

**ASHLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING – WORKSESSION - MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2017
ASHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – CAFE- 6:30 PM**

Chairman Newton called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm with a roll call. Fran Newton, Steve Felton, Leigh Sharps, Harold Lamos, Kathleen Maher, present.

Others Present: Town Administrator Charles Smith and Administrative Assistant Pat Crowell

The Board signed the Payroll and Accounts Payable Manifests and the items in the signature file.

Chairman Newton opened the first Public Hearing at 6:31pm.

The Chairman explained the **Thompson St/High St/Smith Hill Road Reconstruction Project**. There will be no impact in 2017 in the tax rate. TA Smith explained the bonds and answered some questions about the rates. David and Carol Fucarile who live on Smith Hill Road had some questions regarding the passage of this article. Hearing no more concerns, the Chairman closed this public hearing at 6:38pm.

The next public hearing opened at 6:39.

Fire Chief Heath explained why the department needs a **new fire truck**. Amanda Loud asked if the cost would increase every year. The Chief explained that the cost would go up about 4%. David Fucarile asked if the department had considered getting a used fire truck from another town. The Chief explained that a new truck would last much longer and be less costly for maintenance. Steve Felton thanked the Chief and the department for his hard work and research. Hearing no more concerns, the Chairman closed this public hearing at 6:51pm.

The next public hearing started at 6:52pm.

Mardean Badger explained the need for a new **Library at 41 School St**. She explained the financial impact of bond issues. Katie Maher asked about the long-term budget impact. Ms. Badger said they hadn't looked at that yet. Harold Lamos asked about the elevator costs. There were no public comments. The Chairman closed this public hearing at 7:00pm.

The next public hearing started at 7:01pm.

The Chairman explained the **Automobile Registration Fee**. She said that it would be a \$5.00 charge to vehicles for everyone living in Ashland with the fee to be placed in a new Capital Reserve Fund to be used for transportation infrastructure within the town. No public comments. The Chairman closed this public hearing at 7:04pm.

The Chairman resumed the regular meeting at 7:05pm

MINUTES

January 3, 2017 – Felton moved to approve as written. Sharps seconded. All in favor 5-0

January 9, 2017 – Lamos moved to approve as written. Sharps seconded. All in favor 5-0

OLD BUSINESS

2012 Northern Pass warrant article #27 – Selectman Maher spoke. She explained that in 2012 the Town of Ashland opposed Northern Pass. About a year ago, the Board of Selectmen wrote letter regarding Intervenor Status. Maher asked about the next step for the town. David Toth, Water & Sewer Commissioner, explained what they have been doing. They have hired a lawyer and engineering studies have been done. Kathleen DeWolfe, Conservation Commission, said that she has heard nothing about this from anyone. She stressed the need for more effective communication. Sherry Downing asked if the Board was concerned about the lack of communication. The Chairman apologized for the Board. Ms Downing said that there is no transparency and a lot of miss-communication. Kathleen DeWolfe said this is why a land use assistant is needed. Maher said that this was a good dialog and they will do a better job of communicating.

Current Issue Log – TA Smith explained what has changed in the log and what has been done. Maher wants to set up a meeting with the Personnel Policy committee within the next month. Sherry Downing would like to volunteer for the committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Library Budget Request – The Library would like approval for \$4000 to pay bills. They have asked in years past for this as well. Felton moved to approve the \$4000 for the Library. Sharps seconded. All in favor.

Administrative Assistant Position – TA Smith asked the Board for a start date of March 13, 2017, so that a new person can be trained by Pat Crowell who is retiring at the end of March. There were a lot of questions regarding what the job entails. The Board decided that they will have a meeting next Wednesday, January 25th at 7:30 am to discuss this.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS

The Board decided who will speak on the Warrant Articles at the Deliberative Session and had votes on the following articles:

Day Away Program article – No Ashland residents have been qualified. The Board is opposed 5-0.

Tax Collector/Town Clerk increase in pay – The Board is opposed 5-0.

Town Treasurer increase in pay – The Board is opposed 5-0. The Board needs some clarification on both articles.

Town Manager – TA Smith explained. Glen Dion also had some comments. Smith mentioned RSA 37.

150th Committee would like \$5000 to start a fund for the 150th celebration in 2018. The Board recommended 5-0.

Opposition to Northern Pass – The Board had objections to the way it was written. The Board is opposed 5-0.

Voters' Guide – The Board thanked Patsy Tucker for all her hard work putting this together. They tabled a discussion until the next meeting.

Submitting a **letter to the SEC** regarding Northern Pass – Kathleen DeWolfe said that the SEC denied on January 12, 2017.

The Chairman said that she will not be available for the meeting on February 6th and Steve Felton will also not be available. She would like the Board's permission to postpone that meeting until February 13th.

Received **letter from Trustees** regarding the Board's authority to allow the Electric Department building on Collins Street. Smith has sent the letter to legal.

There being no other business, Lamos moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm. Sharps seconded. All in favor 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Crowell
January 18, 2017