

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
August 16, 2021
Minutes
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair and Todd Bedard

Others Present: Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance, Finance Director Patricia Rousseau, Fire Chief Michael Williams, Tax Collector Susan Jenkins, Deputy Tax Collector Walter Milne, Michael DiPietro, 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 Accounts Payable Manifest for the Week of August 9, 2021 - \$1,678,101.55

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of August 9, 2021 in the amount of \$1,678,101.55. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest for the Week of August 9, 2021 - \$22,732.50

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of August 9, 2021 in the amount of \$22,732.50. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Payroll Manifest for the Week of August 16, 2021 - \$50,937.04

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest for the week of August 16, 2021 in the amount of \$50,937.04. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda for the week of August 16, 2021

Mr. Leclair read out loud and provided for inspection a copy of the Consent Agenda for the week of August 16, 2021 some of which included: one (1) Raffle Permit, one (1) Void Check Register, and one (1) pistol/revolver license.

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for the week of August 16, 2021. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Appointments with the Board

Finance Director Patricia Rousseau – Credit Card Policy

Finance Director Rousseau presented a request to the Board for approval of a Town credit card for use by Department Heads. This would minimize use of personal credit cards by employees to pay for Town purchases. Use of the Credit Card would be managed through the Finance Director and Finance Assistant who manage the Home Depot card in the same manner of signing in and out.

When asked by Mr. Leclair, Mrs. Rousseau noted the auditors did not recommend the policy. Town policy would need to be updated with regulations regarding use of the card and consequences for not turning in receipts in a timely manner.

Mr. Leclair agreed all purchases need to be backed up with receipts whether paid by a department using their personal credit cards or by a Town credit card but did not like the idea of having staff need to go back and forth to get and return it.

Mr. Bedard did not like the idea of employees having to pay for purchases on behalf of the Town on personal credit cards and wait to be reimbursed.

Mrs. Lachance cited some examples where she has paid for such as large group camp reservations and outings up front. Mrs. Rousseau cited examples where it would assist the welfare officer.

Mr. Leclair recommend Mrs. Rousseau explore options and come back to the Board with more information and what an updated policy may look like.

Fire Chief Mike Williams – Monthly Meeting

Chief Williams presented the Department's Monthly Report for July 2021. Chief Williams noted calls for service continue to be up, with 57 calls in the month of July. Many operations have returned to normal with a decline in COVID-19 related issues. The Department responded to a substantial house fire which unfortunately left the home uninhabitable despite their efforts.

Mr. Leclair asked about the vaccine rate in the Department and Chief Williams estimated approximately half are vaccinated but it is not something being officially tracked. COVID payroll reimbursement for officers participating in State run vaccine states ended July 1st.

Chief Williams reported on equipment and maintenance issues. The Ladder apparatus is recertified annually and had its aerial testing and spent three weeks at the apparatus company having small items repaired and replaced such as brake drums, lights and some grounding issues. The bill hasn't been received yet.

Chief Williams and Mrs. Lachance met with the fireworks vendor concerning the event to take place at the baseball field.

Chief Williams note training on the new Red Alert software which went live on August 1st and is going well and able to generate an incident report from dispatch.

Appointment of Firefighter

Chief Williams recommended the hiring of Call Firefighter Cody Lappas to fill the vacant full-time Firefighter/EMT position. He has been a call member for a year and a half and is a Firefighter Level II with EMT and Hazmat training. He is currently attending AE&T class. There were six interviews done and he will hold onto the names of the other five good candidates in the event there is another vacancy.

Mr. Bedard moved to appoint Cody Lappas of Manchester as a full-time Firefighter/EMT with the Town of Auburn at a starting level of Labor Grade 6, Step 8 effective August 23, 2021. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Request for State Equipment

Chief Williams presented a proposal for State equipment loaned through the NH Division of Forests & Lands with no cost to the Town, outside of maintenance. The vehicle cannot be sold but can be returned to the State when no longer in use by the Town. It can be stored at Station 2. The first step would be to sign the Request Form then the Department would be on a waiting list with other Towns. The vehicles come in every 2-3 months, and he would go up and look at vehicles as they are offered and make a choice. Mr. Leclair would like to see the draft Lease Agreement before signing the request. Chief Williams will get that to the Board.

Mr. Bedard moved to approve the proposed Request for State Equipment with the Forest Protection Bureau of the NH Division of Forests and Lands for a Stewart Stevenson 5 Ton vehicle to strengthen Auburn's Forest fire control efforts and to authorize the Chair of the Board of Selectmen to sign the agreement on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Walter Milne – Health Insurance for Part-Time Employees

Mr. Milne made a request for Health Insurance benefits for part-time employees. Finance Director Rousseau noted she has obtained numbers for the proposed cost of the benefit should the Board approve the request. Currently health insurance benefits are offered to full-time employees who work 35 hours per week. Mr. Herman noted one of the reasons for this is the direct deduction structure from payroll. An employee needs to earn enough for the deduction to be deducted from their paycheck otherwise the Town could find themselves in the position of having to collect unpaid contributions. He indicated this has been an issue in the past.

Mr. Milne noted when he takes on the position of Tax Collector, he will be working 25 hours per week with no benefits. Mrs. Rousseau felt part-time employees who elect to participate should have to pay their premiums up front annually, so they don't fall behind and the other part-time employees would need to participate.

Mr. Bedard asked how many part-time employees the Town had and the cost of a mid-level plan. Mrs. Rousseau estimated with approximately 10 part-time employees the cost to the Town would be \$100,000 per year just for health insurance benefits, but that was with the high-end plan.

Mr. Leclair noted he would like to review the numbers and while he was not in favor of passing the cost onto the taxpayers, he recommended bringing the request to the Personnel Board when they meet again in November.

New Business

Project Discussions for FY 2021 ARPA Funds

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a spreadsheet outlining the projects which the Board has already agreed to fund using the 2021 American Rescue Act (ARPA) Funds and the total cost and balance available. A total of \$117,000 has been obligated so far, and Mr. Herman noted the summary is available on the Town's website.

Mr. Herman noted construction of the building at the Safety Complex is underway and half of the cost has been paid upon the roof going on the structure, with the balance due at completion which is estimated to be shortly. The funds from the Warrant Article covered the first \$81,000.

Mr. Herman provided a request from the Griffin Public Library for the purchase and installation of a two-side electronic message center in the front of the sign of the library and a quote for \$19,895 and a quote for four (4) HEPA Air Purifiers and associated filters for \$3,549.60.

Mr. Leclair indicated he would like to see at least one more quote for the electronic sign and asked about the quote the Board asked the library to provide for replacement of the mini splits. Mr. Herman noted he understood the mini splits to be in working order, but replacement was recommended by the Board due to their age so they asked for the quote.

Mr. Leclair recommended tabling the request until Selectman Rolfe could provide input.

Mr. Leclair asked Chief Williams to report on the status of the gear extractor and Chief Williams indicated the radiant heat in the bay floor is a concern. The extractor must be bolted securely to the floor and the bolt pattern must be established so they can install it without damaging the pipes below the concrete floor. Options include having a company come out to assess and evaluate the location of the radiant heat pipes or attempt to locate the pipes with the Department's heat sensor equipment. Chief Williams indicated he will try to locate the pipes by turning up the heat with using the heat sensor and will report back. Another room at the Safety Complex may have to be utilized.

2021 Supplemental Groundwater Monitoring Annual Summary Report

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a copy of the Supplemental Groundwater Monitoring Report from Stantec dated August 3, 2021 which provided July PFAS Results for MW-101 and MW 102 which were similar to April 2020 results and recommended annual monitoring continue.

Engagement of Auditing Firm for FY 2020 Audit

Finance Director Rousseau provided an engagement agreement with the Town's auditing firm – Vachon Clukay & Company of Manchester for the Town's FY 2020 audit. The field work associated with the FY 2020 audit is complete, and the formal report is being prepared. The anticipated cost is \$13,000.

Mr. Bedard moved to approve the engagement agreement with Vachon Clukay & Company of Manchester for the audit of Town of Auburn financial records for the year ending December 31, 2020 at the anticipated cost of \$13,000 and to authorize the Chair of the Board of Selectmen to sign the agreement on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Nominations for Deputy Health Officers

Mr. Herman reported Chief Williams and Building Inspector Carrier Rouleau-Cote are willing to serve as Deputy Health Officers for the Town of Auburn to replace the vacancies left by the retirement of former Health Officer Paul Raiche and the changing of employers by Deputy Health Officer James Saulnier earlier this year. Mrs. Rouleau-Cote has experience, while Chief Williams will attend an initial training program.

Mr. Leclair noted the State would appoint the position if the Town did not and asked if either would be personally liable. Mr. Herman indicated they would not be personally liable and would be State appointed, insured and bonded.

Mr. Bedard moved to appoint Carrie Rouleau Cote and Michael Williams to the Commissioner of the NH Department of Health & Human Services for appointment as Deputy Health Officers for the Town of Auburn. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

HealthTrust FY2021 Return of Surplus

Mr. Herman provided a copy of a letter dated August 12, 2021 from HealthTrust indicating a surplus is anticipated for FY2021 to be approximately \$37,207,827 with the anticipated return for the Town of Auburn's benefit group of \$40,235.52 for medical, dental and short-term disability. The actual amount would be determined at the October 5, 2021 Board of Director's meeting and distributed on November 17, 2021. Groups will be notified no later than October 15, 2021.

Mr. Herman noted this is only the second time in 15 years he is aware that such a surplus has been returned. Some will go back to employees and some to retired persons who contribute their full share of premium costs. Mr. Leclair asked where the unanticipated revenue would go, and Mr. Herman noted it will likely go to the general fund.

Citizen's Request to Name Soccer Field

A request dated August 2, 2021 was received by a group of residents asking that the Soccer Field at the Wayne Eddows Recreational Fields be named Peguri Field after the Auburn Soccer Club "Coach JP" Jean Paul Peguri who passed away unexpectedly.

Mr. Herman provided the Board with the 2017 draft Policy for Naming Town Facilities, Trails or Properties which sets forth the application process, criteria and qualifying facilities. Mrs. Lachance reported Parks & Recreation will meet in October with the residents proposing the change and have not discussed the request. Mr. Leclair recommended they review it first. He noted Mr. Peguri was a neighbor and friend, but he would not be in favor of renaming the field as there have been a lot of people who have done a lot for the Town. Mr. Leclair noted he would recommend instead and support fund raising efforts for a memorial that recognized the appreciation to all the Town's volunteers. He noted he did not support using tax dollars to establish the memorial.

Old Business

Vacancies on the Zoning Board of Adjustment

Mr. Herman provided the Board with two applications to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for membership. The ZBA meets next on the 24th of August and Mr. Wright will continue until September 1st. The ZBA has a full board with two alternates.

Mr. Leclair recommended holding off on the appointments until the next meeting.

Insulation of Remainder of Safety Complex Ceiling

Mr. Herman noted he is working to secure the revised estimate on insulating just the Training Room at the Safety Complex.

Report/Comments of Ex-Officio Board Representative

Mr. Bedard reported Parks & Recreation met. They received the letter asking to rename Wayne Eddows Field and started work on the budget.

Mr. Leclair noted the Selectmen will begin to review budgets in September, the deadline for submission was today. Mr. Herman will schedule review of the budget for the Board's September 27th meeting and noted the Budget Committee's vacancy was filled by Joanne Linxweiler for a three-year term.

Next Meeting/Events

Monday, August 30, 2021 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

Monday, September 13, 2021 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

Minutes

August 2, 2021 Public Meeting

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the August 2, 2021 Public Meeting Minutes. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

August 2, 2021 Non-Public Session

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the August 2, 2021 Non-Public Meeting Minutes as written. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Mr. Bedard motioned to adjourn at 8:19 PM. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer
Recording Secretary