

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
Selectboard Meeting
16 School Street
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275
November 18, 2019

Call to Order

The Allenstown Selectboard Meeting of November 18, 2019 was called to order by Chair Ryan Carter at 6:12 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; Debbie Bender, Finance Director; Trish Caruso, Administration, Human Resources & Welfare

Others present: Fire Chief Paul St. Germain, Michael Frascinella, Kyle Gingras, Plodzik & Sanderson; Sheryl Pratt, Plodzik & Sanderson; Marc Boisvert, Highway

Citizens' Comments

Mr. Frascinella displayed a sample of the banners which the EDC is proposing. He said his committee wants to dress up Allenstown and promote its bears. After reviewing an initial design, he said, they made the background darker and enlarged the seal. He said that the EDC has been looking at purchasing 25 banners at a cost of about \$100 each. Matt Seiler of the Hometown Heroes organization has informed them of a vender from which they can get the hardware at one-half the price. He said that they have their first order from someone who wants to honor his grandfather. Mr. Frascinella said that he has been having conversations with the Bear Brook Park Manager about cutting saplings at the south end of Podunk Road just before the 4-H camp to reveal the vista to the north, and he has noticed that they have cut the saplings.

Public Hearing

- **Purchase of Land Identified as Maps and Lots 114-004 and 115-001 by the Town of Allenstown for a Future Trail (second of two public hearings)**

Mr. Goodine explained that the two parcels are in line with Hooksett at one end and Pembroke at the other end via a trail portion crossing the Suncook River. This is an important piece of the trail, and as Craig Tufts of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission has said, acquiring land and easements is the most difficult part of the trail creation process. He said that the final decision will be made at the December 2, 2019 Selectboard meeting.

Chair Carter opened the Public Hearing on this item at 6:14 pm.

Chair Carter closed the Public Hearing at 6:20 pm.

Regular Agenda

▪ **Audit Presentation**

Mr. Kyle Gingras introduced himself and Ms. Sheryl Pratt as representatives of Plodzik and Sanderson. He first referred to the Independent Auditors Report. He said that Government Activities, Business Activities and the Sewer Department received adverse opinions, due mainly to infrastructure and assets not being identified in all areas.

Ms. Bender said this is a work in progress and they are making progress on it.

Mr. Gingras said that one positive change was moving the Sewer Department finance function to Town Hall. He said that both the Major General Fund and the Aggregate Remaining Fund Information received unmodified opinions. He said that Allenstown added GASB #75 - Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). this year. This involves the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS). He next referred to Schedules #1-5 beginning on page 57. These, he said, are the most helpful for management. Schedule #1 shows Revenue exceeding budget by \$252,057 and Schedule #2 shows Expenses under budget by \$70,651. On page 60, Schedule #3, is the Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB), which is important for the State in terms of setting the tax rate. The beginning UFB was \$2,100,973. Of this, \$56,000 is the amount used to reduce the tax rate. Another \$123,567 was assigned to capital reserve accounts via warrant articles. These are offset by \$252,057, the amount of revenue exceeding budget and the amount of \$70,651 by which expenses were underspent. The key amount from a management standpoint is the \$2,255,930 UFB. Schedules #4 and #5 are the Balance Sheet figures for the year ending 2018. Some adjustments have been made for the difference between general versus GASB accounting, as well as budgeting versus the modified accrual system, mostly because of the 60-day rule for uncollected revenue, typically property tax revenue. The Business Activity, he said, is the Sewer Department.

▪ **Open Plow Truck Bids (2001 F550) and Award Sale**

Chair Carter opened the sealed bids. He said the first bid is from Fiddlers Farm Construction in the amount of \$2,850; the second is from Asian Auto Service in Plaistow in the amount of \$4,567.89; and the final bid is from PS Construction in the amount of \$1,251.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the sale of the open plow truck (2001 F550) to Asian Auto Service in the amount of \$4,567.89. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

▪ **Public Works Garage Doors Update**

Mr. Boisvert stated that he has a price for six windows for each of the two garage doors. At \$50 each, the 12 windows will cost \$600. This, he said, is not in the budget for the doors.

Ms. Higham made a motion to add \$600 for windows to the amount of \$6,920 allocated for Highway Garage Doors, bringing the total to \$7,520. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

▪ **Spring and Fall Cleanup**

Mr. Goodine said that questions have been raised about picking up leaves by Public Works. He said that he suggests having a special schedule for two weeks in the Fall and also in the Spring.

Mr. Boisvert said they want to pick up leaves, but some adjustments have to be made. Sometimes other projects take priority. He said they do not want yard waste in the regular trash because it increases tipping fees.

Ms. McKenney said she disagrees with the dates suggested.

Mr. Goodine said there have also been questions about the hours the dump is open. In particular, the dump closes at 12:30 pm on Saturday, and many residents would like to be able to go to the dump later in the day.

Ms. Caruso said this is not important in the winter months but is a factor for spring and fall cleanup.

Ms. McKenney said they can continue this discussion when they have a new Road Agent.

Mr. Goodine mentioned that Dirt Doctor operates in Pembroke, picking up yard waste at no cost to residents.

Mr. Boisvert said that Dirt Doctor is very particular about what they pick up. They dump the bags on site, and if there is one item which is not yard waste, they will not take it.

Budget Review

- **Town Non-Property Tax Revenue**

Mr. Goodine presented a list of Non-Property Tax Revenue, comparing the 2019 Budget to the 2020 Proposed Budget. He said that the proposed budget is up \$129,400. The two major increases are the \$81,000 from the State aid and \$40,000 in Motor Vehicle Registrations.

- **Fire Department Wage Scale Discussion**

Ms. Bender said that the Fire Department wants to make some adjustments to the wages of a few on-call firefighters. The pay scale is the one approved by the Selectboard. She said that none of the on-call firefighters got a raise in April of 2019. This action is to update certifications and times of employment.

Chief St. Germain said that Chief Murray attempted to update pay rates in 2017, but this adjustment is needed to place employees where they should be on the scale.

Ms. McKenney said that this should be discussed in non-public session.

Mr. Goodine and Chair Carter agreed to pursue this in non-public session later in the meeting.

Health and Dental Insurance Agreement

Mr. Goodine said that the new contract was received this week. At the October 23rd meeting, he said, they discussed a new option for early retirees, which would allow them to stay in the health plan even if they move out of the state. They would be required to pay 100% of the cost. He said this needs to be signed by the Chair.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Medical and Dental coverage rate for 2020 per the contract to be signed by the Selectboard Chair. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- **2019 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Certificate**

Mr. Goodine announced the equalization rate of 87.7%. The rate is calculated based on 86 valid sales. When the market (sale) prices are higher than assessed value, the equalization rate is less than 100%; when the market (sale) prices are lower than assessed value, the rate is over 100%. The ideal rate is 100%.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the 2019 equalization rate. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- **Community Center Sink in Daycare**

Mr. Goodine presented a copy of the plan for the sink, showing its placement in relation to the lockers and the existing bathroom.

Ms. Higham made a motion to allow adding a sink to the Boys and Girls Club Preschool Classroom, with the work to be done by a licensed plumber. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Agera Bankruptcy and Gas Contract

Mr. Goodine reported that Agera Energy is filing for bankruptcy and terminating service to its customers, including Allenstown public buildings. He said the town has been paying 0.6116 cents per BTU with Agera and prices are going up. He has consulted with an organization which collects pricing and assists with shopping for the best price. The town has an opportunity to enter a six-month contract for 0.725 cents or a 12-month contract for 0.7 cents. Although the six-month contract is more expensive, he said, they would probably be able to negotiate a lower price in the spring, as compared with next fall.

Chair Carter said demand is lower in the spring and that would be a good time to negotiate a contract.

The consensus of the Selectboard was to accept the six-month contract for now.

Appointment of Checklist Supervisor

Ms. Higham made a motion to appoint Irene Boisvert as a Supervisor of the Checklist, term ending March 10, 2020. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Goodine said that he and Mr. Monahan of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission recently talked with Allenstown Aggregate regarding their clean-up contract. Although they haven't gotten rid of all of the coal ash, they have made considerable progress.

Mr. Goodine reported that the roof replacement for the Old Allenstown Meeting House was completed yesterday.

Mr. Goodine said that the PSNH case is now in trial.

Mr. Goodine reported that he, Ms. Bender and Ms. Caruso recently attended the NHMA Convention in Manchester. He attended a presentation on Community Choice Aggregation, which advocates pooling for electrical energy services in order to get better rates. Freedom is the organization which will meet with them at no cost.

Mr. Goodine said that the CIP Committee is ramping up. Although a Selectboard representative is not required, he suggested that Ms. McKenney might serve as a second Planning Board representative and thus be there on behalf of the Selectboard as well.

Other Business

Ms. McKenney said that they should be getting prices for a new furnace.

Ms. McKenney asked about the property on Bartlett Street where the owner has been asked to remove blocks which are in the right-of-way.

Mr. Goodine said that the work is partially done, and the Highway Department may have to help with some of it.

Consent Calendar, Minutes and Manifests

Mr. Goodine explained the Consent Calendar item on PFAS monitoring. At the NHMA convention, he attended a presentation on this subject, and while monitoring expenses are less this year, \$4400, an amount of \$2,550 is needed for additional testing. He warned that more testing will need to be done in the future. He added that they would pull the Fire Department Wage Scale item from the Consent Agenda to discuss it in non-public session.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minutes of Non-Public Session I of the November 4, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minutes of Non-Public Session II of the November 4, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the minutes of the Public Session of the November 4, 2019 meeting. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the appointment of Brian Arsenaault as Code Enforcement Officer and Deputy Building Inspector, effective retroactively to November 4, 2019. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Payroll and Accounts Payable Manifests listed on the November 20, 2019 agenda. Ms. Higham seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Non-Public Agenda Items

Ms. Higham made a motion to enter Non-Public Session at 8:10 pm in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Ms. McKenney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: Ms. Higham – aye; Ms. McKenney – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. Higham made a motion to return to Public Session at 9:07 pm. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: Ms. Higham – aye; Ms. McKenney – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. McKenney made a motion to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session as they might adversely affect someone not a member of this Board. Ms. Higham seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: Ms. Higham – aye; Ms. McKenney – aye; Mr. Carter – aye.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the hiring of John Keller and Keith Lambert by the Allenstown Fire Department, both effective December 1, 2019 at an hourly rate of \$18.83. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract included therein. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Higham made a motion to adjourn at 9:10 pm. Ms. McKenney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

DRAFT

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
 SELECTBOARD
 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18, 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