

**Town of Auburn  
Board of Selectmen  
April 19, 2021  
Minutes  
7:00 PM**

**Selectmen Present:** Keith Leclair, Todd Bedard and Michael Rolfe

**Others Present:** Jacqueline Ireland, Chris Richards, Jennifer Strabone, Police Sergeant James Huard, Michael DiPietro, Fire Chief Michael Williams, Deputy Fire Chief Bob Seling, Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance, Tax Collector Sue Jenkins, Town Administrator William Herman and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

**Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 6:59 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Payroll Manifest for the Week of April 12, 2021 - \$72,441.28**

*Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest for the week of April 12, 2021 in the amount of \$72,441.28. 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 April 19, 2021 - \$60,526.59**

*Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of April 19, 2021 in the amount of \$60,526.59. 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 April 19, 2021 - \$64,092.12**

*Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of April 19, 2021 in the amount of \$64,092.12. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained, Mr. Leclair voted aye, and Mr. Bedard voted aye. The motion passed 2-0-1.*

**Approval of Consent Agenda for the week of April 19, 2021**

Mr. Leclair read out loud and provided for inspection a copy of the Consent Agenda for the week of April 19, 2021 some of which included: a Notice of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber, an Abatement/Refund Request, two (2) Tax Collector's Warrant/Yield Taxes, one (1) Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed and four (4) pistol/revolver licenses.

*Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for the week of April 19, 2021. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.*

## **Appointments with the Board**

### **Jacqueline Ireland, 386 Spofford Road – Property Assessment and Tax Lien Issue**

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a copy of a letter received on March 24, 2021 from Ms. J Ireland concerning the tax assessment and correction for 386 Spofford Road (Tax Map #4, Lot #2) together with a copy of the billing statement and the Town's response dated April 2, 2021 and a copy of Mr. Herman's Memorandum dated April 2, 2021 instructing the reimbursement of overpayment of \$1,448 to the property owner after demonstrating the amount of acreage was 3.06 acres rather than the 4.95 acres being assessed. Tax Collector Sue Jenkins calculated the \$6,300 value reduction for the property for tax years 2009 through 2020 which determined the amount of the overpayment.

Ms. Ireland expressed concerns after receiving a notice of pending tax lien and noted the Town records were in error for at least 10 years, which was confirmed by email of November 20, 2020 by the Planning Department. Ms. Ireland emailed in December why she felt the abatement process was not appropriate in this case. Mr. Herman indicated in New Hampshire the only way to address such an issue is through the tax abatement statutes and this is not a Town requirement or process, but one which all municipalities must follow by state statute.

Ms. Ireland indicated she received the Town's refund check dated April 7, 2021 in the amount of \$1,448. which she has not yet cashed. Ms. Ireland stated she does not believe she should be charged interest and costs on taxes she does not believe she owes. Chris Richards noted the bill has been wrong for 10 years. Ms. Ireland noted the abatement process would only cover one year.

Tax Collector Sue Jenkins indicated the amount owed is \$1,489 as of December 14, 2020. If Ms. Ireland were to apply the refund toward the amount owed, the difference is \$110 due.

Mr. Leclair noted the standard process is to file an abatement and go back one tax year, but the Town decided to go back ten. Mr. Herman noted the error concerned the acreage of the abutting property, one taxpayer overpaid and one underpaid. Mr. Leclair asked if the abutting property owner would be billed for the underpayment and Mr. Herman indicated the state statute does not allow a municipality to go back due to an "under" assessment, so they will not be billed until this year's assessment and not for prior years. Mr. Richards stated the error is geographical. Mr. Herman noted it is an error in land value. Mrs. Jenkins indicated a difference of approximately four acres.

Mr. Bedard clarified that the disputed amount is \$41.14 in interest and \$19.50 in costs and Ms. Ireland indicated in the affirmative.

Mr. Leclair asked Mr. Herman if there were any other similar incidents that caused the Town to go back so far, and Mr. Herman stated he did not know of any in the 15 years he has been in Auburn.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to abate the \$60.64 in charges for interest and costs for Tax Map #4, Lot #2 assessed on the second half of 2020 bill. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion.***

Mr. Rolfe noted he was sticking with the \$1,550 owed. He felt the Town had already done more than it had to in refunding what it had to the taxpayer.

Mr. Leclair asked Ms. Ireland if she had been told and understood the process by statute was the taxpayer file an abatement request after paying the tax bill. She indicated she was told and understood that, but she believed it would restrict the credit she felt she was due. Mr. Leclair agreed with Mr. Rolfe that the Town must follow the state statute.

***A vote was taken Mr. Bedard voted aye, Mr. Leclair voted nay and Mr. Rolfe voted nay. The motion failed 1-2-0.***

### **Amy Lachance and Jennifer Strabone – Parks & Recreation Commission**

Mrs. Lachance indicated Patricia Rousseau had resigned from the Parks & Recreation Commission and Ms. Strabone has applied to fill that vacancy. Ms. Strabone is currently a third grade teacher at the Auburn Village School and has three children.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to accept, with regret, the resignation of Patricia Rousseau from the Parks & Recreation Commission effective April 6, 2021. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Mr. Leclair thanked Ms. Rousseau for her volunteerism.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to appoint Jennifer Strabone as a member of the Parks & Recreation Commission with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Mr. Leclair reminded Ms. Strabone she will need to take her oath once it is ready. Mr. Herman will contact Mrs. Lachance.

### **Fire Chief Mike Williams – Monthly Meeting**

Mr. Leclair commended the Fire & Police Departments for a nice job with the awards night.

Chief Williams presented his monthly report for March 2021. There were 36 calls for service, 15 were EMS related. Chief Williams reported training continues on Zoom. Fire training with gas meters was held in the classroom through the Hazmat program with responders learning how to read codes and gas meters. The Department hosted its annual Red Cross blood drive. The mobile radio was installed in Tanker 1 and the Forestry vehicle is waiting to have one installed. Fire Rescue was granted their new radio repeater frequency from the FCC with an expected start date of May 18<sup>th</sup>. The Red Alert software continues to be worked on and is expected to be ready in July.

Chief Williams reviewed the month's safety inspections, there were four life safety, one oil tank removal, one assembly permit, one foster care inspection and review of residential sprinkler plans.

Chief Williams noted Deputy Chief Selinga worked on the Fire Chaplain policy being presented tonight. Captain Glennon is overseeing both stations. LED lights were installed in the Station 2 bay so operators can see better to back up. Painting is being scheduled. Captain Barsaleau is working on scheduling training and the new online training portal. Lieutenant Szatynski is reprogramming radios and making a list of radio codes. Lieutenant Dignard is fixing equipment. Rescue air bags needed repair, the Tanker 2 porta tank line was replaced, hydrant bags were installed on Tankers 1 and 2. Lieutenant Sullivan is working on licensing new members and serves as EMS coordinator. A copy of the statistics for March 2021 and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021 were provided.

Mr. Leclair asked about Tanker 2 and if the intent was not to invest much money into it since it was aging out and due to be replaced soon. Chief Williams noted that was correct noting the tanker is up for replacement in two years. Mr. Leclair asked if it could still be used to shuttle water back and forth and Chief Williams agreed that if it didn't pass inspection 100% it would probably pass 80% but would not be utilized in response to a fire without another primary tanker.

#### **Proposed SOP #117 – Rapid Intervention Team/Mayday**

Chief Williams presented SOP #117 Rapid Intervention Team/Mayday. The purpose of SOP #117 is to provide information on the expectations and use of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) and describe what a mayday is and when and how it should be called. Chief Williams noted other Towns are often each other's RIT and he is working with a neighboring Town to partner up that has similar equipment. They would train together.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to approve SOP #117 RIT/Mayday. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

#### **Proposed SOP #118 – Fire Department Chaplain**

Deputy Chief Selinga noted Rick Dennis would serve as Chaplain. The purpose of SOP #118 is to help guide the newly established position whose duty is to provide emotional and spiritual support and guidance as needed to those who need/accept services including members, families and residents in time of need when experiencing emergencies such as fires, EMS, natural disasters and official Fire Department functions.

Mr. Leclair noted Mr. Dennis' background in H.R. Deputy Selinga noted Mr. Dennis will be attending classes and getting together with other chaplains and will receive a certificate. Chief Williams added that Mr. Dennis' church pastor is assisting him. There is a chaplain group in Massachusetts that he has reached out to.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to accept SOP #018 Fire Department Chaplain. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

## **Funding Consideration**

Chief Williams provided a letter dated April 19, 2021 requesting the Board consider using funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to local communities for Covid-19 relief to be applied toward the Portable Radios and Associated Equipment \$152,848 and Gear Extractor and Dryer \$43,002. Proposals for both projects were provided to the Board. Chief Williams reported he has applied for a grant for the radios this year, but will not be applying again this year for the grant for the gear extractor and dryer. Currently the Department is traveling to Derry, Hooksett and Manchester to use their extractor and dryer. Mr. Leclair asked if the other communities charge Auburn for that and Chief Williams indicated no.

Mr. Rolfe asked the life span of the equipment and Chief Williams noted he could find out.

Mr. Herman advised there is general guidance of how municipalities can spend the American Rescue Act funding and more definitive guidance is expected to be issued by the U.S. Treasury Department on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Funds are expected to be distributed to communities sometime by mid-June. The total expected for Auburn's portion over two years is \$550,000 with \$275,000 the first year and \$275,000 the second. Spending must be COVID related.

Mr. Leclair recommended bringing the request before the Budget Committee.

## **Town Response to Covid-19 and State Emergency Declaration**

Sergeant Huard reported approximately 30 positive cases in Auburn with no positive cases in the Department.

The Governor has not renewed the mask mandate. Mr. Leclair recommended the Board revisit the mask policy at Town Hall approaching Memorial Day so that everyone who wants to get vaccinated has the opportunity to do so.

Sergeant Huard reported Drug Take Back Day will be on Saturday April 24<sup>th</sup>, and Chief Williams noted Saturday is also Town-wide Clean-up Day.

## **New Business**

### **Appointment of 2021 Duck Race Committee**

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance reported the Town is not doing Old Home Day this year, but instead partnering with the Historical Society to do the 2021 Duck Race Day which will kick off the night before at Wayne Eddows' field. Other Towns have cancelled their fireworks and Mrs. Lachance noted Parks & Recreation are working on ways to be able to continue that for residents, perhaps with a limited amount of wristbands at no charge. Mr. Leclair thought that was a good idea and recommended advertising in the Town Crier and at the Auburn Village School. Mrs. Lachance noted police support may be needed. Mr. Bedard recommended residents provide some form of I.D.

Mr. Herman provided a list of individuals recommended for appointment to the Duck Race Committee by Dan Carpenter for a term of February 10, 2021 through October 1, 2021:

Daniel Carpenter, Nancy Mayland, Brenda Beer, Pat Clement, Deb Mancini and David Rogers.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to appoint Daniel Carpenter, Nancy Mayland, Brenda Beer, Pat Clement, Deb Mancini and David Rogers as volunteers to comprise the Duck Race Committee for the term of February 10 through October 1, 2021. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

## **Old Business**

### **Vacancy – Alternate Member, Zoning Board of Adjustment**

Mr. Herman provided a copy of applications received for consideration of appointment to the vacancy on the Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Alternate Member. The Board elected to accept the first application and will ask the second applicant if they have any interest in serving on the vacant Planning Board position.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to appoint Shannon Daoust as an alternate member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

### **Broadband Review – Volunteers for Citizen’s Advisory Committee**

Mr. Herman provided a Memorandum dated April 14, 2021 concerning interest in the Broadband Study Committee and a copy of RSA 33:3-g. Mr. Herman noted six residents have expressed interest in participating. The Board discussed whether to appoint all six where only five were needed and decided all were good candidates, but there would be a lot of crucial timing involved and too many members may cause delays in the process. Mr. Leclair recommended the Board of Selectmen could chose the Chair of the Committee, call the first meeting date to alleviate concerns of delays and appoint all six applicants.

Mr. Herman noted the Committee will be subject to the Right to Know Law and recommended the Board consider if a Selectmen should be appointed to the Committee. The members must review the RSA.

Mr. Bedard noted four of the applicants are involved in technology and one works at home and has a good understanding of the importance of being dependent on internet. Mr. Bedard noted he has contacted the Town of Rindge who has done a multi-community effort with Broadband to get their feedback on the process. Mr. Bedard recommended inviting back the representative from Consolidated Communications. Other providers such as Granite State or Spectrum could also be asked to come in and present proposals and may have a different process than Consolidated. Mr. Herman noted the statute provides a framework for process which first requires a request for information be sent to the current provider, Comcast, who is afforded 60 days to respond with the requested information. The Town can then move forward requesting information from other providers if it is determined the current provider is not providing service throughout the community. Mr. Leclair and Mrs. Bedard envisioned completing the process

timely so if bonding is the recommended course of act, the Town would be able to vote at its next meeting in March of 2022, then go to bond around June and begin working in September.

***Mr. Bedard motioned to create a Broadband Study Committee for the Town of Auburn for the purpose of moving forward looking at broadband service for the community and to appoint six members: Jan Gonsalves, David Oliveira, Beth Thomerson, Sean Finegan, Chris Rolfe and Jess Edwards with David Oliveira to be Chair of the Committee and to charge the Committee to have its first meeting on or before May 10, 2021. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

### **Safety Complex Insulation**

Mr. Herman noted the contract was issued. Mr. Rolfe noted he has not had a response concerning scheduling and both he and Mr. Herman will follow up before the next meeting.

### **Storage Building Project**

Mr. Leclair reported the Board met at 5 PM for its Pre-Bid Meeting and had two potential bidders attend, Pidcor and New Hampshire Demolition, both of Auburn. The bidders were instructed to provide bids before April 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Report/Comments of Ex-Officio Board Representatives**

Mr. Rolfe reviewed the upcoming agenda for the April 21, 2021 Planning Board meeting which includes hearings on Joseph Falzone, Auburn School District SAU 15, Paola Farina, Dollard Road (Tax Map #10, Lot #19 and Tax Map #31, Lot #13) Lot Line Adjustment. An informal meeting with Joseph Falzone for discussions on age-restricted residential development and continuance with Eric Mitchell on behalf of Matthew Scott, Map 25, Lot 47, 15 King Street which is a major site plan review.

Mr. Bedard noted Highway Safety is meeting on Wednesday. The speed limit sign was taken down on Anderson Way with the approval of the Planning Board. Parks & Recreation reviewed its budget and discussed the storage building and the upcoming inspection of the old Severance School property, the traveling Easter Egg Hunt event, Camp Adventure and the kickoff of the Duck Race event at Wayne Eddows. The Parks & Recreation vehicle was swapped out with the retired police vehicle. The old vehicle can be put out to auction next month. The trailer can be downsized, and a more suitable trailer purchased. Mr. Leclair recommended finding out the expense of the existing trailer, how much was paid, before putting it up for sale. Mrs. Lachance noted the Commission doesn't meet again until June but will reach out to them sooner.

### **Other Business**

### **Next Meetings/Events**

Monday, May 10, 2021 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

Monday, May 24, 2021 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

## **Minutes**

April 5, 2021 – Public Meeting Minutes

***Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the April 5, 2021 Public Meeting Minutes as written. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

## **Adjourn**

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to adjourn at 8:39 PM. Mr. Bedard seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer  
Recording Secretary