

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN  
Selectboard Meeting  
16 School Street  
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275  
September 30, 2019

**Call to Order**

The Allenstown Selectboard Meeting of September 30, 2019 was called to order by Chair Ryan Carter at 5:38 pm.

Chair Carter called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

Present on the Board: Sandy McKenney, Maureen Higham, Ryan Carter

Allenstown staff: Derik Goodine, Town Administrator; Deb Bender, Finance Director

Others present: Kathleen Pelissier, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Mike Frascinella, Claudette Verville, Armand Verville, Old Allenstown Meeting House; Chad Pelissier, Chris Gamache, Tri-Town EMS Director

**Citizens' Comments**

Ms. Pelissier told the Selectboard that Armand Verville has finished making the sign for the dedication of the boat launch in memory of Ronnie Pelissier. She suggested that they begin their next meeting there for the dedication and return to Town Hall for their meeting.

**Regular Agenda**

▪ **Old Allenstown Meeting House Budget**

Mr. Verville stated that his proposed budget shows an increase of \$100 for Eversource and Comcast expenses. This is for electricity, telephone and modem.

Mr. Goodine asked him if he had heard about the non-profit casino in the basement of Draft Sports Bar & Grill in Concord, where various non-profit organizations can receive the profits.

Mr. Verville responded that he looked into one in Nashua about seven or eight years ago. He said that the non-profit organizations have to provide volunteers to work at these venues and that it would change their 501c3 status. He said he would be glad to look into it again. He continued his report, saying that the roof has been redone by the Historical Society and that volunteers have painted most of the building.

▪ **Ambulance Budget**

Mr. Gamache stated that, for the current budget, they have moved money through the budget and were able to offset the amounts owed by Allenstown and Pembroke. He explained that in the first few years of the service, revenue projections were based on 'best guesses.' They took in a lot more revenue than budgeted and did not exceed the expense budgets. This resulted in a large surplus. They decided to move \$365,000 to their CIP and use \$40,000 to offset what the towns owed in 2019. They also have a policy of holding 20% in the fund balance, an amount of \$180,000. He suggested that the proposed 2020 budget be compared with 2018. Turning to payroll, he said that they run a 24/7 service, with a supervisor and a paramedic on duty. They maintain an average of 45 seconds out the door for their calls. He said that they are Pembroke personnel, which made pay scale adjustments one year after Allenstown did theirs. Therefore, they had an adjustment this year which was not budgeted for, and now have two years-worth of pay scale adjustments in the 2020 budget, along with the COLA. There are corresponding increases to the other personnel lines as well. He said that no major projects are planned for 2020. They have had serious problems with Ambulance 8, mostly with air conditioning, and they have put \$40,000 into Ambulance 3, which is now in North Carolina getting a new chassis. He said they are working on a project which is in the conceptual stage. They would like to train local residents who wish to be EMTs to use as on call personnel. They would like to have a second ambulance and a sufficient number of local, on call people so they could take a second call. They have new stretchers for both ambulances so that the EMTs only have to lift the patient once – onto the stretcher. This is safer for the crew and the patient. He said they have no solid plans for a third ambulance. He continued, saying that the ventilator they talked about last year has been purchased and is in service. This process often obviates the need for intubation, which has a risk of infection and requires a longer hospital stay for the patient. He added that the ventilator was a precursor for the training which is almost complete for a process called Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI). The last training session is scheduled for November 6<sup>th</sup>. Paramedics will be able to sedate, paralyze, and place a tube in the patient. This has been a three to four-year project. He said that Tri-Town is one of three communities (out of 29) in the Greater Concord area trained in this procedure. They are one of seven in the whole state.

Ms. McKenney asked if they now have two ambulances.

Mr. Gamache responded that they own Ambulance 8, they have a white loaner which they try not to use, and Ambulance 3, which is in North Carolina.

Ms. McKenney asked how often they have two trucks out at the same time.

Mr. Gamache responded that it happens about ten times per year. He said they would like to expand so that they would have two trucks ready to go up to midnight during the week and on weekends. Continuing, he said that they had 1,080 runs in 2016; 1,300 in 2017, 1,364 in 2018 and are estimating 1,310 for 2019. He said they receive and give mutual aid about equally; call volume is increasing for all services without commensurate staff increases.

Ms. McKenney asked about expenses so far this year.

Mr. Gamache said he did not have that data with him, but the maintenance line is basically destroyed. Also, they have been hauled into a lawsuit which they had nothing to do with. It is tied to the previous association, and they have spent \$30,000 already, having budgeted only \$5,000. He said they have hired seven per diem employees and were budgeted for five. They did this because using a full-time employee for a run costs about \$30 per hour, while a per diem employee is only \$15 to \$16 per hour. Also, when hiring paramedics with little experience, they are brought on as Advanced EMTs, and promoted to paramedics after they complete 80 hours of ride time and their performance warrants making them paramedics. This way, instead of having to let them go if their performance isn't sufficient, they can be retained as A-EMTs. He said that the Board of Director's policy now asks him as the Director to report on lines that are over budget and the reasons for the deviation. He said the budget will be tight at the end of this year. They will be within the budget, but with little or nothing left. He said he likes to have what he calls a 'payroll buffer.'

Chair Carter asked if the service is now fully staffed.

Mr. Gamache said they have 28, with a goal of 30.

Ms. McKenney asked about the shifts.

Mr. Gamache said that the day shift is ten hours and the night shift is 14 hours. They strive to arrange the schedule so that no one has more than one 24-hour shift a week. He said that it varies; they aim for 38 hours per week. If given overtime, the employees are happy to earn more.

Ms. McKenney asked if he was managing it so that they are not working two or three long days in a row, because that would not be safe.

Mr. Gamache said that they try to do that.

Chair Carter asked if they were meeting response times.

Mr. Gamache said he keeps a spreadsheet for time out the door. The daytime average is two seconds; night is 1.5 to two minutes out the door. If it runs over two minutes, there is a problem to address. The average time for arrival on the scene is 5:13 minutes. They average 18 to 20 minutes on the scene and the same for transport. He stated that this is what justifies their existence; that is, 50 seconds out the door saves lives in cardiac arrest scenarios, versus other deployment models. Relying on another community adds two extra minutes, which can make the difference, especially in an overdose situation.

Mr. Goodine said that he could supply the Selectboard with the monthly Director's Report, if they would like to have it.

Chair Carter stated that Allenstown Fire is dispatched for most EMS calls. He asked how it would affect the level of service and care if they did not.

Mr. Gamache said that would not be the safest situation. The service has the challenge of getting people on scene. The Police Department has a few times driven the ambulance when the two crew members need to stay with the patient. He added that Tri-Town is an oddity in New Hampshire, being a third service. Most have a private ambulance service or a Fire-based service. He said that Pembroke Fire only goes out upon request. He said Tri-Town has a good relationship with both Police and Fire in Allenstown, and that Tri-Town is used more often regionally. They guarantee a paramedic. Two crew members on the fire truck and two on the ambulance is ideal for providing the needed level of care. He said he would like to have an intercept vehicle next year.

Chair Carter noted that \$56,000 of Tri-Town's increase is payroll.

- **Review Parts of Administrative Budget**

Mr. Goodine said he wanted to begin with a brief note on capital reserve funds. He said that the Capital Improvement Plan is part of the Master Plan which, in turn, determines impact fees. He said he feels strongly that they must stay honest to the plan, and it involves a team effort. He added that the Economic Development Committee is doing a great job with projects and activities to promote community and foster development.

Ms. Pelissier said that the only significant increase in her budget is due to having four elections in one year. The polls will be open from 7:00 am until 7:00 pm. They will have two booths in the morning and four in the afternoon.

Ms. McKenney asked if she will need more people to work at the elections.

Ms. Pelissier responded that she feels confident in the current plan. Also, there is money budgeted for election equipment, and if nothing breaks, they will have that money in case they need it. She said that the current moderator will be retiring soon and his replacement is now shadowing him in preparation for taking over. Regarding training, Ms. Pelissier stated that her deputy has two more years of one-week classes for certification, and she herself must attend at least one conference in order to keep her certification.

Ms. Bender stated that there are no significant changes in the Finance budget and that bank fees, which are paid out of interest earned, are down.

Ms. McKenney asked about the audit cost.

Ms. Bender said there will be one more payment to the auditing company. She continued, presenting the Assessing budget, which has only three lines. The first is for contracted services.

The amount does not change this year because it is a three-year contract. The second is for computer services provided by Avitar via a contract. There is a public computer for use by individuals wishing to look up information on parcels. The third account is postage, which isn't changing.

Mr. Goodine said that the executive budget has a \$3,000 increase in administrative salaries. He said that he and the Finance Director now know the budget much better and can more accurately predict expenses. He said that the town website is up \$50 because they may be using some new templates in conjunction with his plan to arrange for streaming of town board and committee meetings. He said he would like to proceed with the project this year or next, depending upon the final audit results. He added that perhaps the cost of the templates can be included in the capital reserve fund he is proposing for this. He continued, saying that the State budget has been passed, and the town might receive additional revenue increases to offset increases in expenses. Continuing, he said that \$800 is budgeted for advertising, which might be needed for the hiring process or for public hearing notices, such as those associated with the proposed zoning changes. The amount appropriated for 2019 was \$1,000.

Ms. McKenney asked about the expense for transcription of meeting minutes.

Ms. Bender said that all transcription expenses go into the administration budget and are then distributed to the various committees and boards. She added that the third quarter is not done yet. She said that Unemployment Compensation was \$0 for 2019 because of a premium holiday credit. This will be used up in 2020, and \$4,000 is the budgeted expense.

Mr. Goodine said that contracted services will probably increase, as Matt Monahan of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission continues work on the China Mill redevelopment. He said that the Town Hall custodian is budgeted at \$5,000, down from \$5,900 this year.

Chair Carter said that if funds are available at the end of the year, maybe they could complete more maintenance on the Town Hall building.

Mr. Goodine said that most of the projects have been done. He would like to have an energy audit done, and he would like to install two more security cameras. He said that the benches and gazebo have been painted. Ms. Caruso is working on a security card system so that board and committee chairs can get into certain areas of the building. This involves creation of zones within the building. They still have to paint the copier room, and Ms. Bender wants to do some work on the downstairs bathrooms.

Ms. Bender said the work could be done at the same time as the upgrade of the heating system, for efficiency.

Mr. Goodine said that there are still concerns about the boiler. Next, he said that the Cemetery line and the Conservation line have been increased to \$10 from \$1 to make the numbers easier to work with. Regarding property insurance, he said he expects confirmation of the rate in a week or so. The maximum increase permitted by contract is seven percent. Some new, more expensive vehicles have been added, increasing the amount. The budgeted amount for this year is \$56,620 and actual expenses thus far total \$61,694. With about \$5,000 in rebates, this line will still be okay. The requested amount for 2020 is \$66,960. He said that Building Inspector budget includes part of the salary of an administrative assistant. They left \$25,000 in the contracted services line, even though the Building Inspector amount is only between \$16,000 and \$18,000. This way, if they contract with a Code Enforcement Officer, there will be funds in this budget for that expense. He reported that Pembroke no longer wants to share the cost of the river gauge when the contract ends in the middle of 2020 because they have purchased all of the flood zone properties. The budgeted amount of \$3,200 remains the same, but they will not receive \$1,600 in revenue from Pembroke to offset it.

Ms. McKenney said that Chief Stark has \$3,000 in his budget for generator maintenance.

Ms. Bender said that all generators should be in one budget, so they will make that adjustment.

Ms. McKenney asked about the amount for Emergency Management Dispatcher.

Mr. Goodine said they have budgeted \$300 for emergency management equipment, which they may need to increase because of the trailer.

Ms. Bender said there is an expense for an emergency exercise, but this will have offsetting revenue because it is grant-funded.

Mr. Goodine said that the Health Officer line shows a \$50 increase because of training which Mr. Eisenhart will attend. He reminded the board that the deputy position is voluntary. He said there is increased concern about EEE and insect-borne viruses because of the number of cases sited not far from the area. Turning to the Welfare budget, he said that payroll, dues, and updates for guides are up \$200. Temporary rental assistance is down by \$7,000 and \$500 has been added for emergency food. Looking at Social Services, the proposed amount for the Community Action Program (CAP) shows an increase of \$790. Waypoint, formerly Child and Family Services, is level funded at \$3,500 as is CASA at \$500.

Mr. Goodine said he would like to have a more formalized Employee Appreciation dinner at the Community Center this year.

Chair Carter said the Board would think about it.

Mr. Goodine said that the proposed purchase of a flag is for Town Hall. For Parks & Rec, he said the maintenance cost is increased for the custodian. Sewer is up \$100, per billing. That expense

is based on water use. He speculated that usage is higher because of more activities at the Community Center. He said that Old Home Day and Christmas in Suncook are level-funded. He said that he wants to boost the budget for the Economic Development Committee from \$900 to \$3,000 because they are spearheading a number of great activities and projects whose value is ten times that of the amount budgeted.

Ms. Bender said that the Highway Department wants to purchase a bigger truck, but that could be in 2021. Some money was added for Police vehicles because the new vehicles are getting more expensive. She said that the Budget Committee asked about the interest paid for vehicle leasing, suggesting that money could be saved if vehicles were purchased outright. She said she will provide them with the amount of interest paid, as they requested. However, she said, if there is a default budget in any year, they could lose a truck needed that year, while saving only a few dollars in interest.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. McKenney reported her concern that one employee was alone in the building today. She said they had agreed there would always be at least two employees in the building for safety reasons.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. McKenney made a motion to adjourn at 8:12 pm. Ms. Higham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN  
 SELECTBOARD  
 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

**Signature Page**

<b>Original Approval:</b>	
RYAN CARTER, Chair	DATE
SANDRA MCKENNEY, Vice Chair	DATE
MAUREEN HIGHAM, Member	DATE

<b>Amendment Approvals:</b>		
<b>Amendment Description:</b>	<b>Approval:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
	RYAN CARTER, Chair	DATE
	SANDRA MCKENNEY, Vice Chair	DATE
	MAUREEN HIGHAM, Member	DATE