

TOWN OF MONSON

"A town where friendliness is more than just a word"

November 15, 2023 – Select Board Meeting

Present –Tyler Adkins, Sue Chase, JD Walker, Marti Gagnon, Bill MacDonald, Terry Gaudet, Ryan Laplante, Giovanni Lauro, Bryan Alcorn, Gunnar Ranta, Don Dunfee, Sandra Hardy, Jonathan Pullen, Gabrielle Huettner,
ZOOM: Brian Turner, Heather

- 1) Meeting opened at 6:00 PM
- 2) Selectboard approves prior meeting minutes and signs warrants

PUBLIC COMMENT

On behalf of outdoor exploring group, 207 Overland, Marti explained that the group would like to use the ballfield August 14-18, 2024, for their annual meet. They are a group of New England Families who explore the Maine outdoors in their vehicles. There will be a large group camping there on Wednesday and Thursday and a smaller group, Friday through the weekend. The group used to meet in Fort Kent but are looking for a more central location as Fort Kent is too far for some people to travel. Marti will find out more about the agreement between 207 Overland and Fort Kent and provide more information at the next meeting.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Bill provided updates on the following:

- GIS update information has been sent to Judy at Viewshed. Changes will be uploaded to the website.
- The 2021/2022 audit should be complete by the end of the year and the 2022/2023 audit should be complete by the time budget meetings begin.
- Jeneve Parrish will not be moving forward with a block grant but will be working on getting a micro-enterprise grant.
- The planning session with Laurie Osher of EMDC was part of being eligible for membership. Bill will submit an application by the end of the year in order to be eligible for grants beginning in January.
- There has been some community feedback on the Gorrill Palmer presentation and revisions and updates will be made. Parking was a big concern. The plans are still on display at the gym.
- Bill is working with the assessor to get the personal property list updated.

- Tyler was able to make contact with Axiom and Bill will arrange scheduling to get WiFi to the poles.
- Bill put orange flags on the speed signs on North Guilford Rd. He also met with Don Ettinger from DOT who suggests changing the yield sign to a stop sign. A three- way stop would also be something to consider. Bill will apply to use the DOT sign in the spring. JD suggests taking a progressive approach and considering stop signs if that doesn't work.
- The culvert work on North Guilford Rd will be done this week.
- The comp. plan has been submitted.
- The decals for the public works truck are almost ready to be installed.

SELECTBOARD REPORTS

JD asked if there is a feedback loop that goes through the town. He suggested an avenue for feedback and communication, perhaps an RSS feed. Bill will investigate.

Sue asked for an update on the EV charging stations. Bill stated the chargers have been installed but have not yet been activated. Customers will use their credit cards through an account with Charge Point, who will in turn send the town money. The town has a maintenance plan with Charge Point and the units will be monitored remotely. It will take 2 – 3 hours to charge a car.

Sue then mentioned a rock on Elliotsville Rd and asked if it will cause a problem for the plow truck. Bill will check with Steve.

Tyler mentioned that the public meetings this week were well attended, and the parking issue is an important part of a larger discussion. The town can do a parking inventory if Gorrill Palmer hasn't already done so. Tyler feels there are plenty of opportunities to improve parking. Jonathan Pullen mentioned that James Pullen has consulted the Land Use Ordinance to see what kind of parking businesses a required to provide customers. He has also counted and documented the existing parking. Ryan Laplante stated he would like to get rid of the municipal parking behind the municipal building as the Fire Department often has to park in the town office lot.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

RECREATION COMMITTEE: JD stated the committee will begin having Zoom meetings and will be working on the Snowroller Festival. The Fire Department has offered to keep the ice rink cleared off.

BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE: Sandra noted the committee is back on a monthly schedule. The Christmas lights will be going up soon. The Down East Sculpture Project will cost approximately \$25,000 so the committee will be doing some fundraising.

OLD BUSINESS

Open Public Works Truck Bids: The bids for the old Public Works truck were opened by the Selectboard. Justin Thomas submitted a bid for \$500, Jeff Killam submitted a bid for \$5,300, Tom Morong submitted a bid for \$5000 and Tim Robinson submitted a bid for \$10,501. JD Walker motioned to accept Tim Robinson's bid for \$10, 501, seconded by Sue Chase. Vote 3 -0

CEO Report and Actions, Notice of Hearing for 19 Center St. Bill stated that a date needs to be set for a public hearing regarding 19 Center St. He suggested January 11, 2024, to allow enough time for the paperwork to be served to the owner. The Selectboard agreed and the date was set.

Rules of Order: The Selectboard reviewed the previously approved changes to the Rules of Order. The Rules were signed and will be updated and posted.

Consider Transfer of \$10,000 From the Fire Equipment Reserve to Cover FY22-23 Equipment and Budget Overages & Next Steps on Equipment Purchases: Bill explained that the Fire Department budget had an overage of \$12,844 from the last fiscal year. He recommended using \$10,000 from the Fire Department reserve fund and close the remaining balance of \$2,884 through special town meeting or use of other funds. Bill also noted that the department's personnel line is already at 70%. JD suggested the department manage certain things, like meetings, and determine call rates from individual towns to determine if the rates are adequate. He would also like to look for trends. Tyler asked if the overage can be reconciled with funds from the current budget and then reconcile everything at the end of this fiscal year. Bill explained that there is no money budgeted for that. Tyler stated he is reluctant to authorize use of reserve funds without more information. He would like to see a spending forecast for the rest of the year and a projection of where the budget will be at the end of the year. Ryan suggested using funds from the donation line. The discussion was tabled until the next meeting. Marti will provide further information on an invoice from IPS for coats and pants.

JD noted that the fire truck cost increased by \$15,000 since the last meeting. John Simco from Androscoggin Bank has provided finance options. \$600, 586 is the up-front purchase price of the truck, \$75,00 will be used from the reserve account and \$591,586 will be financed. The Selectboard will hold a special meeting on November 30 to review the warrant language and date and discuss finance options. JD motioned to set a Special Town Meeting date of 12/14/23 at 5;00 PM to consider approving the purchase of a new fire truck, seconded by Sue Chase.

Vote: 3-0. JD then explained to the Fire Chief, Ryan Laplante that if something were to happen on a call, the town would be liable. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the town to have more formal notification if there is an issue with another town or if there is a scheduled event such as a controlled burn for training purposes. He requested that the Town Manager be informed of all such matters. Ryan explained the procedures that are currently in place and assured the Selectboard that the town will be notified prior to any future events.

NEW BUSINESS

Sign Selectboard Documents: The Selectboard signed a Recreation Committee appointment for Molly Poole.

Consider Setting Hearing Date for Consideration of Extending the Emergency Moratorium on Commercial Solar Energy Facilities: Jonathan Pullen explained that the topic is in process but that the Planning Board needs more time. The board plans to meet monthly and they expect the draft ordinance to be complete in February. Any significant progress or setbacks will be reported at Selectboard meetings. Their goal is to have the ordinance in place before the ground thaws in the Spring. Tyler motioned to set a hearing date for November 30, at 6:00 pm to consider extending the moratorium on commercial solar facilities, seconded by JD Walker. Vote: 3-0. Jonathan then stated that Kent Rich had mentioned something about junk yards and the Planning Board feels that the Land Use Ordinance already has reasonable rules regarding junk yards. Bill then explained that the inquiry was regarding commercial junk yards. Jonathan will bring the matter back to the Planning Board for further discussion. The Planning Board would also like to clean up the language around short- term rentals and Bed and Breakfasts. Jonathan feels it is in the best interest of the town to discuss what the goals are.

Authorize Grant Opportunities, Including Letter of Support for Elliottsville Foundation, Inc. for a Grant They are Pursuing: The Selectboard signed a letter of support for the Elliottsville Foundation's Mountain Bike Trail Program proposal.

Consider, Approve and Sign a Special Liquor License for the Lakeshore House for the New Years Day celebration at the Gym on 1/1/24: The Selectboard signed the special liquor license for the Lakeshore House.

Tyler Adkins motioned to move the meeting to Executive Session for 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (A)- Personnel Matters at 7:15 pm, seconded by JD Walker. Vote 3 – 0.