

MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Monday, January 15, 2024

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Janet Wall (JW), Mark Avery (MA), Tim Burt (TB)
OTHERS: Eric Fiegenbaum (EF), Deb Ahlstrom (DA)

CORRESPONDANCE

- none

MINUTES: TB moved and MA seconded a motion to approve the minutes of 11/20/2023 as amended. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

- The public hearing notice was read. The purpose was to accept and authorize expenditure of unanticipated funds from the State of New Hampshire for road and bridge projects. No public was in attendance. It was explained that the funding does not lapse and it should be spent on projects that are not in a regular plan. Jenkins Road drainage was mentioned as a possible project. The public comment period was closed. MA moved and TB seconded a motion to accept and authorize expenditure of unanticipated funds from the State of New Hampshire for road projects in the estimated amount of \$15,661.28 and for bridge projects in the estimated amount of \$9,830.71. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was a general review of the proposed budget, wages, and warrant. It was noted that that the PD had issued personnel action forms that were not in line with what the Selectmen had approved for clerical staff. Payroll will be processed at the Selectmen's approve rate of \$18.75. With regard to repurposing the Hayes Rd capital reserve it should be a two-step process. One to close Hayes Rd and one to open a Major Roads capital reserve and fund it from the funds left in Hayes Rd. Language will be added to Article 17 to say that if it does not pass, Article 18 will not be considered.
- There was a discussion about the use of paper ballots *during town meeting* for proposed changes to the elderly exemption. Inflation rates from several sources were considered. TB moved and MA seconded a motion to set the income levels to \$45,000 for single and \$55,000 for married applicants, with exemptions of \$114,000, \$142,000 and \$168,000. The asset limit was set at \$200,000. Motion passed.
- MA explained the difference between a ~~road~~ *highway* agent and an expert ~~road~~ *highway* agent. The expert can be appointed for more than one year and with town vote can perform additional duties. There was a discussion on an article that would authorize the select board to appoint an expert highway agent to have charge of the construction, maintenance, and repair of all town highways and bridges and the maintenance and repair of all sidewalks within the town and authorize the select board to add additional duties to those charged to the expert highway agent duties pursuant to RSA 231:63. MA moved and TB seconded a motion to accept the expert ~~road~~ *highway* agent article as presented by DA. Motion passed.
- There was a review and discussion of the draft road agent duties. The supervision of other town employees in the future was added. If the expert highway agent article does not pass, a road agent could still be hired for a year. Suggestions for the duties had come from the NHMA, the public works listserv and website postings, and the review with the current road agent. The addition of equal opportunity employer was noted. Hours and wage rates were discussed. A NH State retiree would have a limit of *1352 hours per year (approx 26 hours*

per week). It was suggested that the wage could be in the \$28 per hour range, with hours of around 32 maximum per week. *\$35,500 was earmarked in the budget for this new position.* MA will work on an ad to approve at the next meeting which should get wide distribution soon.

- MA handed out and explained an updated flow chart on the DPW decisions to be on a future agenda.
- There was a review of agenda items for Friday, to include pay checks, road agent, the DPW matrix, an RFP for the snow contract, and assignments of warrant articles for town meeting. JW expressed an interest in doing the simplest things first. EF reported that Bilank is working to provide worker's compensation information. EF still needs to send the letter in support of the NHMA position on the lobbying bill.
- EF is working on a template to use as a guide for enforcement letters, including Cherry Lane.

BOARD UPDATES

- none

OTHER:

- TB will not be at the meeting scheduled for Friday, January 26, 2024.
- The Selectmen will come up with items for the Selectmen's portion of the Town Report.
- EF will post the budget and warrant articles to the website.
- There was a short discussion on how to review activities at 54 Evans Road with respect to use of the property as a parking lot.

Meeting ended at 9:15pm.

Submitted by: *Eric Fiegenbaum*

Approved: *4-11-2024*

On approved minutes, proof changes are noted through italics for additions and strikethroughs for deletions.