**TOWN OF ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Select Board**

**Unapproved Minutes for Meeting of August 20, 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 |  |  |
| Prescott Trafton | Highway Department |  |  |
| Jesse Moore | Director of Sanitation, EMS & Grounds |  |  |

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** **In person:** Rosemarie Dowling, Jane Quaglin, Alexander Nalevanko, Rich Nalevanko, Barbara Viegener, Joe Levesque, Marge Noonan, Judith Willis; **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:**

**ACTION ITEMS:** Review & sign Payroll Manifest ($34,286.69); review & sign Bills Manifest ($356,640.23); review & sign Tax Liability Manifest ($6,913.18); review & sign four (4) reimbursements; review (for information only) monthly statement from Three Bearings; review & sign one (1) Intent to Cut application.

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:** 8/13 meeting minutes were reviewed, amended and approved as amended by the Board.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Washed-out glass** – Mr. McCarty reports that, thanks to Director Moore, they’ve made contact with Connecticut Valley Yardworks and are working on setting up an on-site meeting next week. They will make sure to arrange the meeting at a time that also works for Mr. Landry and Mr. Haynes.
2. **Thayer Brook bypass** – Mr. McCarty reports that he has an engineering report for Mr. Trafton to review. Mr. Trafton reports that FEMA notified him that the $8,000 bill can be submitted, so that has been submitted. This would be added to the already allocated $240,000 reimbursement. He is now trying to get things rolling more quickly with FEMA. Right now they are looking for the Board to start thinking about what they’d like to replace this structure with. He is working on collecting quotes for various types of projects (bridge, replacing what’s already there, etc.). Mr. Saxton asks if FEMA limits their reimbursement to replacing what was already there, and Mr. Trafton said that is a question he’s looking to have answered. Mr. Trafton hopes to have more information for the Board 9/3. Mr. McCarty suggests it would be a good idea to notify Julie Avenant from NHDOT Bridge Design about this project. Mr. McCarty asks if there’s any ETA for the reimbursement, but Mr. Trafton is unsure.
3. **Bridge projects** – Mr. McCarty reports we are on schedule with Bell Hill, have paid our invoices and are up-to-date, and still have money in the bank.
4. **Dams** – Mr. McCarty reports they just paid the bill from Dubois and King, and he is meeting on site on 8/22 with team at 11:00 am (he’s not sure which dam yet) for a check-in, and he’s hoping to get recommendations for fixes based on their data so he can start thinking about budgets for next year.
5. **Status of property at M11 L2 (abuts Town Hall)** – Mr. Kemp reports that Mr. Bouchard notified him that he called the lawyer to get an update, and will keep him posted.
6. **Model T MOU** – Mr. McCarty reports he sent a revised Primex-based MOU to Mr. Kercewich this week.
7. **Langdon Library Fees** – No updates.
8. **Employee Health Insurance** – No updates.
9. **Fire Dept Policies –** No updates.
10. **Pine Cliff Road information/updates –** Mr. McCarty reports he has not received word back from New Hampshire Fish & Game and the Town attorney regarding who owns the boat launch. There was a back and forth between Mrs. Dowling and Mr. Trafton about the presence of a catch basin at the bottom of Arbor Way (on the right side of Arbor Way if traveling down Gilsum Mine Road). Mr. Trafton is certain there is one, Mrs. Dowling is certain it’s no longer there. Mrs. Dowling also brings up that the grading of the road a couple of weeks ago has made the road “slick” from the rain, and potholes are resurfacing. She asks why they can’t use another particulate on the road instead of fill, like Surpac. Mr. Trafton says the current particulate gets slimy because that reduces runoff. Surpac would be more slippery, and other particulates (sand) will runoff more easily. Stones are used during mud season. Mr. Saxton asks about putting down the pavement that is at the Highway Department. Mr. Trafton says they do not have the funds to put this down the ground up pavement (would need to be done via paver). Mr. McCarty worries how the Shorelines Protection Act would feel about this. Mr. Trafton also notes that it’s not a good long term solution either. Mrs. Dowling asks what can be done about the potholes resurfacing; e.g., dig up the road. Mr. Trafton says the road gets too much traffic for that to be a good long term solution. Mr. McCarty reports that he asked Mr. Trafton for a paving estimate, which he provided at $251,000. This does not include drainage work and engineering, so it will just be a bandaid and not a long term solution. Mr. Saxton notes that to be done properly and with longevity, it needs to start much further below the surface with proper drainage and base. Mrs. Dowling asks what will be done with the road at the dam, where water often overflows. Mr. McCarty notes that engineering studies will show that the drainage below the dam is inadequate for the amount of water flowing through, and the hope is that the engineering firm will provide a recommendation for fixing this. This report should be available before the end of the fiscal year.
11. **210 Gilsum Mine Road land merger talks –** Mr. Kemp reports that he broached the subject at a non-meeting of the Planning Board (because they didn’t have a quorum). Those that were present were generally in favor. He asked Mrs. Bacon for the statutory requirements (believes it’s 3 years). He does want to speak with a couple of landowners in that area who have expressed interest in some of the smaller lots to get their feedback. Mr. Trafton notes that there are two dead Maple trees at 210 Gilsum Mine Rd on the edge of the road. He’s hoping that because the Town owns the land, that they can get those cut down.
12. **Lighting upgrade for Village Station –** Mr. Kemp will ask Ms. Iozzo if we’ve received the check for this yet. Once we do, it can be removed from the list.
13. **Department & Board**

**NEW BUSINESS:** Update on wage study, full informational presentation on 8/27/24 by Mary Ann Wolf.

**OTHER ITEMS:** The Select Board Administrative Office will be closed the week of 8/26-8/29. REMINDER to Dept. Heads: Payroll will be due on August 30th due to the Labor Day holiday

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**School Board**., etc.– Mr. Levesque reports that they have successfully found a teacher to work at Sarah Porter. Their budget season is coming up, and they have a Budget Committee that will take care of that. They have Union negotiating sessions starting next month. As Alstead Assistant Moderator, he’ll be counting blank ballots Thursday morning at the Town Office (public event). He is trying to set up a meeting with Jack Ahern at SWRPC to make sure we get our grant funding for the project to build the sidewalk from the Vilas School to the Library. The deadline for the grant is 9/27. He is hoping we can do the engineering study this winter/spring, and break ground next summer. Director Moore reports he has gone through and completed every requirement for the Traffic Incident Management. Mr. Levesque also reports there is a School Board project that they are looking to get funded. Last March they received $150,000 to do a study of the property at the High School and they had a goal to pave the access road, parking lot, transportation area, and build another access road. Part of the money is to go towards surveying the 70 acres (which has never been surveyed before), but their focus is the previously mentioned areas on the property. They have 3 companies that they are evaluating for the engineering study.

**Highway** – Mr. Trafton reports that one of his employees is on vacation this week. They are trying to get some roads graded between rain storms. They are also trying to get some culverts in the ground (3 on Griffin Hill, 1 on Thayer Brook Rd). They will be depleting their culvert supply this year. Mrs. Viegener asks if road lines will be done this year, and Mr. Trafton reports that he has been reaching out to have this done but has not heard back. She asks about the $5,000 in the budget for line work, and he notes that’s for Gilsum Mine Road specifically. She asks if there was a warrant article for striping last year, which there was not. She asks about trees that have been cut down, and he notes they try to take care of the smaller ones themselves. He has a request out for a quote on 3 large Pines on Main Street. He’s waiting for another quote from (??) for townline markers for all of our roads.

**Transfer Station, Ambulance, and Parks –**

Director Moore reports that:

* Ambulance – there have been 120 calls to date. Last Thursday he went to UNH with Chief Murrell for the NH Safe Campuses Symposium. They met Governor Sununu and talked about campus safety as well as police/fire/EMS well-being and what we need to do for that. There was a world-renowned surgeon from the Mayo Clinic about a new type of cardiac plaque they found in first responders. They talked about the possibility of a public safety drone program, and talked about mass violence in campus situations (and would like to meet with school to formalize a plan for such situations). There is an incident report for a light that broke on one of the ambulances forthcoming (will be repaired 8/21). On 9/5 at 5:00 pm in Charlestown Eversource/Liberty is coming to do a Utility Safety program for anyone who doesn’t have it (he’s requiring all his staff to do it).
* Parks – he is trying to mow the lawns between rain. Mr. Trafton notes that he’ll need to mow the soccer field more often now that practice is in session.
* Transfer Station – he has put together a dump picking policy and commercial hauler policy. The second policy is in response to a resident dropping off huge amounts of trash that he collects from residents and non-residents. The policy was reviewed with the Board and signed by all. He is going to serve this individual the policy on 8/21 and will check to see if all the trash is actually coming from Alstead.
* He will be forwarding some quotes for building maintenance projects from Mr. Bellows to the Board.

**Town Office Administrator** – The Select Board Administrative Office will be closed the week of 8/26-8/29. REMINDER to Dept. Heads: Payroll will be due on August 30th due to the Labor Day holiday.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

**Mr. Kemp** – he is dealing with two departments at Consolidated - one for the three free locations, and one for the Town Office and Highway Department. He asked for some details from the group about current service at the Town Office and Highway Department to complete a form for Consolidated. Mr. McCarty reports a resident on Maclean Road reached out to complain about the work not being done yet. Mr. Kemp received a request from a resident to get the Board minutes posted to the Town website. Mrs. Gratacos will email those not yet posted to him to be uploaded. The new Land Use Admin started and is doing well so far. He asks Mr. McCarty and Mr. Saxton about paying Melanie Marsden for training, and they both agree. He asks to add the personnel policy to the agenda.

**Mr. Saxton** – Asks Mr. Trafton to take down the tattered flags on Mechanic Street (will be replaced next spring). He will ask that during the fall gutter cleanup at the Library that they evaluate the roof for cracks. He has been told by NRRA that all bales of 1-7 plastics get recycled. Mr. Kemp says it doesn’t actually get recycled, but the receiving company makes a small profit on getting it from us. NRRA also notes a man in Groveton, NH takes ALL plastic and reduces it to diesel fuel which he uses to fuel a cruise ship generator. He wants to have a business doing this but cannot get permits from the state. Mr. Kemp says the sticking point on that technology is that it takes more energy to do it than it creates. He evaluated this at length last year. Director Moore is in favor of revisiting this since the market changes constantly. Another issue is having a place to store this plastic until it’s ready to send.

**Mr. McCarty** – I didn’t hear that you had any updates?

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:** Mrs. Dowling asks what the procedure is for removing dead trees along public roads, especially those that post a safety risk. Mr. McCarty reports that there is a line item in the budget for removing “hazard trees”. This often gets spent before June because it’s not nearly enough to address all the problematic trees.

Mr. Nalevanko asked about the 5-town Selectboard meeting. The Board thinks it’s not going to get revived.

Mr. Levesque asks if the Board has gotten anywhere with removing the “scenic” designation for Camp Brook Road. Mr. McCarty reports that it has been left with the Conservation Commission, for a recommendation, and then needs to go to the voters in March.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION/S:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Next regular Select Board meeting:** | Tuesday, August 27, 2024 @ 5:00 PM, Town Offices, 15 Mechanic Street. |
| **Next FM School Board meeting:** | Monday, September 9, 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 6:52 PM.***

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Steuwe

Recording Secretary