

Town of Boscawen

Select Board

Final Minutes

Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 6:00pm

In attendance: Ed Cherian, Lorrie Carey, Paul Dickey, Alan Hardy, Katie Phelps, Kellee Easler, Tama Tillman, Gary Tillman, Dean Hollins, Tim Kenney, Kevin Wyman, Kearsten O'Brien, Barbara Randall, Mark Varney, Shawn Brechtel, Bonny John, Nicole Hoyt, Sarah Gerlack, Haley Dilts-Brown, Susan Croft, and Peg Daneau.

This meeting is being held under a Declaration of Emergency by the Governor and by the Board. Under RSA 91-A: 2, III (b) the requirement of a physical quorum is waived and this meeting is being held entirely remotely, and is being recorded.

Chairman Cherian motioned to approve the consent agenda with the minutes from December 3rd as presented and authorize the use of the signature stamp by Town Administrator Alan Hardy. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to approve Non-Public Minutes one and two from the November 19th meeting. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Old Business:

Loren Martin presented the new language for the warrant article for Solar Exemptions. If the warrant article were to be passed, this language would make sure that one hundred percent of the assessed value for all systems that are used on site would be exempt, except for any solar energy that is being sold off site. Any energy being sold off site would be taxable.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to allow Loren Martin to submit the new language for the Solar Exemptions to the Department of Revenue for review. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Chairman Cherian asked the Select Board members how they would like to pay the remaining \$1,500 to the Boscawen Food Pantry. Chairman Cherian suggested using funds from the Back Pack Program line. Human Services Administrator Sarah Gerlack said there is money left over from their budgeted line for 2020 and wanted it to be clear that this would not be taken from the Back Pack Program's donations.

Selectman Dickey motioned to pay the remaining \$1,500 to the Boscawen Food Pantry with the Back Pack Program's 2020 budget line. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Department Head Updates:

Emergency Management Director Mark Varney updated the Select Board on COVID-19 and the precautions taken within the Town Offices. The Police and Public Works Departments have been received the hand held victory sprayers and are in current use in both departments. The backpack victory sprayer will be used for the Municipal Complex and the Town Library. EMD Varney has agreed to stay on as EMD until March 31, 2021. In the State of New Hampshire there has been an

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average of 750 to 800 positive COVID-19 cases a day. There were 14 deaths today 13 of the deaths have been in long term care facilities. The positivity rate as of today is at 9%. In Merrimack County there are three outbreaks the first being in the NH State Prison, Epsom Health Care, and the Merrimack County Nursing Home. The Library will be closed from December 24 to January 6th. EMD Varney said there needs to be a new location to store the PPE. Town Administrator Hardy suggested to store the PPE in the 1913 Library.

Finance Director Katie Phelps had five transfer requests for the Trustees. The first being the Transfer from the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for reimbursements.

Selectwoman Carey made a motion that the Trustees of the Trust Funds transfer \$123,200 from the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse the General Fund for the expenditures from Southworth- Milton, Inc. and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

The second request for the Trustees of the Trust Funds is a transfer of \$8,971.87 from the Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund for reimbursements.

Chairman Cherian motioned for the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$8,971.87 from the Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse the following expenditures from Citizens Bank, ADF Flooring, Longchamps, and NUSO, LLC. and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

The third request is a transfer of \$4,128.39 from the Municipal IT Capital Reserve to the General Fund for reimbursements.

Chairman Cherian motioned for the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$4,128.39 from the Municipal IT Capital Reserve to the General fund for expenditures from Citizen's Bank and Cybertron, Inc. and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

The fourth request is a transfer of \$3,152.70 from the Police Cruiser Reserve Fund to the General fund for reimbursements.

Selectman Dickey motioned for the Trustees of the Trust Fund to transfer \$3,152.70 from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse the General Fund for the expenditure of Ossipee Mountain Electronics and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

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The last request is a transfer of \$123.96 from the Town Wide Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund for reimbursement.

Chairman Cherian motioned for the Trustees of the Trust Fund to transfer \$123.96 from the Town Wide Safety Equipment Fund to the General Fund to reimburse the expenditure from Joe King's Shoe Shop and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps presented the Select Board with a Funds Transfer request of \$4,400 from account number 4152114 Assessing Assistant to account number 4150114 Finance Assistant.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to accept the Funds Transfer request of \$4,400 from account number 4152114 Assessing Assistant to account number 4150114 Finance Assistant and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps presented the Select Board with two encumbrances. The first for the Landfill Covering and Maintenance for \$10,000 for the purpose of offsetting costs of paving at the transfer station.

Selectman Dickey motioned under the provisions of RSA 32:7 to encumber funds from account number 4325441- Landfill Covering and Maintenance for \$10,000.00 for the purpose of offsetting costs of paving at the Transfer Station in 2021, and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

The second encumbrance is for Landfill Paving for \$ 8,910.00 for the purpose of offsetting costs of paving at the transfer station.

Selectman Dickey motioned under the provisions of RSA 32:7 to encumber funds from account number 5999141- Landfill Paving for \$8,910.00 for the purpose of offsetting costs of paving at the Transfer Station in 2021, and to authorize Town Administrator Hardy to use the signature stamp on behalf of the Select Board. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps presented the Select Board with a donation of \$150.00 from Janice Steenbeke for the Boscawen Roundabout for acceptance.

Chairman Cherian motioned to accept the \$150.00 donation from Janice Steenbeke for the Boscawen Roundabout. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Town Administrator Hardy updated the Select Board about the CDBG project. The Town has to pick a grant writer. He would like to set the public hearing for January 7th, 2021. Chairman Cherian

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asked if the CDBG grant was for Woody Hollow. Town Administrator Hardy said yes. Chairman Cherian and other members of the Select Board were okay with setting the public hearing date for January 7th, 2021.

Fire Chief Tim Kenney updated the Select Board that he was contacted by the state that he has to have a roster in by Monday for the First Responders for their COVID-19 Vaccinations. The Fire Department did a training with Penacook Rescue. The trailer needs to be stored inside for the winter, they will be doing some work to the trailer to make it a shelter for them to take with them to emergency scenes in the winter and try to get a heater in it to make it a multipurpose trailer.

Police Chief Kevin Wyman updated the Select Board that Family Car Care in Penacook had their toy drive and were able get the Police Department many toys to fill the toy bags for distribution next week. They also will have a big cruiser repair coming, the brake system in one of the cruiser has been malfunctioning and they had to replace the entire system. There should be a recall on the system and they should be able to be reimbursed once it is an official recall.

Public Works Director Dean Hollins updated the Select Board that he received the reports back from DES for their water sampling. DES was satisfied with the fall sampling at this time so they will not need to put wells in until possibly 2022.

Budget Presentations and Discussion:

Town Administrator Hardy presented the Executive Budget. Kearsten O'Brien will be dedicating 25% of her time to Assistant of the Administrator which will change by 3.2% and the Administrative Assistant / Municipal Clerk has been taken out for this year. Town Administrator Hardy asked the Select Board if they would like to receive the 1.3% COLA. The Select Board agreed to receive the 1.3% and keep it within the budget. Chairman Cherian suggested to cut the litigation budget by \$5,000. He would also like to keep the funds available for the Facilities Director. Town Administrator Hardy said he will accept the adjustment of litigation budget of \$25,000 to \$20,000. The number for the Facilities Director is a part-time 24 hour per week job. Selectman Dickey asked if the \$24,998 was still available in the Facilities Director fund. Town Administrator Hardy said it is still available until December 31 unless the Select Board decides to repurpose it.

Selectman Dickey motioned to provisionally approve the Executive Budget for 2021. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Finance Director Phelps presented the Select Board with the Financial Administration Budget. She had spoken with the Treasurer and asked if she would like to add the 1.3% COLA to the Treasurer stipend or to the Deputy Treasurer stipend and she did not. There will be a 0% change for the Treasurer's stipends. For the Finance Director position there was a shift in time, last year she was 79.5% in Finance Director and this year will be 85% due to a portion of time not being dedicated to the role of Deputy Health Officer . Finance Director Phelps added the 1.3% COLA and is

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eligible this year for her five year longevity. The Finance Assistant is a new position filled by Kate Merrill with 85% dedicated to this position. It is a part time position with no benefits. Annual audit services are up 1%. There will be a 5% increase in 2021 from our payroll company, Checkmate. Selectwoman Carey asked if the Deputy Treasurer position was still open. Finance Director Phelps said yes.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to provisionally approve the Financial Administration Budget for 2021. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor.

Tax Collector Nicole Hoyt presented the 2021 Tax Collector budget to the Select Board. Lien Expenses show an 18.4% increase. These expenses are for all the liens and redemptions that they have to record at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds. It costs \$5.00 per parcel, last year lien amount was 99 and the deeding amount was 21. Under meetings and travels the 2020 actual is a place holder for the bank fees for the first bills that were payed online. The line for tax deeded properties is always kept the same but if a cut needs to be made they may be able to adjust the number. Deputy Tax Collector Gerlack's time is now distributed to 50% time in this position. They have also budgeted for a potential full time assistant in the tax collector's office. Chairman Cherian asked what the pay range for the potential employee. Tax Collect Hoyt said they factored the high amount into the budget at \$18.00 per hour. Selectwoman Carey asked how many hours are budgeted for the position. Tax Collector Hoyt said they are asking to budget the position for full time, therefore between 36 to 40 hours a week. Selectwoman Carey asked if this would be a benefited position. Tax Collector Hoyt said yes. Chairman Cherian asked if the new hire could be an April 1st start. Tax Collector Hoyt said she is unsure at the time and would like to speak with her co-workers about starting April 1st.

Selectwoman Carey said if they are going to have a new hire the Select Board should allow for the new hire to begin with in the New Year, after the approval of the budget. Selectwoman Carey said the Select Board has heard the need for the position and it is something the Select Board should be able to present and support if there are questions. Selectwoman Carey said the only issue she has with the budget is the current credit card fees being placed under meetings and travel. There should be a separate line item in the tax collectors budget. Tax Collector Hoyt suggested waiving the first two weeks of credit cards fees after the bills have gone out. Selectwoman Carey said she likes Tax Collector Hoyt's idea of an incentive. Tax Collector Hoyt said she will work up a plan for what the fees maybe and present it to the Select Board next week. Finance Director Phelps suggested to use the Facilities Director budget that has not been expended to use on the Tax Collector's budget for the credit card fees from the taxes in July. Selectman Dickey would like the budget for Tax Collector to come down for him to accept the budget. Finance Director Phelps said to keep in mind that there has been a shift in the percentages of employees allocated to the department. Town Administrator Hardy said the increase in the budget is due the increase in services that are now provided to the town. Chairman Cherian said he would like the Select Board to provisionally approve it and circle back to the budget if needed. Chairman Cherian and Selectwoman Carey feel as though they are able to present and defend the budget if questions and issues arise.

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Chairman Cherian motioned to provisionally approve the Tax Collector budget for 2021 as presented. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. Chairman Cherian and Selectwoman Carey were in favor. Selectman Dickey opposed.

Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt presented the Town Clerk and Election budget to the Select Board. Town Clerk Hoyt said most of the line items went down. This year alone has been a big year for election costs. Election cost for 2021 have gone down by 77.6%. The vital records preservation was not used for this year and is waiting for quotes. Depending on the quotes received back Town Clerk Hoyt said she may be asking to encumber the funds. Town Clerk Hoyt said she did add \$500.00 to the vital records preservation line for potential supplies need for a Town Historian. Selectwoman Carey suggested breaking off Town Historian as a separate category for the Town's people to see for more transparency and clarification. Town Clerk Hoyt said she did make changes to the stipends for elections. She evened out the stipends for the supervisors of the check list.

Chairman Cherian motioned to provisionally approve the Town Clerk and Elections budget for 2021 as presented. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Fire Chief Kenney presented the budget for the Fire Department, Ambulance, and Life Safety to the Select Board. Fire Chief Kenney elected not to put the 1.3% COLA in the budget because the pay structure will need to be worked on within the next year. There is an increase in Fire Department hose appliances, most of them need to be replaced because they are old. The dispatch dues had a 200,000 dollar miscalculation from the City of Concord last year and that is where you will see most of the increase for the upcoming year. Life Safety Officer decreased his budget by \$3,600.

Selectman Dickey motioned to provisionally approve the Fire Department, Ambulance and Life Safety budget for 2021. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Selectman Dickey made a motion to go into nonpublic RSA 91-A:3, II(a). Chairman Cherian seconded. All in favor.

Chairman Cherian made a motion to come out of nonpublic. Selectman Dickey seconded. All in favor.

Selectwoman Carey motioned to seal the minutes. Seconded by Chairman Cherian. All in favor.

Motion made by Selectman Dickey adjourn. Seconded by Selectwoman Carey. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Kearsten O'Brien