

MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Friday, January 05, 2024

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Janet Wall (JW), Mark Avery (MA), Tim Burt (TB)

OTHERS: Eric Fiegenbaum (EF), Deb Ahlstrom (DA), Jay Moriarty (JM) as Road Agent

CORRESPONDANCE

- none

SIGN: payroll

NEW BUSINESS

- MA moved and TB seconded a motion to approve a burial lot license for Debra Leslie, Section A, Lot 57. Motion passed.
- TB moved and JW seconded a motion to approve town hall use for McKenna (birthday party) and Jody Walker (birthday party). Motion passed. The Selectmen requested that a waiver for the Pony Club use of Town Hall be put in writing, *before that request is granted*.
- Budget items were discussed including placeholders for cleaners at the Town Hall and Safety Complex. DA reported that she is waiting for a response from ~~on~~ the Fire Department longevity model for wages, giving a five percent wage increase to the base rate and then adjusting add-ons for skills separately. The Board discussed a desire for a future full review of all wages for town employees. ~~DA TB~~ reported that Fire Chief Perley objected to the Selectmen's reduction of the proposed capital reserve contribution to \$50,000 for a future engine replacement. It was pointed out that reducing any capital reserve can mean that an amount may have to be made up in future years. It was agreed to add a new line for cleaners at the Town Hall (\$5,356) and at the Safety Complex (\$9,620). EF reported that the cuts to the Recreation Commission budget were accepted. The Police Chief was disappointed with the Selectmen's declining of a wage increase proposal he had made. EF will verify the Police Chief understood that his clerical wage request was limited to \$20 \$18.75. ~~The Selectmen were not decided about the capital reserve for public works and considered the best place for a larger discussion was with an implementation committee agreed on \$95,000 for this year's PW capital reserve, but indicated a larger discussion is needed with an implementation committee.~~
- TB moved and MA seconded a motion to approve a contract with Bilank for cleaning services at Town Hall (\$103/instance) and the Safety Complex (\$185/instance). Motion passed.
- EF will work on arranging a meeting with the Lee Selectmen regarding the two towns collaborating for savings and/or efficiency.

OLD BUSINESS

- EF will thank Walker at 54 Evans Rd for the response to the Selectmen's inquiry about land use issues (*response indicated the cars on the property are the owners' and/or UNH students helping with agricultural duties*). He will ask the Police Chief to keep an eye on the property with regard to its *alleged* use as a parking lot.
- A discussion on dealing with public work tasks continued including topics like road agent duties, and proposing a warrant at town meeting to expand the road agent duties. An "expert ~~road~~ highway agent" would need town approval, and is not as limited by term ~~and~~ duties. There was a general discussion about how the town accomplishes trash pickup. MA *to work on sending out RFP's for snow removal contractors*.
- The Oyster River School Board has approved enhancements to the Mutualink system.
- February 5, 2024 is the tentative date for the public hearing on the budget and warrant.

- *Huckins Rd wetland fill update - EF reports that DES considers this a self-reported violation and has asked for a restoration plan from the owner. Owner has hired a soil scientist and is asking for a minimal amount of fill to remain for existing structures.*

BOARD UPDATES

- JM, as Road Agent, suggested setting up a meeting with Talco Enterprises to arrive at an agreement on the 2024 mowing of the town's road shoulders. He will work with the snow removal contractor about giving more attention to town lots. Some potholes have been patched. He is working on several beaver issues. Eversource has addressed a shattered tree reported by a resident. MA noted ponding of water at the Freshet Rd-Mast Rd-Pudding Hill Rd intersection. MA will be asking JM to review road agent duties as we move toward advertising the position. EF will set up a meeting with MA, DA, JM and EF to discuss road agent duties. JM has an interest in staying around for work being scheduled in early 2024.
- TB reported that the Planning Board is working on the issue of drafting an ordinance for short term rentals. EF will ask the Martins' attorney if she has made any progress in regards to visiting with the Planning Board for a possible Home Occupation. The Planning Board Chair had been in touch with the town attorney and expressed some concern that the short term rental issue had not been discussed by the Selectmen with the town attorney. EF will ask Portsmouth about the status of the enforcement action against Schwartz at 14 Huckins Rd. EF will note to the ZBA that it might be good practice to have a condition of approval also include the obtaining of all other required permits.
- There was a discussion on how to facilitate the public's ability to report issues.

OTHER:

- EF will put the elderly exemption review on the next agenda.
- A Selectmen can appoint a pro temp on election day if they are unavailable.

Meeting ended at 12:45pm.

Submitted by: *Eric Fiegenbaum* Approved: *4-11-2024*
On approved minutes, proof changes are noted through italics for additions and strikethroughs for deletions.