

Ashland Water and Sewer Commission Minutes
January 17, 2017
6 Collins Street
Ashland, NH
6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

There was a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the Water and Sewer Commission, the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. Fran Newton, Chair of the Select Board called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Present at the meeting was David Toth, Alan Cilley, Christine Cilley, David Fucarile, Kathleen DeWolfe, Susan McLeod, Carol Fucarile, Mardean Badger, Fran Newton, and Leigh Sharps.

CORRESPONDENCE

Fran Newton, Chair of the Select Board opened a Public Hearing at 6:30 regarding the Thompson Street/High Street/ Smith Hill Road Reconstruction Project. The warrant article reads as follows: To see if the Town will vote and appropriate the sum of One Million Nine Hundred and Seventy-One Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars (\$1,971,900) for the purpose of a road and utility reconstruction project on Thompson Street and Smith Hill Road. Of such sum Three Hundred Ten Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Three Dollars (\$310,173) will be appropriated from the towns' Capital Reserve Fund for Road Improvements. The remaining One Million Six Hundred Sixty-One Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty – Seven Dollars (\$1,661,727) to be raised by the issuance of bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended. Without impairing the general obligation nature of bonds and notes, it is the Town's intention that of the sum (\$1,661,727) a total of Two Hundred Eighty-Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$287,920) to be paid by Ashland Water and Sixty-Four Thousand Four Hundred Eighty (\$64,480) to be paid by Ashland Sewer. Estimated first payment of bond or note is \$82,603 and not to begin until 2018. Final amount is subject to further negotiations and to be based on the interest rate and terms of such agreement at the time. Recommended by Select Board vote 5-0. Not recommended by the Budget Committee vote 4-4.

Novus did the engineering study for the Thompson Street/High Street/Smith Hill Road Reconstruction Project. The estimated bond for this project ranges from 2.75 to 1.25%. Most banks would consider a 10-15 years bond. Most banks will go as long as 20 year bond. USDA Bank will go as long as a 30 year bond.

The Thompson Street/High Street/Smith Hill Road Reconstruction Project: Smith Hill Road has a drainage issue as does High Street. These drainage issues need to be addressed. The project can be broken into pieces. When asked about the Smith Hill Road piece of the project the Select

Board thought that this portion of the project may need to be revisited and the costs particularly for this portion of the project will need to be calculated.

The project will involve reconstructing and repaving Thompson Street, High Street and Smith Hill Road. It will also involve the installation of new water and sewer lines on all three roads. The Select Board and the Water and Sewer Dept. will need to work with Novus on costs for the project. All options of the project will be discussed following the Town Meeting. Depending on the results of the Town Meeting it may take another year before the drainage issues on Smith Hill Road and High Street can be addressed. This project may need additional funding and may need an additional vote. With no additional discussion, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:45 PM.

The next Public Hearing was opened. This Public Hearing was with regards to appropriating funds to buy a new Fire Truck. The warrant article asks the Select Board to enter into a five year lease purchase agreement. The lease purchase agreement is contingent upon having a non-appropriation clause in the agreement in accordance with RSA 33:7-e. The first payment for the new truck will be \$125,000 for the first year. This \$125,000 will be withdrawn from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. The remainder of the cost will be in five annual payments of (\$79,849) commencing in 2018. The following points were made:

- The trucks continue to age
- More changes with more developments being constructed in Ashland
- Price can increase 4%/year
- Meet new EPA standards
- If buy used truck need to consider repair costs in the cost of the truck
- It was felt that more research needed to be done on the purchase of a fire truck that is most cost effective to the town
- Feeling is that the truck needs to be purchased

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:00 PM.

A Public Hearing was opened to discuss a bond on the purchase of the Historic School for the Ashland Town Library. The cost is \$525,000 having come down from \$800,000. The Library Committee would like to have a bond of \$600,000 for the purchase of the building. The extra monies will be used for furnishing and renovations. The third floor of the Historic School building will be used for meeting space for government, nonprofits, and community groups. Further research needs to be done on the tax impact of the bond issue. The following issues need to be discussed:

- Tax impact
- Care costs of building
- Another municipal building
- Long range costs of the building to the Town Budget
- More staff/ additional services
- Cost of heat/water/lawn maintenance/snow removal
- Permanent increase in budget costs going forward
- CAP costs for the building/ \$5,000/yr.

- Historic building will give the library space for expansion which is not true of the present building

There was a discussion of a Municipal Transportation Fund. There would be an additional fee for all residents who rent or own in the amount of \$5 for motor vehicles. This fee will be instituted after May 1, 2017.

The Select Board, Conservation Commission, Water and Sewer Department and Planning Board discussed Northern Pass. The following points were made:

- The Town came together to discuss being intervenors
- The Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Water and Sewer Department wrote letters expressing their concerns about the Northern Pass Project to the Town of Ashland and its resources and assets.
- It was felt that the proposed Northern Pass towers would disrupt/spoil the aesthetic views of Ashland as well as disrupting services

David Toth of the Water and Sewer Commission advised that the Water and Sewer position is to protect the infrastructure.

- The Water and Sewer Dept. did submit an intervenor letter, become a participant in the intervenor process
- To protect the infrastructure the Water and Sewer Commission hired Steve Whitley, attorney,
- Soucie was hired for an engineering study of the Water and Sewer infrastructure
- Emery and Garrett gave the Water and Sewer Dept. the impact of Northern Pass on Ashland's well sites and lagoons.
- Emery and Garrett drew up requirements that Eversource will need to adhere to to continue to use the well field. These requirements will be hard to follow.
- Concern from Water and Sewer for the Northern Pass lines being installed too close to the lagoons. The vibration from the lines can crack/break the clay linings of the lagoons allowing septage from the Solid Waste Plant to seep into the Pemi River.
- Water and Sewer Dept. is an intervenor in a legal process.
- Concern raised about Eversource's access to their installation sites. Eversource has access via Cedar Street. Eversource wants a right of way/site access agreement off Collins Street.
- The Town and Commissions and Boards are concerned about the damage that can be done to the Town's resources and assets by the Northern Pass Project.
- There is a letter being written from Eversource to the Town and Commissions relative to Eversource access off Collins Street. The final draft of this letter has not been returned from Eversource.

After much discussion there needs to be improved communication between the Select Board and the Town Commissions and Boards. Any communication sent out the receiving party needs to

know that a reply is requested/required. Improvement of communication needs to happen from all parties to the Northern Pass Project discussion. The public needs to be informed about any upcoming discussions/conversations concerning Northern Pass.

The parties that need to be contacted about any discussions/conversations about Northern Pass are:

- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board
- Water and Sewer Department
- Select Board
- New Hampton Conservation Commission Chair
- Max Stam

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday, February 7, 6:30 pm at the Utility Office at 6 Collins Street.

With nothing more to come before it the Commissioners adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 7: 45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Hancock
For the Ashland Water & Sewer Dept.