

SELECTMEN'S MEETING– January 22, 2024

Present: Margo Connors, Richard Bielefield, Chris Ellms
Jennifer Gaudette

Guests: Chief Mike Ho-Sing-Loy, Chief Allan Clark, Carl & Nancy Martland, Martha Evelyn,
Claire & Fred Von Karls

Budget Hearing Date: February 5th, 2024 @ 6:00 pm.

The Select Board attended a Tri Town Board meeting with Franconia and Easton in Franconia on Monday January 22nd at 4:30 pm. Tri Town Recreation and Transfer Station budgets were discussed. The minutes will be sent by Franconia.

CHIEF MIKE HO-SING-LOY presented his 2024 budget to the board. Over all it shows a 1% increase. This shows adjustments to reflect pay in area towns for officers. The computer in the Chief's office will be replaced this year. The Chief requested the board have a Warrant Article to replace the \$10,000 to the PD CRF from funds received by the sale of the old cruiser. The total cost of the new cruiser after the grant the Chief received and the sale of the cruiser was around \$9,000.

CHIEF ALLAN CLARK presented his 2024 budget to the board. Over all a 3% increase. He is requesting warrant articles for the following:

Container for storage behind the station \$5,000

Replacement of air packs total cost \$100,000 requesting \$50,000 and hoping to find grant for the balance.

Heavy Equipment CRF \$50,000

Building CRF Fund \$10,000.

Chief Clark has also reached out to the Connors Trust in regard to reclaiming the fire pond on the corner of Birches Road and Route 117. The cost is estimated to be \$10,000 and the location of the pond is very important water source for the fire department. The board will look at creating a new Fire Department Equipment CRF for the first two items.

CHRIS ELLMS made a motion to approve the minutes and non-public minutes of January 8, 2024, seconded by MARGO CONNORS. The motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence was read and acted upon.

MARGO CONNORS and JENNIFER GAUDETTE had a conference call with the attorney for Vertex Towers. They explained that the town would need more information to even consider a warrant article. Attorney felt that people want better cell service and would be in favor. The attorney wanted to come in and meet with the board and bring a sample warrant article but have not heard back. A second tower company reached out to CHRIS ELLMS in his position as chair of the SH Conservation Commission about the town forest property. The board did not feel that this was an area that a tower would fit in.

The board received a letter from John Tardelli who lives on Birches Road and is concerned about water draining on his property. Road Agent will be meeting with Mr. Tardelli and the Town Engineer to discuss his concerns.

The board approved the use of the Sugar Hill Meetinghouse by the Willing Worker's on November 21 -23, 2024 for set up and winter sale.

The Select Board, Planning Board and SHCC received copies of the Eversource Wetland Permit application for the U199 Project.

The board received septic approval for operation for Map 214, Lot 39.2. John Etzel III.

The board reviewed the current Elderly Exemption qualifications that were voted on 14 years ago. The board wondered if there is any formula that towns use to decide the qualifications. Jennifer will follow up with the DRA and the board will continue to review what other towns in Grafton County are using.

There will be an additional hearing for Community Power on Monday February 19th at 6:00 pm at the Crapo Building. No board meeting just the power hearing.

The board opened the meeting to public comment:

Carl Martland asked about a possible fire pond on Pearl Lake Road. His neighbor and SHFF Dan Kenerson will discuss with the Chief. Carl advised that the draft Highway Committee Report was final. Carl as a member of the Scenic Byway Council and NCC Transportation Committee, offered to look at having Route 117 from Franconia to Sunnyside Cemetery changed by the State to one speed limit. Currently it runs from 25, 30, and 40 in different locations. Perhaps either 30 or 35 through the whole section.

Fred Von Karls would be happy to see the speed limit down to one speed if that would slow people down. He is also in favor of the board raising the elderly exemption.

Claire Von Karls wanted the board to know that she came to support the board and if the board needs assistance to reach out. Claire currently sits on the Conservation Commission and the Energy Committee.

Nancy Martland wanted the board to know that as she has spoken with many residents recently, the community is uniformly in support of the board.

CHRIS ELLMS updated the board that he had met via Zoom with the Town Engineer Red McCarthy, Josef Bicja and Joanne from Hoyle and Tanner about the plant that needs to be removed and they will work to get a plan approved and a person to do the work. The easement for the Streeter Pond Bridge is ready to be signed off by Cliff Hughes and the NHSPNHF.

The board signed off on the following permits:

Susan Schibanoff – Solar	Map 228, Lot 6
Susan Briggs – Solar	Map 227, Lot2.3
Rusty Talbot – renovation	Map 222, Lot 25
Matthew Carney – Renovation	Map 214, Lot 27
John Avizinis – Complete home	Map 219, Lot 57.3

With no more business before the Board, CHRIS ELLMS made a motion to adjourn, seconded by RICHARD BIELEFIELD the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM. The next regular scheduled meeting is Monday January 29, 2024, at 6:00pm. at the Crapo Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Gaudette
Administrative Assistant