

**Town of Auburn  
Board of Selectmen  
Town Hall  
Stritch Meeting Room  
December 18, 2023  
Approved Minutes  
7:00 PM**

**Selectmen Present:** Keith Leclair, Michael Rolfe and Tom Carroll

**Others Present:** Police Chief Ray Pelton, Tax Collector Susan Jenkins, Kevin Manning, Mike DiPietro, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary and persons unknown to the minute taker

### **I. Call to Order**

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **II. Public Comments**

Mr. Leclair asked if there were any comments from the public at 7:00 PM.

(unidentified) asked about the 12 Petitioned Warrant Articles concerning the zoning ordinance. Town Administrator Sterndale noted that the Selectmen's only role is to send them to the Planning Board and validate the legality, enforceability, language, and signatures of the registered voters which will happen over the next few weeks. The Town Attorney has cleared them for submission to the Planning Board. The Planning Board would hold a public hearing in January. She asked about their effect on subdivisions who had already applied to the Planning Board and not been approved yet. Mr. Sterndale explained there is a gray area on what would trigger a full blown application governed by rules the application were submitted under and it was best to verify that with the Planning Board.

Kevin Manning expressed concerns about the voting machines being purchased by the Town. Mr. Leclair indicated the Town had old machines which need replacing but they can only use machines approved by the state. Mr. Leclair noted that the Selectmen had motioned at a previous meeting to purchase the Old Dominion machines, only if they were approved by the state however it is uncertain if the approval will come in time for the November election. He noted alternatives could be considered but there were only two, the other being Loading Works, and one is closer to approval than the other. Mr. DiPietro noted they were just bubble counters not electronic voting machines.

### **III. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Leclair read out loud the Consent Agenda for the week of December 18, 2023 which included a Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$86,700.61 and 12 Petitioned Warrant Articles to amend the Auburn Zoning Ordinance to submit to the Planning Board.

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the Consent Agenda dated December 18, 2023. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.***

#### **IV. Manifests**

#### **VI. New Business**

Mr. Sterndale reported that Engine Two was sideswiped on Pingree Hill a couple of hours ago and sustained minor damage. There were no injuries. The vehicle that hit it left the scene without stopping.

Mr. Sterndale noted abatement requests would be coming to the Selectmen soon. Mr. Leclair requested they be emailed as individual packages with the application information in the subject line.

#### **VII. Old Business**

##### **A. 2024 Budget**

##### **i. Default Budget**

Town Administrator Sterndale presented the proposed Default Budget report to be submitted to DRA for the March warrant. He explained that in the event the proposed operating budget were not to pass, this default budget would take place less certain items which are removed such as one-time expenses. A new budget would be made from it and the Selectmen would have the responsibility to approve and sign the report. He noted that the proposed FY 2024 budget was initially increased by 6% and after reductions to certain line items made by the Selectmen, the increase was 3.2%.

##### **ii. Warrant Articles**

Town Administrator Sterndale indicated that he added the library concept.

Mr. Sterndale explained that the Police Union Contract has been a repeating annual expense for the last two years of five. The projected cost is \$24,454 annually. He noted that the five-year total could be done in total, for the remaining three years with a projected cost of \$76,000. Mr. Leclair asked if he had talked to the Police Union and noted he would have to let them know of the change. The Board considered it and agreed to continue it annually.

Mr. Sterndale reported the remaining warrants to be decided upon were the library and the elderly exemption. The deadline for petitions is January 9<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the Dominion voting machines are still pending state certification and are not going to be ready until after January 2024. As they won't be under

contract there will be no way to encumber the funds but there may be some funding for November.

Mr. Leclair reported that he ran both by the Budget Committee at their last meeting on Thursday. The Committee agreed with option one for the elderly exemption. Mr. Rolfe noted it would need to be run by Herb Tardiff the resident who proposed the additional relief to the seniors. Mr. Sterndale noted he would draft it and run it by Mr. Tardiff.

Mr. Leclair reported that the Committee did not feel good about the fundraising piece for the library but agreed it should be a joint project with Parks & Recreation with a community center.

Mr. Sterndale asked the Board if they would like to do multiple warrant articles or lump some of them together. Mr. Sterndale noted there would be a lot of zoning articles coming. He recommended the operating budget go first. The Board agreed the operating budget would go first and the warrant articles would be separate from each other.

Mr. Sterndale noted that the School would go first this year at Deliberative Session. He will ask the Town Attorney to be available that day.

#### **B. Police Vehicle**

Chief Pelton asked if the invoice for the new police cruiser came in and the Selectmen indicated the invoice came in on Friday and was approved to be paid for with this year's funds.

#### **C. Full-Time Firefighters**

Mr. Sterndale reported that the Town had four full-time firefighters for the first time however that lasted only nine days as the last hire resigned for medical reasons. There may be an internal candidate for that fourth position.

### **VIII. Committee Reports**

Mr. Rolfe reported that the Planning Board met and had an informal with William Dodge concerning potential Class VI building on Prescott Lane, and Maine Drilling and Blasting came in concerning their storage yard. Keach Nordstrom presented a lot line adjustment with Russ Sullivan concerning the Tanglewood project. Mr. Carroll asked about the timeline and he indicated there was no timeline yet. The application is not approved yet. He noted they discussed surety.

Mr. Leclair reported that the Budget Committee met at Auburn Village School on Thursday to review their budget. Mr. Sterndale provided a proposed meeting schedule for the remaining budget meetings, together with date of Presidential Primary on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, Deliberative Session on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and Town Meeting on March 12, 2024.

## IX. Minutes

### A. December 11, 2023 Public & Non-Public Meeting Minutes

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the December 11, 2023 public and non-public meeting minutes, Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.***

### B. Consideration of Unsealing Non-Public Meeting Minutes

- i. September 13, 2023
- ii. October 18, 2023
- iii. December 6, 2023

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to leave the minutes of the non-public minutes unsealed, as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.***

**X. Non-public Session 91-A:3(II)(d)** *Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.*

***By Roll Call, Mr. Leclair motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(d). Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, Mr. Leclair voted aye, Mr. Rolfe voted aye, and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed 3-0-0.***

The meeting room was closed to the public at 7:43 PM.

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to come out of non-public session. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.***

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 7:55 PM.

***By Roll Call vote, Mr. Leclair motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Leclair voted aye, Mr. Rolfe voted aye, and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.***

## XI. Adjournment

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 PM. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary