacon	Town Clerk/Tax Collector	•	•
Stephen Murrell	Police Chief	•	•
Steve Reynolds	Emergency Mgmt Dir	•	•
Prescott Trafton	Road Agent	•	•
Jesse Moore	Dir of Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks	•	•
Kim Kercewich	Fire Chief	•	•
Bobbie Wilson	Supervisor of the Checklist/Ambulance Lt/Vilas Pool Committee	•	•
Richard Beringer	Fire Department	•	•
Penny Gendron	Police Department	•	•

COMMUNITY MEMBERS: In person: Rich Nalevanko, Barbara Viegner, Judith Willis, Joe Levesque

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. McCarty called the Select Board meeting to order at 5:01 PM and then proceeded with leading the agenda-based discussion.

ACTION ITEMS: Review & sign Payroll manifest (\$35,236.82); review & sign Bill manifest (\$24,993.06); review & sign Tax liability manifest (\$7,450.12); review & discuss email regarding Dam inspection; review Preliminary Design info from DOT & Hoyle Tanner

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: The 5/21/24 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Washed-out glass** – No updates.
- B. **Thayer Brook bypass** – No updates.
- C. **Bridge projects** – Mr. McCarty reports that this work continues to move along with no barriers.
- D. **Dams** – Mr. McCarty reports that there is an inspection scheduled for 6/11 at 12:00 pm at the Warren Dam. Mr. Trafton will attend to speak to the dam's operations and maintenance. Ms. Gratacos will add this meeting to the calendar.
- E. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – no updates.
- F. **Model T MOU** – no updates.
- G. **Langdon Transfer Station and Library fees** – no updates.
- H. **Employee Health Insurance** – Meeting held. Ms. Gratacos is waiting to hear back from Mr. Trafton in regards to if there are any issues with insurance in his department. Mr. Trafton reports they are going to schedule a meeting to discuss.
- I. **Department & Board** – See below.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Kemp reviews the nepotism policy, specifically focusing on the need for clarifying language around “any person residing in the employee’s household”, per previous feedback from the group. Mr. McCarty defers to Mr. Kemp’s judgment, so long as it involves standard industry language and is run by the Town’s Human Resources group. Mr. Kemp offers to remove the line or change it to specify “romantic relationships”. Mr. Trafton feels this line should be removed from the policy. Mr. Saxton cites Alstead’s long history of family involvement in town government and feels that the Board is responsible to make sound hiring choices for town positions. Mr. Beringer speaks to the Fire Department and feels they would lose a number of their staff due to this policy. He feels they should retain the ability to vote in their officers without being hindered by this policy, asking to be exempt from the policy. Mr. Levesque notes that the Fall Mountain School District has recently decided not to adopt a nepotism policy because of similar concerns. Mr. Kemp clarifies that this only applies to direct supervision and that it does not prevent temporary supervision. Mr. Saxton is most concerned with the fact that the policy implies that inappropriate behavior will take place and feels it is better to address an issue, should one arise. Mr. Reynolds notes that Human Resources policies must apply to all employees and cannot exempt any person or group. Mr. McCarty suggests a review by Human Resources at New Hampshire Municipal Association, and will discuss this with them and report back. Ms. Gratacos feels that fine-tuning the language in the policy is worthwhile, and is not in favor of allowing exemptions or not having a policy. She

offers to get in touch with some professional connections in Human Resources to see what they have for policies and will report back her findings.

Mr. Kemp reviews the updated Emergency Operations policy proposal regarding “personnel responding to emergency scenes”. Before beginning, Mr. Beringer asks what Mr. Kemp’s starting point was for this policy. He states he took pieces of existing standard operating guidelines in the Fire Department, and spoke with other agencies and members of our Fire Department. The policy was forwarded to Chief Kercewich via Town email, however he was unaware that he had a Town email. He will review this and Mr. Kemp will revisit it in June.

Mr. Moore reports he spoke with David at Bailey Plumbing and Heating today regarding the quote for a new pressure washer. The quote provided was with copper pipe, and Mr. Kemp asked him to see what the difference would be with PEX piping. He was told it would be around \$200 cheaper. Mr. Moore reports the majority of the quote is for the water sediment filter coming out of the hot water heater. He suggests pivoting to buying a cold-water pressure water instead and hooking it up to the hot water heater. The Board approves the quote with PEX, and asks Mr. Moore to revisit the quote for a pressure washer (the existing quote is quite old).

The Cintas service receipt for the East Station was reviewed. Director Reynolds advises that the Haylon Unit in the Police Department needs to be upgraded. The Board asks Director Reynolds to get a quote to review.

An email from Director Reynolds regarding the Stryker Power-LOAD system was reviewed. Derek (last name?) took pictures of Cheshire’s and sent them via email. Mr. Moore is going to arrange a demo with the vendor.

OTHER ITEMS:

GUESTS: None.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Town Office Administrator – Ms. Gratacos reports the tax warrant was completed by deadline, tax bills will be mailed out 5/30 (due 7/1).

Fire Department – Chief Kercewich reports they have completed 44 calls to date. He asks if any decision has been made on using ARPA money for Engine 1? The Board reports that yes, it was reviewed and approved.

Vilas Pool – Ms. Wilson reports that she is waiting for the Board to sign an invoice for a purchase order of dock parts. The Board did sign the invoice. Mr. Kemp reports there is an ongoing insurance claim with Primex for part of this (resulting from flood). The Board reports that they met with the NH Department of Natural & Cultural Resources (NH DNCR) at Vilas Pool Park to review with them the damage Vilas Pool has sustained due to flooding. DNCR has a variety of funds available that may be applied to projects under way. DNCR did note that there are issues with ADA accessibility. The Board asked Ms. Wilson to remove the ADA sign until the Park is back in

compliance, and to put up another sign with the Park's hours of operation. The Board also asks Mr. Levesque to assist them with creating a 5 or 10 year plan for the Park, as this will be a prerequisite for funding projects. Mr. Levesque agrees and suggests a meeting with Mr. Kemp and Ms. Wilson.

Emergency Management – Director Reynolds reports that he sent an email to Mr. Moore and Darren (last name?) about the Starlink System. Darren (last name?) thought it was a good idea but suggested verifying if there's an annual contract. Mr. Kemp says they have a month-by-month contract available. Mr. McCarty asks if Director Reynolds will check with Homeland Security about funding available for this and if they suggest using any other equipment provider. Director Reynolds reports that all extinguishers have been serviced except for those in A1 and A2. The hood at the Food Shelf has also been serviced, although there is one component that requires service from an electrician. This needs to be addressed within 6 months to avoid a write-up. Mr. Trafton met with Jack (last name?) about this and he advises that an external company will need to be hired to complete this. Mr. Trafton will connect with a company in Keene to get an estimate for this work. Director Reynolds reports that he spoke with Jack (last name?) about the generator contract. He hasn't submitted an invoice for the work he completed in December and does not have a written contract to provide. Mr. Kemp advised that he needs to put together a contract for his services. Mr. Reynolds reports there was an incident at the Transfer Station that demonstrates the need for safety barriers to go around two dumpsters. This is being reviewed by Primex and will be addressed by Mr. Moore. There is a vendor for this service, and he will provide a quote for Board review. Director Reynolds asks if there is a policy for the CFMoto UForce 1000 side-by-side, and Mr. Kemp reports that one will be in place before it can be utilized. Director Reynolds asks Mr. Levesque for an update on the Library safety audit, and Mr. Levesque replies that he is waiting on one thing and will send Director Reynolds a report (which he'll include the Board on). He also asks Mr. Levesque for an update on the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and Mr. Levesque replies that Henry Underwood informed him that he has submitted it to FEMA, but is unsure how long it will take to get a reply. Mr. Levesque will follow up on this. Finally, Director Reynolds reports that he has worked closely with Mr. Trafton on road conditions in response to heavy rain.

Highway – Mr. Trafton reports that culvert material inventory is adequate. They haven't had a chance to work on culverts recently due to competing demands. He reports that there are many culverts that need to be put in, which will likely deplete the material inventory by year's end. Mr. McCarty asks if we should purchase additional material for the year 2025 before May of 2025, and Mr. Trafton replies that we should. Mr. McCarty asks if he's prioritizing culverts, and Mr. Trafton replies yes. He reports that Bazin Brothers has moved into North Road for paving. He had asked them to do North Road last because he wants to extend that project out, but they had forgotten this. He asks the Board for approval to move the project from where the existing pavement is on North Road to the intersection of Corbin Road, and north, where the school bus turns around. This is about 1,500 feet, and will result in \$74,700 worth of work. We appropriated \$400,000 for paving, and the bid for paving was awarded to Bazin Brothers for \$259,510.40, leaving \$140,489.60 available. Mr. Kemp is concerned with the fact that this is fundamentally changing the road versus repairing it. Mr. Saxton feels we should consider more carefully wording warrant articles in the future to allow more flexibility. Mr. McCarty feels it's ultimately a taxpayer decision. Mr. Trafton goes on to mention that each year we use block grant money for paving,

and that we have a million dollar piece of equipment that we need to buy (but did not put any money into the Capital Reserve this year). He asks that we put block grant money into the Capital Reserve this year in the amount of about \$120,000. Mr. McCarty supports this but feels it is Mr. Trafton's to implement with the voters. He advises that this should be run by the NH Department of Revenue Administration at some point first to ensure it is in compliance (references being scolded for using bridge block grant money for the Capital Reserve). Mr. Trafton reports they have used their new mowblower blade, which is working great. On 5/23 they completed their fire inspection. The new 10-wheeler is in, but they are waiting for a grill. He anticipates it will be in the week of 6/3. He notes that he typically signs off on titles, however Ms. Bacon advised that the Select Board needs to sign off on this title. He asks how the Board would like to do this, and Mr. McCarty says they can do this during business hours and to let them know when the truck's ready.

Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –

- **Ambulance** – Mr. Moore reports they have taken 81 calls to date. Ambulance 2 is with Steve's Equipment Repair because the AC stopped working. He contacted the dealer who said he would help warranty some of the work on that. It also turns out it needs a TIPM unit as well. One has been overnighted from CA and due for delivery and installation 5/30. They anticipate Ambulance 2 should be back 5/30 or 5/31. Mr. McCarty asks for the estimate cost of this work, and Mr. Moore replies around \$700 plus installation for the unit. He will provide the Board with an invoice once available. They are using Ambulance 1 at the Village Station at the moment. It is not licensed to be a paramedic ambulance. As a result, they cannot put paramedic equipment on the ambulance and paramedics have to respond with equipment on them. He also reports the doors at the fire stations have been left unlocked a couple of times (automatic locks failing, and staff didn't lock). The locks that we currently have are on the NDAA no fly list, making it impossible to order replacements. He found American-made biometric locks, which cost \$429 each. They have fingerprint or code access and keep a log of entries and exits. They are battery operated, but can also be opened with a code or physical key. He's asking for two for the Village Station, where the pharmaceuticals are kept. Finally, he reiterates Director Reynolds' point that the ambulance fire extinguishers still need to be serviced. He will make these arrangements.
- **Transfer station** – Mr. Moore met with Derek (last name?), who is happy with the layout of plans and likes the idea of having an inbound and outbound lane at the gate. Mr. McCarty asks for a proposal with an estimated cost and timeline. Mr. Moore is selecting a new vendor for the outhouses since the current vendor is not servicing them and still sending invoices. Mr. Kemp mentions seeing someone driving the backhoe around during heavy traffic with the door open again, and suggests an SOP needs to be written.
- **Parks** – With the exception of the square at Pratt Road, he is keeping up with the mowing (doing it 5/30). He is doing Millot Green on 5/30. He is concerned with several trees by the Town Offices that are in poor health and pose a safety risk and risk to the Town Buildings and structures if they were to fall. Mr. Trafton received a quote some time ago for \$1,800 to remove 3 of the trees. He's most concerned with the ones by the backstop

and the Office windows. He will get a new quote for this and will provide it to the Board for review.

Town Clerk/ Tax Collector Office – No updates.

Police Department – No updates.

School Board – No updates.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. McCarty – No reports.

Mr. Kemp – Reviews the Nepotism policy, which does not represent a change from the policy recently voted on, though he reworded it to make it more clear (see above for additional detail, under “new business”). He reviews an Emergency Response policy proposal (see above for additional detail).

Mr. Saxton – Reports working on getting the tax warrant completed. He mentions some paperwork that needs to be given to the assessors for review.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS: Ms. Willis reports on behalf of Mr. Landry that he found two small culverts put together. Mr. Trafton said he will connect with him.

INFORMATIONAL:

Next regular Select Board meeting:	Tuesday, June 4, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street.
Next FM School Board meeting:	Monday, June 10th, 2024 @ 6:00 PM, High School (2nd Monday)
Next 5-Town Select Board meeting:	TBD – Reschedule in progress

On a motion made by Mr. McCarty and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board Chair adjourned the public meeting at 7:00 PM.***

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 7:04 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) regarding compensation.***

On a motion made by Mr. Kemp and seconded by Mr. Saxton ***the Board voted to leave the non-public session at 7:06 PM. The motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary

DRAFT