

**Town of Hampstead
Board of Selectmen
MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2024**

Members Present: Selectman Eaton, Selectman Guthrie, Selectman Morse, and Selectman Worthen. (Selectman Warnock was absent)

Public Announcements:

- Waste Oil and other items are collected at the DPW garage on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 8 am to 1pm
- The public was asked to silence their cellphones during the meeting.
- Toiletries are being accepted for Waypoint, a homeless shelter for children ages 14 to 24. There is a receptacle in the front foyer of the Town Office building and one at the Library.

Visitor's Comments:

Department Heads

Police Department- Chief Kelley

Chief Kelley noted that with the passing of the Police Union Contract, he would like to request some changes to the billing rate for police details. Currently details are billed at \$79 per hour and an officer is paid at \$56 per hour. With the new contract, the rate to the officer goes to \$60 during the week and then time half for weekends/holidays/emergencies. He would like to move the billable rate from \$79 to \$90. This would cover the cost of the increase along with the NRHS fees. The employee would be getting \$90 per hour on the "premium" shift (weekends/holidays/emergencies) and he would like to move that billing rate to \$125.00. When questioned about the increase, Chief Kelley noted that it was in the negotiated contract and that they are in line with billing rates in the area.

A motion was made to accept the billings rates as presented.

Motion: Selectman Eaton

Second: Selectman Worthen

Motion Passed 4-0-0

Stormwater Committee- Chair, Paul Carideo

Mr. Carideo was present tonight to request that the Selectmen approve a contract and waive the requirement of going out to bid for Comprehensive Environmental Inc. (CEI).

He noted that CEI is currently the company that they have been working with regarding the Stormwater regulations and for the BMPs that are required to be done. He announced that they did request to encumber 2023 funds whereas they weren't able to start a project last year. This year they are moving forward with their second-choice location which is on School Street on the outskirts of the Middle School. He noted that the work for 2024 is over \$10,000 which is when it is required to out for RFP. He noted that the different tasks could be broken out to avoid the \$10,000 but all the tasks need to be completed and this is the best way to move forward. They have been working with this company for a couple of years and know the town and the issues. He met with the School Board and the Superintendent to discuss what the proposed work was and both are okay with it. He did note to the SAU that this was a town project and would be covered by the town. Mr. Carideo was asked if he felt they could get a better quote if they went out and he responded that he priced it out himself and believes his estimate was higher.

A motion to waive our requirement of going out to bid and award the work for \$24,000 to CEI and to allow the project to go forward.

Motion: Selectman Guthrie

Second: Selectman Worthen

Passed: 4-0-0

Building Department-

There was an email sent to the Selectmen from Chief Building Official, Kris Emerson, asking for some of the fees charged by his department be amended. This will require a public hearing, which will be scheduled. The fee changes were asked to be posted.

New Business

COLA Discussion- Selectman Morse

Selectman Morse suggested that they look at the COLA policy and instead of using a five-year average, move to a 10-year average. Currently using the 5-year average, the COLA would be 4.14 whereas the 10-year average would be 2.9%. The 2.9% rate is closer to the actual cost of living, he stated. Using a longer term will adjust for those spikes that come up. Currently the employees get the COLA if the budget passes and then either a 2% or a 3% merit increase.

S. Theriault stated that we look at the COLA that is announced in October, so maybe that would be the time to discuss any changes. There was no further discussion on the topic.

Old Business

There was none

Liaison Reports

J. Guthrie-The Ordway Park Committee will be meeting this week and he stated that he hopes that they have a comprehensive report on work to be done.

L. Eaton- The Planning Board Workshop for 3/18/24 was cancelled. There are new members coming onto the Planning Board- Susan Hastings and Ryan Gray. He noted that he met with the Town of Kingston to walk the town bounds with them. There were 3 missing areas that Kingston didn't have. They will be going back out once the paperwork is reviewed to locate the other spots.

He also noted that each of the Selectmen had been in touch with the Town Clerk regarding a question on seasonal residents and the transfer station. It was noted that a seasonal resident is eligible to get a transfer station permit by showing a tax bill and that was the consensus of the Selectmen.

L. Warnock- Absent

S. Morse- He reported that the transfer station has new fees for some items, which were approved at the last meeting. There is also a change in brush days. There are normally four days held with two in the spring and two in the fall. This year there will only be dates in April and May with no fall dates. What was decided by the Committee is that the brush will be allowed to be brought in during regular bulk days so that separate dates will not be needed. This is being done as a cost savings.

He also announced that four of the members met with members of DHHS, Fire Chief, Police Chief, members of the State of NH Police along with various people from Hampstead Hospital. He noted that it was a productive conversation and at the end of the day, he stated that they will consider some of the recommendations made. They did give a better explanation of what is happening there and there should be a better press release to explain what their function is because it is not a juvenile detention center now. He would anticipate that Chairperson Warnock will give more of an update when she returns.

M. Worthen - The Fire Department is looking to hire two full-time firefighters with an effective start date of July 1, 2024. The Chief is looking to get a jump start on the hiring by getting the ad out there this week. He then gave a brief overview of the timeline from the ad going out to getting someone to start. Selectman Guthrie asked to have a breakdown of what the fire department will look like with the new hires. Selectman Worthen will bring the request to Chief Carrier. The ad for the positions are okay to go out.

Administrator Assistant's Report

Contract with Comprehensive Environmental Incorporated (CEI)

S. Theriault reported that with the approval of the contract, the Selectmen need to authorize someone to sign on behalf of the town.

A motion was made to authorize the acting Chair, Selectman Morse, to sign.

Motion: M. Worthen

Second: L. Eaton

Vote Passed: 3-0-1

MS 232 Appropriations

The MS232 form for the Department of Revenue Administration has been completed and needs to be signed by the Board. The form lists all the appropriations that were approved by the voters.

Consent and Waiver

Additional paperwork is needed for the discontinuation of a portion of Whitcher Road. The voters supported the closure of Whitcher Road, However, in the most recent RSA, the law is specific in that it requires the Selectmen's office to send out the certified notices. In an older version of the RSA, it didn't identify who was responsible for sending out the notices, nor did it in the 2015 Edition of a Hard Road To Travel, page 70 "Complete Discontinuance Procedure. Since this was an oversight, the petitioner has requested that the BOS sign a Consent and Waiver, which would allow for the closure of a portion of the Road. This has been reviewed by Town Counsel and is satisfactory. S. Theriault also read the Consent and Waiver document. If the Board approves, the BOS will need to make a motion as to who the authorized signatory will be. S. Morse noted his concern that although understanding what happened, the Selectmen portrayed it that it was the petitioner's responsibility to send out abutter notices as requirement of the passing of the article and if it wasn't done, then then the article was moot. No one else voiced concerns.

A motion was made to authorize the acting Chair, Selectman Morse, to sign the Consent and Waiver.

Motion: Selectman Guthrie

Second: Selectman Eaton

Vote Passed: 3-0-1

Ambulance Billing Agreement

The Town needs to have a 3rd party billing company to bill for ambulance services when the fire department treats and transports patients to the hospital. The proposed cost is 7% of what they collect from the company the Chief is dealing with, which is an industry standard. (As an example, if the company receives \$800 for the fire department transporting a patient, the cost to MBS would be \$56.00; and if during the year, the company receives \$100,000 in revenue for the town, the cost would be \$7,000.)

Additionally, the town needs to be credentialed to bill for ambulance services. The initial cost for this is \$2,500. If, however, the town becomes the primary ambulance provider, \$1,500 of this

cost will be credited against the monthly billing fees and no annual fee will be charged. This is the process of getting approval from the insurance companies and Medicare.

If the town maintains its current secondary transporting service, a monthly fee of \$200 will be charged to the town. This cost will be offset by whatever revenue the town receives from transports. There was a question as to whether this should go out to bid. T. Harrington stated that right now we transport so infrequently that no one would be interested. She also noted that with the work on getting credentialed is a time savings for the staff.

A motion was made to accept the ambulance billing agreement.

Motion: Selectman Worthen

Second: Selectman Eaton

Vote Passed: 4-0-0

A motion was made to authorize the acting Chair, Steve Morse, to sign the contract on behalf of the town.

Motion: Selectman Eaton

Second: Selectman Worthen

Vote Passed: 3-0-1

Appointments

Selectman Morse read the list of open positions.

Correspondence

There were none

Visitor's Comments

There were none

Non-Public RSA 91a:3 II (a) Employee matters

A request was made to go into non-public session at 7:47 pm

Motion: Selectman Morse

Second: Selectman Eaton

Roll Call: Selectman Eaton, yes: Selectman Guthrie, yes, Selectman Morse, yes: Selectman Worthen, yes:

A request was made to come out of non-public session at 8:44 pm

Motion: Selectman Eaton

Second: Selectman Guthrie

Roll Call: Selectman Eaton, yes: Selectman Guthrie, yes, Selectman Morse, yes: Selectman Worthen, yes:

A request was made to seal the minutes of the non-public session at 8:44 pm

Motion: Selectman Guthrie

Second: Selectman Worthen

Roll Call: Selectman Eaton, yes: Selectman Guthrie, yes, Selectman Morse, yes: Selectman Worthen, yes:

Adjournment

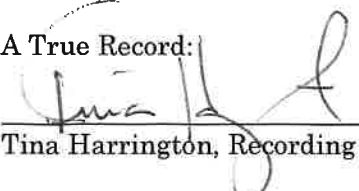
A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 pm

Motion: Selectman Guthrie

Second: Selectman Worthen

Vote Passed: 4-0-0

A True Record:


Tina Harrington, Recording Secretary

Approved By:

Selectman Eaton:

Selectman Guthrie:

Selectman Morse:

Selectman Warnock: Absent

Selectman Worthen: