

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall
Stritch Meeting Room
October 16, 2023
Approved Minutes
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Michael Rolfe and Tom Carroll

Others Present: Conservation Chair Jeff Porter (@ 7:05 PM), Police Sergeant Kevin Cashman, Finance and Budget Administrator Mimi Friolet, Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote, Mike DiPietro, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Recording Secretary Nancy Hoijer and other 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 and there were none.

III. Appointments with the Board

IV. Manifests

Highway Accounts Payable \$37,592.50

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve the Highway Accounts Payable manifest in the amount of \$37,592.50. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained, Mr. Leclair voted aye and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed 2-0-1.

V. Consent Agenda

Mr. Leclair read out loud, and offered for inspection, the Consent Agenda dated October 11, 2023 which consisted of an Accounts Payable Manifest for 10/18/23 in the amount of \$330,135.26, a raffle permit for Longmeadow Church, and approval of the appointment of the Deputy Tax Collector at Labor Grade 4, Step 5.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for October 11, 2023. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

VI. New Business

A. 2024 Proposed Budget

Conservation – Jeff Porter

Mr. Porter presented the proposed budget for Conservation in the amount of \$4,639.00 which is a 1.1% increase from last year. He discussed the impacts projected for engineering with the potential 100-bay trucking terminal and the wetlands, aquifer and vernal pool on site.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the proposed FY 2024 Conservation budget in the amount of \$4,639. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Planning – ***Tabled***

Mr. Leclair motioned to table approval of the Planning and Zoning budget. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement – Carrie Rouleau-Cote

Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote presented the proposed budget for Building Inspector in the amount of \$83,612. She indicated that legal costs were down based on past years with nothing known on the horizon. She noted that her vehicle has 86,000 miles on it, and it cost a lot to repair last spring so she held onto it and passed on a handed down vehicle that came up. She noted that fuel cost has fluctuated.

Building Inspector Rouleau-Cote discussed the new software which is helping to not generate as much paper outside of the office. Mr. Rolfe asked how it was working out and she indicated very nice. She noted there is good participation online but reported some difficulties with shared data with Avitar and the new permitting software. She indicated that information was frozen during the reevaluation process and could not be exported until Avitar released it. For a larger fee this would happen automatically but she has chosen to do it manually instead.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the proposed FY 2024 budget for the Building Inspector in the amount of \$83,612. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leclair asked how many new permits there were this year and Mrs. Rouleau-Cote indicated there were 537 last year and this year 705. There were, so far, eight in the 55+ development and one single-family changed to a duplex. There

were three conventional. She noted she will speak to the Planning Board at their next meeting when they review proposed zoning amendments. She noted a lot of commercial activity.

Health Officer Administration – Carrie Rouleau-Cote

Mrs. Rouleau-Cote presented the proposed budget for Health Office in the amount of \$2,989.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the proposed FY 2024 budget for Health Officer Administration in the amount of \$2,989. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Cemeteries – Jim Thompson

Mr. Thompson presented the proposed budget for Cemeteries in the amount of \$38,577. Mr. Thompson noted fertilization costs are up and property maintenance is over due to the price of labor.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the proposed FY 2024 budget for Cemeteries in the amount of \$38,577. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Trust Fund Expenditure

Mr. Thompson indicated that a couple of projects are proposed to be funded through the trust funds or other funds. He would like to replace a portion of the chain link fence at the Village Cemetery on the school side that has been there since around 1955 and would like to replace a sign donated in 2005 in memory of a deceased child (approx \$3,000). Matt Plaza provided an estimate of \$8,500 to resurface the gravel lanes at both cemeteries. Mr. Leclair asked if the quote from Mr. Plaza included materials and he indicated it did. Mr. Thompson indicated it would be difficult to get large trucks in there and Mr. Carroll offered to donate the use of a one-ton.

The section of fence is four feet tall by 500' long. He has obtained one estimate from American Fence for \$20,000. Mr. Leclair recommended obtaining more estimates for the section of fence replacement and asked the balance of the cemetery maintenance fund and Mr. Thompson indicated \$32,183. Mrs. Friolet estimated the balance in the Village Fund to be \$54,355 and \$19,507 in Longmeadow.

Mr. Leclair asked about perpetual care and Mr. Thompson explained that per RSA they are only allowed to use the interest. Mr. Leclair asked Mr. Sterndale to get more information on the history of the process to expend

principal which was described as complex. He noted Longmeadow had a balance of approximately \$14,000.

Mr. Leclair recommended having Mr. Sterndale prepare a warrant article to add \$10,000 to the balance of the cemetery trust fund next year. The Board agreed.

COLA/Step/Longevity – Town Administrator Sterndale

Mr. Sterndale reported that the annual formula projects a 3.1% COLA for Town employees next year. The Joint Personnel Board meets tomorrow evening. There may need to be a second meeting for them to review policy changes and pay grade changes for a couple of positions.

Mr. Sterndale reported that the school and town have both turned in their forms on time, and the tax rate is in.

B. Utility appeal lawsuit

Mr. Sterndale reported the appeal has woken back up due to the legislation not going backward. The approximate legal fees to join the other 20-30 towns in the Sansoucy group is \$5,000 per year, approximately for two years. Mr. Leclair requested that Mr. Sterndale run this by legal to see what the Town could hope to gain from participating.

VI. Old Business

A. E-Waste & Shred Day

Town Administrator Sterndale reported that E-Waste and Shred Day took place on Saturday and were well attended. There was a constant stream of participants with Shred Day for the first hour or so and 6200 pounds (3 tons) were processed.

B Board Goals

Mr. Leclair reviewed the search for a new cell tower location. The best location was where the old fire tower had been but too close to a home.

Mr. Sterndale noted refreshment of the town website is plugging along and the new town employee is being trained how to edit the website.

The Board reviewed potential staff vacancies to be filled in coming years and those positions that have been filled recently.

VII. Committee Reports

Mr. Leclair reported that the Budget Committee met and Town Administrator Sterndale presented the status of the current year's budget to date and projected drivers for next year's proposed budget.

VIII. Minutes

A. September 25, 2023 Public and Non-Public Meeting Minutes

Mr. Leclair recommended an edit.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the September 25, 2023 public meeting minutes, as amended and motioned to approve the non-public meeting minutes. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

IX. Non-Public Session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(d) *consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property*

By Roll Call, Mr. Leclair motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(d). Mr. Rolfe 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 unanimously.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:13 PM.

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

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 8:26 PM.

By Roll Call, Mr. Rolfe motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Leclair motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 PM. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary