

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
September 14, 2020
Minutes
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Todd Bedard and Michael Rolfe

Others Present: Road Agent Michael Dross, Linda Dross, Dale Philips, Amy Lachance, Police Chief Ray Pelton, Jerry Diorio, James Pidhurney, James Fitzgerald, Al Eaton, Jill Dross, Shawn Wheeler, James Fitzgerald, Jr., Carlene Fitzgerald, Town Administrator William Herman and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of Payroll Manifest for the Week of August 31, 2020 – \$49,709.13

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest for the week of August 31, 2020 in the amount of \$49,709.13. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest for the Week of September 7, 2020 - \$1,058,347.25

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of September 7, 2020 in the amount of \$1,058,347.25. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Payroll Manifest for the Week of September 14, 2020 - \$53,832.98

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest for the week of September 14, 2020 in the amount of \$53,832.98. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of September 14, 2020 – \$850.00

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of September 14, 2020 in the amount of \$850.00. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda for the Week of September 14, 2020

Mr. Leclair read out loud the Consent Agenda for the Week of September 14, 2020 some of which included: a Notice of Intent to Cut Wood, a Notice of Intent to Excavate, Correspondence – Clearing of blockage from Town road drainage system, Deed – Auburn Village Cemetery, Tax Collector Warrant, Annual Reporting NHDORA MS-1 (2020) and MS-535 (2020) and four (4) Pistol/Revolver Licenses.

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for the week of September 14, 2020. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Appointments with the Board

Jerry Diorio & James Pidhurney – Pingree Hill Road Drainage Project

Mr. Diorio sent an email to the Board on August 24, 2020 in which he listed concerns he has about the Pingree Hill Drainage Project. Mr. Diorio noted the main item which he felt was a safety concern was the use of C-throat catch basins in this neighborhood. Mr. Diorio felt these structures pose an extreme hazard to children and pets and they shouldn't be used.

Mr. Diorio provided pictures of the c-throat catch basins and an enlarged photo of the opening. Mr. Pidhurney displayed a large cardboard cutting which displayed the size of the opening. The purpose of the basin is to collect leaves, water, sticks and debris. Mr. Diorio opined another more suitable drainage system could be utilized, although it would be required to be cleaned out a couple of times per year. Mr. Pidhurney indicated a grate could be used to cover the opening.

Shawn Wheeler of 417 Bunker Hill Road asked if these basins were common or unique to the area?

James Fitzgerald of 625 Pingree Hill Road noted there were always skunks falling into drains and other animals trying to dig them out and asked if there were construction plans?

Dan Tatem of Stantec, the Town's engineer, noted he has worked with Road Agent Dross for 14 years. The previous Selectmen had investigated the reconstruction process including a cost analysis and proved Mr. Dross' work efforts which they found superior in quality and price. Moving forward with full engineered construction plans and processes would raise the cost of the work which would translate to increased taxes to involve the engineers further which does not make sense because of the successful history. If there were problems, failures or injuries, he was certain the Town would have already made a change in process. To design and bid out the road work would result in the low-bid industry standard award, and likely change orders that would increase the project costs.

James Fitzgerald, Jr., of 619 Pingree Hill Road asked if residents could take measures, referencing incidents where construction cones were removed after being placed. Mr. Leclair indicated he would prefer residents call or text the Road Agent even if it is just to let him know what has happened and been done.

Mr. Leclair indicated he and Mr. Bedard separately had visited the site and had recommended a meeting with representatives of Stantec and the Road Agent for input and feedback prior to coming before the Board was the appropriate step.

Mr. Leclair indicated he checked with other communities and these are a common design used throughout the state. There are almost 100 here in Auburn. Mr. Leclair had Mr. Tatem contact the manufacturer to see if there were any accidents and found zero instances. Mr. Leclair noted he hoped they could provide some data, that is what drives this. Throughout the country there are millions and we could not find a single instance of an animal or person injured. The basins serve a purpose so we do not have drainage issues and they work.

Mr. Bedard added he has experience with them on his street and his children are around them and near the bus stop. He asked his 12-year old son if he could figure out how to get into it and

he could not. Mr. Bedard noted he trusts the engineering and people putting them in and would like to say put something different in but couldn't find anything that works as well.

Road Agent Dross indicated the basins deal with flood problems and down pours so that roads are not washed out and with grates or a smaller opening would be a constant issue to clean out. He explained the expense that would be involved to draw plans and have to then address additional costs that would be incurred as existing unsuitable materials are dealt with on the project that would not initially be known when the road plans are prepared..

Mr. Leclair indicated there are a couple of ways for the Town to do road work. The Town decided on a Road Agent and that can only be changed by Town vote. Mr. Leclair indicated the Board has looked at 15 years of history of projects overseen by Mr. Dross and his work has been very good and proved out over time with virtually no issues.

Amy Lachance & Chief Pelton – “Trunk or Treat” and Halloween “Trick or Treat”

Mrs. Lachance proposed a Halloween “Trunk or Treat” event from 6 PM to 8 PM as a drive-thru trick or treat at the Safety Complex for Auburn residents only. They are requesting a portion of Eaton Hill Road be closed from 5 PM to 9 PM for this activity and the Board agreed with that request. Mr. Leclair indicated emergency vehicles would need to be able to get in and out.

Chief Pelton expressed concerns with a small spike in COVID cases. He indicated at this point there has been no guidance from the State concerning “Trick or Treat” activities in general, so he wanted to wait a few more weeks before deciding what happens for “Trick or Treat”. Mrs. Lachance agree to assist in posting information on the Town website and various community Facebook pages webpage if cases were to continue to rise to an extent that would cancel the event. She will also work to include a reference in the October Town Crier.

Chief Pelton indicated a spooky walk is being organized by the Auburn Village School PTA to be held at Wayne Eddows.

Town Response to Covid-19 and State of Emergency Declaration

General Update on Town Issues

Chief Pelton indicated there are four new cases and one officer has been quarantined due to an exposure. He indicated the school reopening went well and there is plenty of PPE.

GOFERR and Elections Funding – CARES Act

Mr. Herman indicated the Town has timely submitted for the third reimbursement period and anticipates the Town will receive the \$59,750 balance of the Town's allotment of CARES Act funds. He felt the Town would know within a week or two.

Mr. Herman noted he also anticipates approximately \$3,500 from funding available through the Secretary of State's office due to the additional absentee ballots sent out and cast during the September State Primary election.

New Business

Camera System – Eddows Recreational Field

The Board discussed locations for the cameras. Mrs. Lachance recommended moving the dumpster to open a more visible coverage area for the camera system. An additional camera

will be added at a cost of \$1,083.93, bringing the project total to \$5,072.87. Mr. Bedard noted signage will serve as an additional deterrent.

NHDES Recommendation for Municipal-wide Lawn Watering Restrictions

Mr. Herman provided communications from the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) asking municipalities to adopt an ordinance to restrict water usage in private wells for things like watering lawns and washing cars during the declared drought. The Board was not in favor of proposing such an ordinance.

HealthTrust FY2020 Return of Surplus

Mr. Herman indicated HealthTrust would be returning a surplus of \$18,500 for health insurance, dental and short-term disability. The Finance Office will work to pro-rate the funds amongst the covered employees, retirees, Cobra participant and the Town, all of whom paid portions of the premium costs.

New Hampshire 10 Miler Road Race – August 28, 2021

Millennium Running wrote to schedule its road race for next year on August 28, 2021. Chief Pelton noted this year's race went well with 15-minute start intervals which resulted in no road closures. Next year will likely return to the regular format. The Selectmen had no objections to the request and asked the Police Department to continue to work with the organizers.

Federal Allowance of Deferment of Payroll Taxes

Mr. Herman provided the Board with information on the President's Executive Order which allows employers to defer employee payroll taxes from September 1 to December 31, 2020. The Board was not in favor of implementing this process as the employees have to pay this back as a lump sum which could result in a hardship or the employer may have to cover both employee and employer costs.

Old Business

Insulation Project – Safety Complex

Mr. Leclair indicated Jim Enquist from J.E. Painting Plus went up to the attic of the Safety Complex to see if the handling unit could be boxed in and noted it was not possible to get anything larger than a 2x6 in there, let alone a sheet of plywood. Mr. Rolfe will reach out to Quality Insulation for a review and price quotation.

Update on Sale of Surplus Vehicles

Mr. Herman noted the sale of the second Ford Interceptor at auction had not been completed and it was re-auctioned on September 9th to a party for \$6,000. He recommended if this sale is not completed, the Town should place it for sale in the October 22nd State auction.

LED Street Light Conversion Project – Bid Canvas Report

Mr. Herman provided two proposals that were received as a result of the request for proposals issued for the LED streetlight conversion project as of the September 9th deadline.

Mr. Bedard noted he will be working in Dover this week and can stop in at Affinity and look at the designs. Mr. Leclair noted he would like to know locations where their products are in operation so he can see a running sample.

Town Hall Tree Removal/Replacement

Mr. Herman provided an estimate for the removal and replacement of the tree and stump in front of Town Hall for \$3,800. The cost of replacement with a 3" caliper tree including installation is \$675.

Road Agent Dross indicated he could get the bucket truck for the day for \$1,325 and need a chipper and stump grinder. Mr. Bedard noted \$675 is reasonable for the replacement tree and installation.

Mr. Leclair noted the new tree could be offset from the center of the property so the roots will not get into the septic and potentially some additional shrubs could be planted out front. The funds could come from the 175th Anniversary fund.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to authorize Road Agent Dross to facilitate the removal of the old tree and stump in front of Town Hall as proposed and authorize replacement with a 3" diameter sugar maple at a cost of \$675 to come from the 175th Anniversary Fund. Mr. Bedard seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Recreation Storage Building

Mr. Herman reported it appears the Town will be receiving the State Revenue Sharing funds in October that were dedicated to the building of a Recreation storage building. He indicated there are no plans to act on, the project had only been verbalized among the Board members. Mr. Rolfe noted he will stake out a 20'x40' area after the E-Waste event on September 26th. The next step would be to pour the concrete base. Mr. Leclair noted the structure could have three interior bays separated by chain link so it could be used by Parks & Recreation, Police & Fire to do away with their storage unit costs. The exterior should be in keeping with the nearby Safety Complex. Mr. Bedard noted there should be a parking pad for winter access.

Report/Comments of Ex-officio Board Representatives

Mr. Rolfe indicated the Planning Board met and approved the parking area expansion at the Longmeadow Church and had a conceptual review with Matt Scott of HQ Properties for its third phase of commercial storage buildings.

Mr. Bedard noted Highway Safety will reconvene on Wednesday evening.

Mr. Leclair noted the Budget Committee will begin meeting in a month or so, in person.

Other Business

Mr. Bedard asked when the Town Hall would be power washed? Mr. Herman will reach out to the contractor to confirm a date.

Mrs. Lachance reported she received one resume in response to the advertisement for a facilities manager and will repost in the Town Crier's October 9th edition.

Mr. Leclair indicated a letter is going out concerning a Ledgewood Drive catch basin which was blocked with rocks. They will have until September 21st to remove the blockage, or the Town will have to take further action. He indicated if the Town must go out to do the work, there will be a bill to the property owner for it. Road Agent Dross indicated if no action is taken, the system will begin to eat its way back to the neighbor's driveway.

Next Meeting/Events

Saturday, September 26, 2020 – E-Waste Collection Event – 9 AM to 2 PM

Monday, September 28, 2020 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

Minutes

- August 24, 2020 Public Meeting

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2020 Meeting. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (b)

Employee Performance Review/Compensation of a public employee

Mr. Leclair motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) & (b). Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken – Mr. Leclair – aye, Mr. Bedard – aye and Mr. Rolfe – aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:31 PM.

Mr. Leclair motioned to come out of non-public session at 8:55 PM. Mr. Bedard seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leclair motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Mr. Bedard seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Mr. Bedard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 PM. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer,
Recording Secretary