

**Town of Auburn  
Board of Selectmen  
Town Hall  
Stritch Meeting Room  
September 11, 2023  
Approved Minutes  
7:00 PM**

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

**Others Present:** Police Sergeant James Huard, Officer Jonathan Nightingale, Lieutenant Charles Chabot, Finance & Budget Administrator Mimi Friolet, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale and Recording Secretary Nancy Hoijer

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed newly sworn in Officer, Richard Nightingale.

**II. Public Comments**

Mr. Leclair asked if there were any comments from the public at 7:01 PM and there were none.

**III. Appointments with the Board**

**IV. Manifests**

Highway Accounts Payable dated 9/6 \$49,120

***Mr. Carroll motioned to approve the Highway Accounts Payable manifest dated September 6, 2023 in the amount of \$49,120. Mr. Leclair 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 September 11, 2023 which consisted of a payroll manifest dated August 30, 2023 in the amount of \$64,075.40, a payroll manifest dated September 13, 2023 in the amount of \$79,939.60, an accounts payable manifest dated September 6, 2023 in the amount of \$1,620,010.47, a merit recognition for the Building Inspector, a step increase for the Land Use Administrator from Grade 7, Step 16 to Step 17, a surety reduction for Map 9, Lot 16 to \$121,309.

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for September 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. Audit Review**

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the audit report from Vachon, Clukay & Company for 2022.

Mr. Sterndale pointed out the surplus anticipated from the sale of the school land of about \$270,000 and reported that revenues surpassed expectation with \$500,000 more than a year ago. He recommended retaining \$150,000 to keep percentages consistent. The fund balance would be 14-15% which is higher than required (5%-17%). The Town has no loan debt to be paid as the fire truck has been paid off.

Mr. Sterndale advised that the GASBY-75 recommendation concerns health insurance costs. A professional could be hired for \$3,000-\$4,000 to draft a formal report but it would not change anything. Mr. Leclair asked how long it would take to get the report and Mr. Sterndale estimated six to eight weeks and be done every three years. Mr. Sterndale noted the recommendation could be revisited in June or January.

### **B. Highway Planning**

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the Board with a preliminary estimate for foam insulation for the Town Garage and will reach out to get more estimates.

Mr. Sterndale provided a preliminary estimate for the drilled well for the Town Garage. Mr. Rolfe recommended upgrading the pump to mid-range for volume of water.

Mr. Sterndale provided the Board with information for Road Surface Management which is a method the Town can use to have an overview of road system conditions and anticipated costs for maintenance and improvements. Mr. Leclair noted that having a road inventory was the first concern and knowing when work was last done, how good it is today and when the work will need to be done again. This would provide a planning tool to identify and schedule which roads will be done in what year that will provide science as well as scheduling to residents. The Board agreed that there are 4-6 town arteries that have the highest traffic (non DOT) and roads like Wilson's Crossing and Hooksett Road were a priority to maintain. Mr. Rolfe noted good drainage is important in preserving road conditions, getting the water off the roads especially when it can freeze and break. Mr. Leclair asked about software prices and platforms. Mr. Sterndale indicated UNH has some free platforms and Rockingham Planning Commission does surveying for \$10,000-\$20,000. Mr. Leclair asked if the software was web-based and Mr. Sterndale explained it has a GIS layer and may require purchasing GIS software. Mr. Sterndale noted the information would be helpful to a new highway supervisor so they can develop a five-year plan. The Board agreed it would be useful to have Road Agent Dross provide feedback.

Mr. Sterndale reported salt prices are at \$77/ton this year versus the \$79/ton price last year. The Board asked if salt breaks down roads. Mr. Rolfe noted salt hurts concrete bridges not asphalt. Mr. Carroll noted cycles in cracks with freeze and thaw. Mr. Rolfe recommended having a 3% crown to keep water off roads.

#### C. Budget Planning

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the Board with the proposed schedule for the Board of Selectmen's budget review meetings beginning Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Budget Committee meetings beginning Thursday, October 5, 2023.

Mr. Sterndale estimated COLA increases to be at 3% as Social Security is projected to increase 3.2% with 2.6% inflation.

Mr. Sterndale advised that this year the Town will see the full-year cost of the new hires by the fire department and library. There is one vacancy with a employee who is deployed which is reflected. Ms. Friolet noted overtime has its own line now. Mr. Sterndale will be sitting down with department heads to talk about payroll.

Ms. Friolet estimated health insurance would increase five to eight percent versus the 17.9% increase proposed last year.

Mr. Sterndale reported revenue from new developments.

Mr. Leclair commented on budget adjustments; when one line is overspent, or another is underspent. Ms. Friolet advised that she could put a notation on the spreadsheets to identify unique spending years.

Ms. Friolet noted that electric and heat went over but property liability insurance had been capped at nine percent.

The Board discussed current and future staffing needs in the Town Clerk's office and Tax Collector's offices.

### **VI. Old Business**

#### A. Griffin Mill Bridge

Mr. Sterndale reported some delay with DOT and updates with Stantec.

#### B. Cell Tower

Mr. Sterndale reported that Manchester Water Works appeared receptive to discuss the concept of providing the Town with a location for a potential cell tower discussed at the last meetings.

### C. Land Swaps – MWW

Mr. Sterndale reported that he is waiting for drawings from Stantec. Mr. Sterndale reported he met with the Cemetery Trustees concerning an easement for MWW to pass through.

## VII. Committee Reports

Mr. Rolfe reported that the Planning Board met and there were a couple of no-shows. The Board had an informal review with Michael Ploof for a one-lot subdivision at Map 8, Lot 15, 213 Eaton Hill. The Board heard a request from Varsity Automotive, Map 25, Lot 44, 22 Dartmouth Drive which the Building Inspector noted was a permitted use in the Industrial zone. Ms. Rouleau-Cote discussed vehicle sales and repairs on vehicles they may be selling. A surety reduction, approved this evening by the Selectmen was discussed for Map 9, Lot 16, 404 Hooksett Road, Auburn Self Storage. Mr. Rolfe reported on a public hearing for David Gugger, Map 2, Lots 19 & 26-3 for a lot line adjustment and road improvements for Silver Hill, a Class VI road, which the Selectmen will also have to approve.

Mr. Rolfe reported that work is finishing on Dearborn Road with driveways and the road will be top coated next year.

Mr. Carroll reported that Highway Safety will resume meeting next week on Wednesday.

Mr. Carroll reported the Library Trustees will be at the Selectmen's meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

## VIII. Minutes

August 21, 2023 Public Meeting Minutes

***Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the August 21, 2023 public meeting minutes. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.***

## IX. Adjournment

***Mr. Carroll motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 PM. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary