



Office of Board of Selectmen

143 Main Street, P.O. Box 310, Belmont, New Hampshire 03220-0310
Telephone: (603) 267-8300 Fax: (603) 267-8327

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill, Tioga Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude "Sonny" Patten, Jr., Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Police Captain Stephen Akerstrom, Town Planner Karen Santoro, TC/TC Jennifer Cashman, Fire Chief Deb Black, Assistant Fire Chief Donald Pickowicz, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, DPW Assistant Director Brian Jackes, Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley and Library Director Eileen Gilbert. Also present were SAU 80 School Superintendent Mike Tursi and SAU 80 Director of Building & Grounds Steve Dalzell. Via Zoom was Parks & Rec Director Danielle St. Onge and SAU 80 Systems Engineer Jim Bureau.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review & Approve Minutes – Non-Public & Public 02/07/2024:

Selectman Jon Pike moved the minutes of the non-public meeting held on February 7, 2024 as written; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the public meeting held on February 7, 2024 as written; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Public Hearing – Ambulance/Equipment Special Revenue Fund:

Chairman Ruth Mooney stated this hearing is to take public comment, in accordance with RSA 31:95-c, on changing the purpose of the Special Revenue Fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund. To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken on Article 7 at the 1999 Annual Meeting to restrict all revenues from ambulance billings to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund to instead restrict all but the first \$124,500 of revenues from ambulance billings received during the 2024 budgetary year to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund. The first \$124,500 of revenues from ambulance billings will be deposited in the Town's General Fund to defray the cost items identified below. This restriction shall only be effective for the 2024 budgetary year.

Training Expenses \$3,000
Medical & Supply Expenses \$30,000
Ambulance Billing Fees \$20,000
Overtime \$40,000
Telephone \$2,000

Conferences & Dues \$1,500
Office Expense \$12,000
Vehicle Repair & Parts \$8,000
Fuel \$8,000

Please note that this Public Hearing is only necessary for this article, and this is something that we have to do every year by law because it is a Special Revenue Fund. The purpose to which we are allocating these funds is directly for the Fire Department and fall within the purpose of the special revenue fund. We are not defraying funds to any other purpose or department fund.

Chairman Ruth Mooney opened the Public Hearing at 10:04 am.

There being no public comment, the Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 10:05 am.

New Business:

TAC Alternate Appointment – Brian Jackes:

TA Alicia Jipson stated this is a housekeeping item. Brian Jackes already serves on the Transportation Advisory Committee, but each appointment is only good for two years. The new appointment would start April 4, 2024.

Selectman Pike moved to reappoint Brian Jackes to serve as the Belmont representative on the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for a two-year term to expire April 2026; seconded by Selectman Sharon Ciampi. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Emergency Plan – Town Hall:

Town Planner Karen Santoro has been working on an Emergency Plan for Town Hall. We have many new people in the building and a basic emergency action plan is important. She worked with the Fire Department and Police Department on an evacuation plan. The document is about 12 pages and the template could be used for other Town buildings. The plan includes phone numbers for who to call for different types of emergencies, who will be in charge of the checklist and attendance, where is the AED located, etc. The document will be distributed to each department shortly. Selectman Pike recommended each Town Hall employee receive a copy of the document and sign a statement that they have read and understand the document to be kept on file.

Mill Bell Tower Light Quote:

Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden reported the lights have not been working for about 6-7 years. An inspection determined they were rusted out. It would be nice to see it lit up with other town improvements. There is a quote for two LED lights, which will be pennies to run, and a photocell instead of a traditional timer. The quote was lower than expected.

Selectman Claude Patten moved to accept the quote from Gove Electric in the amount of \$540 and to move forward with the Mill Bell Tower Light replacement; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

High School Generator:

SAU 80 School Superintendent Mike Tursi and SAU 80 Director of Building & Grounds Steve Dalzell requested that the Board consider splitting the cost of a new replacement generator at Belmont High School, because it is the location of the Town's Emergency Operations Center. It is going to need replacement sooner than they expected because parts are very difficult to find, or can no longer be purchased. They have tried to obtain two grants through the State and one through FEMA but all were denied. Superintendent Tursi does not believe the generator will make another winter season so this is an immediate need. With the propane hookup and tanks already in place, the cost is approximately \$60,000 and the district would like the Town to pay 50%. The Board asked about their propane costs and Superintendent Tursi stated they are around \$2 per gallon but will provide the information to TA Jipson. Chairman Mooney asked if each school has a generator. The High School and Memorial Building have generators. There was discussion about use of the generator for emergency shelter purposes versus to run the school. Superintendent Tursi stated the emergency shelter is the priority. Chairman Mooney explained our budget process for 2024 is already set. Superintendent Tursi recommended taking funds from the unreserved fund balance, which is what the district plans to do. TA Jipson believes there would need to be a warrant article for the Town to use funds that way. Selectman Pike asked for a copy of the generator quote to compare to quotes the Town has received for the Mill building generator. TA Jipson will look into how the unreserved fund balance can and cannot be used. Superintendent Tursi said the school only needs to hold a public hearing. Selectman Travis O'Hara recommended speaking with our emergency management people and doing some research. General Assistance Director Donna Cilley asked why the focus on the generator is for use as the emergency shelter and not on what could happen to the building if there was no power for an extended period during cold temperatures. She also mentioned that years ago there was supposed to be a capital plan for windows, roofs and generators with money put away each year. Superintendent Tursi said there is a Capital Improvement Plan, but the generator has not been on the plan. Selectman Ciampi asked for clarification on the backup plan if something goes wrong with the high school generator. There is a generator at the Memorial Building where people could be housed to keep warm, but there are no showers or cafeteria.

TC/TC Delinquent Notices:

TC/TC Jennifer Cashman gave the Board an update on unpaid account balances. There is about \$1,400,000 in unpaid taxes and \$100,000 in unpaid water and sewer. The reminder notices have prompted some to make payments, but others will need to be liened on May 16th. Notices will go out on April 12th.

Winni River Basin – Route 140 Force Main Analysis:

DPW Director Craig Clairmont explained they are proposing to replace the whole line but the Town thinks some of it should be slip lined, and it should be attacked first in the section that has had the most problems. The Town should go on the offense or we could have a \$9,000,000 bill. Some of the problems are from increased traffic and how the original line was installed, as well as the soils the pipe lays in. We need to do our due diligence and be proactive. There is a risk but we need to ask questions and get more information. It was the consensus of the Board to start fighting and do whatever is possible to correct the problem in an affordable way. Selectman O’Hara asked for the full analysis report and TA Jipson said we are still waiting for it. Chairman Mooney said she tries to attend these meetings to stay informed.

Other New Business:

Road Postings:

DPW Director Clairmont said the roads will be posted on Monday with an ad going in the newspaper Thursday and Friday. He has been calling the local pits, loggers and others that could be affected by the postings. Other towns should also be posting Monday as well.

LiveStream for Broadcast meetings - LRPA:

In May 2024, the LiveStream program that Lakes Region Public Access (LRPA) currently uses is being bought out by another company. LRPA will still broadcast our meetings but we will no longer have the LiveStream option. There are three options for the Town: use YouTube to stream meetings, which is free and allows us to retain our copyright but YouTube could use our videos; use Streamhoster, which is a close fit to LiveStream but there are limitations for storage and the annual cost is \$1,400; or use Vimeo, who bought out LiveStream, which will be an annual cost of \$1,600-\$2,000. There would also be a cost to migrate all of our past recordings from 2016 until now, to a new platform. That cost is about \$1,000. Selectman O’Hara stated they use YouTube for the County. The school also uses YouTube. TA Jipson said we could still continue to use Zoom as we are now, but the LiveStream hardware would need to be reformatted at a minimal cost to transition to YouTube.

Selectman O’Hara moved to proceed with YouTube for streaming meetings and to spend the estimated cost of \$1,000 to migrate our existing videos to YouTube; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Candidates’ Night:

The Belmont High School Honor Society will be hosting Candidates’ Night on March 5th, 2024 at 5 pm in the BHS Cafeteria. The Belmont Board of Selectmen, Canterbury Board of Selectmen and school board candidates are invited to attend.

Old Business:

Town Public Auction – 4 Leisure Lane:

The auction for this parcel of land will take place on Friday, March 8th, on site, at 2 pm. Information is available on the Town website and there are some hard copies available at Town Hall.

Mountain Lake Update:

TA Jipson, Town Planner Santoro and DPW Director Clairmont have reviewed a new draft of the intermunicipal agreement for this project with homes in Belmont and Laconia. There is an issue with sidewalk maintenance. For the Town of Belmont to load up our tractor and move it out to maintain this sidewalk is not feasible. Laconia requires sidewalks, and in 2006 when this was approved, the Town of Belmont included sidewalks in the approved plan. In order to remove the sidewalks an amendment would need to be made to the plan and they would have to meet current subdivision regulations. Belmont DPW has been working with Laconia on some equipment swaps and proposes to plow the Mountain Lake roads if Laconia plows all of the sidewalks. There will be a meeting on Friday to discuss the plan. It was the consensus of the Board that TA Jipson and DPW Director Clairmont work out the final details of the intermunicipal agreement with the City of Laconia for the Mountain Lake Subdivision.

Other Old Business:

Comcast Status Belmont:

TA Jipson said Comcast does not have an exact completion date for Belmont, but expects to have all of the infrastructure complete later this summer.

Public Comment: None

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 10:00 am.

Non-Public:

Selectman O'Hara moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II b & d at 11:08 am; seconded by Selectman Pike. Roll Call 1: J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Those present and voting were Chairman Ruth Mooney and Selectmen Jon Pike, Claude Patten, Jr., Travis O'Hara, and Sharon Ciampi. Also present were TA Alicia Jipson, Town Planner Karen Santoro and Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman.

Building Inspector/CEO:

There were 5 applicants for the position but one withdrew and one cancelled his interview. Town Planner Santoro briefed the Board on the candidates and then provided a hiring recommendation.

Selectman Pike moved to approve the Building Inspector/CEO candidate recommended by Town Planner Santoro and TA Jipson; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 2: S. Ciampi – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).

Town Planner Santoro left the meeting at 11:24 am.

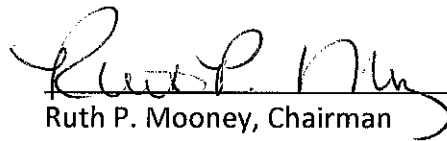
The Board discussed the 4 Leisure Lane auction and the open Finance Clerk position.

Chairman Mooney moved to exit non-public session at 11:49 am seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 4: T. O'Hara – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, S. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

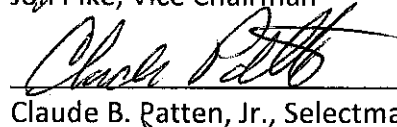
Selectman Pike moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session because it could render a proposed action ineffective; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 5: S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

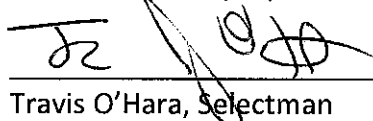
Adjournment:

Chairman Mooney moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 am; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call 6: S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed (5-0).


Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman


Jon Pike, Vice Chairman


Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman


Travis O'Hara, Selectman


Sharon Ciampi, Selectman