

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
TOWN HALL
16 School Street
Allenstown, NH 03285

November 14, 2022

Call to Order

The Allenstown Selectboard special meeting of November 14, 2022 was called to order by Chair McDonald at 6:00 pm.

Chair McDonald called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present on the Board: Chair Scott McDonald, Maureen Higham, Jim Rodger, Keith Klawes, Sandy McKenney

Allenstown staff: Derik Goodine, Town Administrator, Brian Arsenault, (Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer), Chief Eric Lambert, AFD Fire Chief. Trish Caruso, Rich Caruso, Ron Adinolfo

Other: Bob Hayden, President of Standard Power.

Chad Pelissier joined at 6:16 pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Ms. McKinney said the turnout for voting was excellent. Chair McDonald said percentage wise, they were between 65 – 70%, the average was about 146 voters per hour.

REGULAR AGENDA

- **Community Choice Aggregation (Community Power)**

Mr. Hayden introduced himself and his company. He said in general, there has been a law on the books to have community power for municipal aggregation for many years. But it was always a program where you had to opt in in order to participate. He said in 2019, a law was passed that made it so everyone participates, unless you opt out. A bill was passed that was supportive of community power and the bill was signed by Governor Sununu on August 26, 2021.

He said he has currently been working with a variety of communities that are ready to launch the plan and go before the PUC.

Mr. Hayden said they work with Good Energy who has done this successfully in Massachusetts for many years and recently launched some plans in Rhode Island.

He said Community Energy allows control by the community of the electricity supply portion of the utility bills. Eversource would still be responsible for transmission, distribution, line work, and the only thing that changes is a line on the bill for supply.

Mr. Hayden presented the Board with a chart comparing a range of prices.

He said over the last couple of years, the price of natural gas skyrocketed and Eversource bought their most recent contract on the very worst day of the year. This explains why rates are so high currently. The Community Power Plan is designed to help people save money on their electricity supply rate.

Mr. Hayden said this all starts with an committee consisting of interested residents. Mr. Goodine asks what would this “energy committee” do? Mr. Hayden described what other Towns have done in the past.

Ms. McKenney asked if there would be a cost to the Town to which Mr. Hayden answered no. He said if they can add the program, the fee is similar to what the Town pays already for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, 1/10th of a cent per kilowatt hour for their services when the electricity flows. But they do all of the work in preparation for no charge with the expectation that most communities they work with would end up buying power with them.

To get started, the Board of Selectman would sign a Memorandum of Understanding with them to start implementing the program.

Mr. Hayden said he is happy to work with an active committee or a passive committee. The goal would be to reach as many people in the community as possible with the surveys.

Mr. Adinolfo asked if it gives a resident the opportunity to have another supplier to pick from. Mr. Hayden said that plan would have multiple choices. He said typically what they would see is some folks to have the cheapest power they can get and some folks want to be as green as they can get. He said those are the extremes of the 4 choices that they have.

Mr. Hayden said basically they are buying the electricity piece all at once. There is a potential of saving 20% on the whole residential bill.

Mr. Hayden said all it takes for the community budget is a little bit of time, no money and customers can come and go as they choose with no fees or penalties. He said the rates do not depend on the actions of other towns and communities and choices for renewable energy is generally what the town wants based on a survey. At some point the plan may encourage the town offices to be battery backed up or available to stay online in an emergency.

Mr. Goodine said if they move forward, they are going to have to figure out a committee which they can form with individuals from each town committee. He said they would have to do this soon so they can get an Article in the Town Meeting. Ideally they would like anyone who is interested to help out with it. Mr. Goodine said he would like to present the Memorandum of Understanding at the next meeting. Mr. Hayden said that a minimum of 4-5 members would comprise the Committee.

Mr. Hayden said the Committees start out passive and tend to meet only once a month but as they get going, people become more interested.

Mr. Goodine asked how long it would take in all. Mr. Hayden said it is possible that next year in April - May would be in the buying window or October- November when the prices are lowest and natural gas is cheap. He said he personally prefers a 2 year contract, but there is a lot of flexibility that utilities do not have which is part of why the plans save money.

- **Recreation Reserve Request for Ice Rink**

Mr. Adinolfo said he spoke about this at the last EDC meeting. He said they would like to take \$15,000 out of the Recreation Fund for upkeep, upgrade and new equipment. They are also looking at making a warming hut and a place to store their equipment. He thinks in the past they did put porta potties out there which they could do.

Chair McDonald said the Parks and Recreation Capital Reserve Fund account currently has \$87,000.

Mr. Adinolfo said there has been a lot of interest in the rink. Chair McDonald said that Mr. Caruso was able to obtain some hockey nets which will be easy to get on and off the ice. There is no charge for the use of the rink.

Mr. Caruso said they have to do their part to make sure the facility is up to "snuff" and is also safe for the community.

Ms. McKenney made a Motion to take \$15,000 out of the Parks and Recreation Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of the ice rink upkeep, maintenance, and equipment. Chair McDonald seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald, Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye

Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed.

- **Fire Pit for Lighting Contest Party**

Chair McDonald said the issue was going to be the location and whether or not it will be a permanent structure.

Ms. Caruso said that other Towns typically have bonfires once or twice per winter and they don't have a permanent structure. Ms. McKenney said it could be used in the summer for s'mores.

Mr. Pelissier said he would prefer to build it as few times as possible as it will take man hours and equipment. He agrees with Mr. Caruso that if they do make it permanent, it needs to be in the right spot. Mr. Goodine said near the ice rink would be ideal but it is still owned by the school.

Chief Lambert said if it's a fixed location, they could obtain a seasonal permit but if they move it, they would need to obtain a second permit. He said he agreed that it would be better to place it closer to the fire pit. Mr. Arsenault said they should be careful not to build too close to the water line. Mr. Pelissier said there is a lot underground in that area.

Mr. Pelissier said that they could put a couple of portable fire pits out for the first year until they can come up with a better, permanent solution. Mr. Adinolfo said that Tractor Supply had a large fire pit that was almost four feet around for under \$300. Chief Lambert agreed that its not a bad idea. Mr. Goodine said they would need a place to store it.

Mr. Caruso said some towns have Christmas tree burning parties in January.

Mr. Klawes asked about the potential to use 55 gallon drums. Mr. Pelissier said that would work but they tend to smell bad.

Mr. Caruso said it's up to the Board of Selectman since it's going in front of Town Hall. Chief Lambert said that it needs to be 50 feet from a structure and have a close water supply.

Mr. Klawes said he would almost prefer to use a couple of propane fire pits this year to give them more time and save money. Mr. Pelissier said he will also look at the Highway Department to see what they have for drums or barrels.

Ms. McKenney said to Chief Lambert that she heard of the challenge with the Police Department (food drive). She said she has two boxes for the food drive and asked him to pick a number to determine which box he gets.

Chair McDonald said at the last EDC meeting, they appointed two alternates (Chad Pelissier and Mike Landers).

Ms. McKenney made a Motion to appoint Chad Pelissier and Mike Landers as alternate members to the Economic Development Committee for a three year term. Mr. Klawes seconded the Motion.

Scott McDonald, Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed.

- **Flexible Spending Account Limit Increase**

Mr. Goodine said the FSA limits have increased to \$3,050. Ms. Caruso explained how it works and it is up to the Town to offer the full limit or not to employees. If the money doesn't get spent, it goes back to the Town.

Mr. Klawes made a Motion to increase the Flexible Spending Account Limit to \$3,050. Ms. McKenney seconded the Motion.

Scott McDonald, Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed.

- **Wage Scale and Longevity Pay- Tabled**

Mr. Goodine said this item is still tabled for now.

- **Administrative Assistant Position**

Mr. Goodine said he will discuss in Non-Public.

- **Need for Special Board of Selectmen's Meeting for Tax Rate Setting?**

Mr. Goodine said he doesn't know of a date yet because he is still waiting on the school's information.

He said they may need to have a meeting next week, because he will only need three signatures. The Board decided Monday, November 21st at 6 pm.

- **Change Start time for December 12, 2022 BOS Meeting, also change meeting day for December 26, 2022 Meeting**

Mr. Goodine said he would like to start that meeting at 6:45 pm because they were invited to a School Board Meeting at 6:00 pm.

He asked if they wanted to move their December 26, 2022 since it is the day after Christmas. The meeting will be rescheduled to December 27, 2022.

- **Holiday Schedule for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve**

Mr. Goodine said December 22nd and December 29th will be a half day for the office. Mr. Pelissier said that this does not apply to the Highway Department.

Road Agent's Report

Mr. Pelissier said he has to order a screen for one of the back-up cameras.

He said that he has three bids to fix the 2007 truck. The cheapest bid is not a garage in Allenstown but he thinks the difference in cost will justify it. He said he will run the pricing before Mr. Goodine before he does it.

He said the horse trough, at the end of Podunk Road, has been hit several times this summer. He thinks the best thing would be to relocate it to the side of the road by the cemetery which won't affect traffic at all. Mr. Klawes asked if he could also move the stop sign at the end of that road because it is so confusing. He said Armand said he has a good spot for it and would be happy to work with them to get it moved.

Mr. Pelissier said he did put in a request to have the prisoners help with wood before winter.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Goodine said he had a discussion with Tri-Town about a third party auditor which is now his responsibility to find.

He said he has been working on the Capital Reserve Budget and Warrant articles.

The Hazard Mitigation meeting is tomorrow at 1:00 pm.

He said the NH Municipal Association comes this week for two days.

Mr. Goodine emailed the Board the floodplain maps and there is a meeting set up to discuss.

He said that Lieutenant Dawn Shea will be leaving to join the Pembroke Police Department. They have two openings for officers and are currently accepting applications. Chief Stark said the Supervisor Promotion Process will be presented to the Board shortly.

Mr. Goodine said that Chief Stark also purchased four rifles.

He provided the Board with the latest franchise fees as well as another report from the Professional Appraisal RDRA signing off that they followed the uniform standards.

He provided a copy of the Gatsas Report as well.

Mr. Goodine said the new ambulance is painted and ready to go when they are ready with the Allenstown logo listed on it.

He said there was also a PFAS contract that he provided to the Board.

Other Business

Ms. Goodine said the Planning Board will meet on December 7th and even though they are having an information session, they want to appoint additional members to the Board.

Ms. McKenney said she would like to go to the meeting regarding renovation of the TD Bank in Suncook. She said she will also be attending the Sewer Department meeting tomorrow about the fee changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR, MINUTES AND MANIFESTS

- **Consent Calendar**

Ms. Higham made a Motion to ratify the Consent Calendar dated November 14, 2022. Mr. Klawes seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye

Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Review Minutes:**

- **Non-Public: October 31, 2022, Sessions I, II and III**

Ms. Higham made a Motion to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes dated October 31, 2022, Sessions I, II and III. Mr. Klawes seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald, Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed.

- **Public: October 17, 2022 and October 31, 2022**

The minutes are not yet available for October 17, 2022 or October 31, 2022.

- **Approve Payroll and Accounts Payroll Manifests: ACH Manifest: 1077 and 1078; Check Manifest: 1079; Non-Check Manifest: 1075; and Town P/R Manifest dated 11/3/2022.**

Ms. Higham made a Motion to approve Payroll and Accounts Payroll Manifests: ACH Manifest: 1077 and 1078; Check Manifest: 1079; Non-Check Manifest: 1075; Town P/R Manifest dated 11/3/22. Mr. Klawes seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Non-Public Agenda Items

- **Non-Public Session in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (b)**

Chair McDonald made a Motion that they enter Non-Public Session in accordance with the provisions RSA 91-A:3, II (b) at 8:20 pm. Ms. McKenney seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Keith Klawes made a Motion to return to public session 8:37 pm. Chair McDonald seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair McDonald made a Motion to seal the Non-Public Meeting Minutes as it may adversely affect someone not a member of this Board. Mr. Klawes seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye
Maureen Higham- Aye
Jim Rodger- Aye
Sandy McKenney- Aye
Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Klawes made a Motion to adjourn at 8:38PM. Ms. McKenney seconded the Motion.

A roll call was taken.

Scott McDonald- Aye

Maureen Higham- Aye

Jim Rodger- Aye

Sandy McKenney- Aye

Keith Klawes- Aye

The motion passed unanimously.

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SIGNATURE PAGE

Original Approval:		
SCOTT MCDONALD, Chair		DATE
SANDY MCKENNEY, Vice Chair		DATE
MAUREEN HIGHAM, Member		DATE
KEITH KLAWES, Member		DATE
JIM RODGER, Member		DATE
Amendment Approvals:		
Amendment Description:	Approval:	Date:
	SCOTT MCDONALD, Chair	DATE
	SANDY MCKENNEY, Vice Chair	DATE
	MAUREEN HIGHAM, Member	DATE
	KEITH KLAWES, Member	DATE
	JIM RODGER, Member	DATE