

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
Selectboard Meeting
16 School Street
Allentown, New Hampshire 03275
October 21, 2019

Call to Order

The Allentown Selectboard Meeting of October 21, 2019 was called to order by Chair Ryan Carter at 6:04 pm.

Chair Carter called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

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

Allentown Staff: Derik Goodine, Town Administrator; Debbie Bender, Finance Director; Trish Caruso, Welfare

Others Present: Michael Stark, Police Chief; Dawn Shea, Police Department; Michael Frascinella, Brian Arsenault

Brian Arsenault introduced himself as a candidate for the Code Enforcement Officer position for Allentown. He said he currently works part-time in Windham as the Code Enforcement Officer and would be pleased to work in Allentown as well.

Citizens' Comments

Mr. Frascinella read a letter from a resident, praising the town signs and the work of the Economic Development Committee to improve the image of Allentown.

Budget Review

Chief Stark began his budget presentation, saying that the most significant increases are in the salary lines, which is a good thing because it indicates that they are retaining employees. The Staff Salaries line has an increase of \$1,300. The Training Hours line is being reduced to zero because it is being tracked in payroll. IT Services is the same amount as 2019. He praised the work of CCS, saying that they do a fantastic job. They backup the system every fifteen minutes, reducing greatly the risk of ransomware events. He said the Copier line is level, but they have leased a different machine, which is better and has FAX capability. He said that Radar Maintenance costs are creeping up because their equipment is 15 years old. He will be attending a conference soon and will check out new technology such as LiDAR, which uses laser instead of radio technology. Chief Stark continued, saying that, for the Vehicle Repair line, he likes to keep \$3,000 to \$4,000 in case a transmission needs to be replaced. Otherwise routine repairs are about \$7,000 to \$8,000 per year. He said that the Telephone and Modem line is down \$1,000. The Cell Phone line is level funded. They are looking at FirstNet, which will mean a different carrier – AT&T. Recruiting and Hiring costs depend upon whether they need to pay for polygraph testing and physical exams. Since the Police Academy basic classes are no longer free as they used to be, there

is added expense in the Training line. Training Supplies are good at \$3,000; General Supplies are up \$500 due to inflation. Postage is down \$150 as more communication is digital. Gasoline is down \$6,000. They purchase gasoline at the State pumps or at Irving, whichever is cheaper. There is concern that the State pumps are old and they can't be sure they will be replaced. The State purchases gas in bulk to get a reduced rate. Uniforms are up \$50 due to increased cost. Full-time Salaries are up \$15,000 and Overtime is the same. Regarding Dispatch, Chief Stark said they are trying to minimize the number of calls because the cost is based on the percentage of total calls from Allenstown. He said the State is looking into differentiating between calls for which they do nothing and those they have to handle. He said he hopes to reduce this line next year. For Building Maintenance, Chief Stark said that prisoners are painting the building. It is taking longer but saves money and is a way to demonstrate to the prisoners that police are not 'out to get them.' The officers thank them and buy them lunch. He said that Sewer and Water are down. Regarding the Electricity line, they are hoping to save money from the installation of LED lighting on the first floor. If that is the case, he said, they would use the savings to put LED lights on the second floor. The budget was left at \$9,000 because they do not know what the savings will be. Heat is down \$900, due to the extra insulation installed. He noted the pass-through lines involving grants, saying that he likes the transparency of gross budgeting, but is concerned that some only look at the expenses and don't see the offsetting revenue.

Ms. McKenney asked for the total amount of the budget.

Chief Stark said it is \$945,210.

Chair Carter asked about the Animal Control Officer (ACO) and the Emergency Management budgets.

Chief Stark said the ACO only need a scanner for the microchips, and the Emergency Management budget has salary increases of \$3,000.

Chair Carter stated that he appreciates the Police Department's keeping the budget as tight as possible.

Mr. Goodine reported that Pembroke no longer wants to share the cost of the USGS river gauge. The current agreement expires at the end of June 2020. The \$3,200 has been shared equally between the towns.

Chief Stark said he would rather not unplug the gauge and have nothing. He said he would like some time to see what they can work out

Ms. Bender said the USGS might help with the cost.

Chief Stark said that his capital expenditures budget is 'very much a wish list.' The amount of \$3,461 for Computers is already covered, he said, and the amount of \$15,000 is just an estimate because he does not yet have a quote. He said he simply wants to stay in line with the surrounding communities.

Chair Carter asked if there is anything the Police Department needs that is not in the budget.

Chief Stark said that there is not.

Chair Carter asked if there is anything in the proposed budget that could be cut.

Chief Stark said that he could perhaps cut the fuel further, but with the volatility of the fuel market, that would make him nervous. He said that fuel line is his cushion. The dilemma, he said, is that you can't budget for everything that could go wrong because ending up with a huge surplus looks bad.

Mr. Goodine presented the Stormwater budget, saying that the amount has dropped because they are deeper into the MS-4 process. Testing is down to \$4,000 from \$6,000. The total budget decrease is \$5,500. He reported that the Streetlight budget is down \$500, based on historical costs. Solid Waste includes an increase in salary for the manager – a step increase and a COLA. There is a reduction in Miscellaneous expenses, Dues are the same, and Supplies are down \$50. There is a three percent contractual increase for Casella.

Regular Agenda

▪ CIP Project Contract and Discussion

Mr. Goodine said that this is for the 2021-2026 CIP. It involves forming a committee to create various chapters such as the Introduction, Demographics, CIP Projects Prioritization, Summary of Projects, Financial Analysis, and Tax Rate Trends. He said that the Road Management Plan will fit in nicely. He added that there may be funding sources available. Membership is to include two Planning Board representatives, one Budget Committee person, a representative of Administration, department heads and a School Board representative. A BOS member is not required but the Selectboard could be included.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Allenstown CIP contract with Central NH Regional Planning Commission in the amount of \$3,000. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

▪ Health and Dental Insurance Agreement

D. Bender presented the new health and dental rates. She said there is an option for early retirees to stay in the health plan if they pay their own costs, even if they move out of state.

Chair Carter said they would table this item until the next meeting after exploring this option.

▪ Trustees of the Trust Fund Withdrawal Request from the Economic Development CRF for Town Signs Project

Ms. Higham made a motion for the Selectboard to request reimburse to the town from the Economic Development CRF for new town welcome signs, with the amount including \$1,800 paid to Clayton's Creations for the carved bears and \$11,100 paid to ProSource for signs and graphics, with the funds going to the General Fund account ending in 8125. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, with carried unanimously.

▪ Hazard Mitigation Plan Agreement and Discussion

Mr. Goodine said that the current Hazard Mitigation Plan will lapse on December 23, 2020 and since they are getting a late start, the new plan may not be complete when the current one lapses. The plan has to be updated every five years in order to be eligible for Homeland Security programs such as pre-disaster mitigation. The update covers areas of potential flooding, road washouts, and trees in hazardous areas. The plan can provide funding for culvert upgrades in potential flood areas. The Hazard

Mitigation Committee point of contact is Ron Eisenhart and is made up of the Road Agent, the Transfer Station attendant, the Town Administrator, one member each of the Planning Board and the Budget Committee, a land use planner, a representative of the Fire Department, one from the Police Department, and members of the community at large. The committee will meet twice monthly.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Letter of Agreement with Central NH Regional Planning Commission for the Allenstown 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- **State Budget Funds Use for 2019 and 2020**

Mr. Goodine said that Allenstown would be receiving about \$81,000 in extra aid from the State for this year and probably the same amount next year. He said that the School made out very well in funding for free and reduced lunches. He said that the School will receive \$404,000 from the State this year, classified as unanticipated revenue, meaning the School Department would not need to have a public hearing in order to expend it. It restores the stabilization fund back to 2016. He said it would be good if some of that were used to reduce taxes, since the School budget is increased by \$500,000 this year.

Chair Carter said they would most likely use it for repairs & maintenance and to increase capital reserve funds.

Mr. Goodine said that if the town uses \$30,000 of the \$81,000 to reduce taxes; it would equate to ten cents on the tax rate. He said that he hopes to have a two-year plan to stabilize the tax rate. For the second year, some of the State money could be used to reduce taxes and some to bolster capital reserve funds.

Chair Carter said he would be in favor of applying more than \$30,000 to reduce taxes but not as much as \$90,000. He said they could further discuss the use of Unassigned Funds to reduce the tax rate at future meetings.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Goodine reported that the Transportation Committee has plans for blinking yellow traffic lights at three Allenstown locations – Bridge Street, School Street and Route 28. This is part of the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) initiative. This works like a right turn on red, but is a left turn on blinking yellow. The goal is reduced emissions from idling.

Mr. Goodine said that Tim Blagden and Craig Tufts will attend the Public Hearings on November 4th and 18th to answer questions about the Rail Trail project. Tim Blagden is with the Lake Sunapee Rail Trail and Craig Tufts is with the Central NH Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Goodine said the heating issues at the Community Center have been solved. They are working on the plans to install a sink.

Mr. Goodine said that Town Attorney Sharon Somers asked if there might be pollution issues related to the old railroad properties the town is planning to purchase for the rail trail, but he said he has looked into this and has learned that anything potentially hazardous can be buried, so there is no concern.

Mr. Goodine said that ABC will be airing a program on Wednesday and Thursday of this week about modern DNA testing, based on the identification via DNA of four bodies found at Bear Brook. Also, on October 28th at 6:30 pm, the Hooksett Library is hosting Jason Moon, NPR producer of the famous podcast, *Bear Brook*.

Mr. Goodine said that a representative from the Merrimack Valley Trail Riders will be at the November 4th Selectboard meeting seeking permission to use Chester Turnpike for their annual ride from Candia to Loudon called the Charity Classic Trail Ride for Cystic Fibrosis.

Ms. McKenney said they should get an estimate for replacing the Town Hall furnace. She said it just been fixed with a 'Band-Aid' approach.

Mr. Goodine recommended that Mr. Pelissier and Mr. O'Meara be appointed to fill in for Mr. Carter and Ms. Higham since they will not be at the October 22nd Special Town Meeting.

Consent Calendar, Minutes and Manifests

Ms. Higham made a motion to ratify the Consent Calendar of the October 21, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Chair Carter made a motion to approve the minutes of non-public session I of the October 15, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Chair Carter made a motion to approve the minutes of non-public session II of the October 15, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minute of non-public session I of the October 7, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minute of non-public sessions II - VI of the October 7, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2019 public meeting, the October 7, 2019 public meeting, and the October 15, 2019 public meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion. The motion carried. Mr. Carter abstained.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable and Payroll manifests listed on the October 21, 2019 agenda. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Non-Public Agenda Items

Ms. Higham made a motion to enter non-public session at 8:01 pm in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (e). Ms. McKenney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. McKenney – aye; Ms. Higham – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to return to public session at 8:06 pm. Ms. Higham seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. McKenney – aye; Ms. Higham – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. Higham made a motion to deny the Eversource settlement offer discussed in non-public session. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session as they could render the proposed action of the Board ineffective. Ms. Higham seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. McKenney – aye; Ms. Higham – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. Higham made a motion to enter non-public session at 8:09 pm in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (c). Ms. McKenney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. McKenney – aye; Ms. Higham – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to returned to public session at 8:22 pm. Ms. Higham seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. McKenney – aye; Ms. Higham – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the tax payment application for the property identified as 107-12-167. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session because they discussed matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of a person not a member of the public body itself. Ms. Higham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 pm. Ms. Higham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

TOWN OF ALLENTOWN
SELECTBOARD
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 21, 2019

Signature Page

Original Approval:	
RYAN CARTER, Chair	DATE
SANDRA MCKENNEY, Vice Chair	DATE
MAUREEN HIGHAM, Member	DATE

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