

Strafford Selectboard Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 20, at 5:30 pm

Strafford Town Office

Members participating: Toni Pippy, Rett Emerson, Pat Kelly, Jeff Solsaa, Mary Linehan

Others participating: Lisa Bragg, John Freitag

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm

1. Public Concerns – none
2. Town Road Crew, Highways and Equipment Update. Fuel pump used to fill trucks with diesel is in poor repair, a new one has been identified and will be delivered early next week. Road grant process has been started for Miller Pond and Old City Falls Roads. Documents should be ready next week. Justin Morrill Highway bridge needs a historian to determine if we can repair or take down and rebuild. Brook Road bridge repairs are under discussion to obtain an estimate. Liaison suggests holding a meeting with Orange County Sheriff to clarify the relationship and our expectations, because the town is asking for a broader range of services from Orange County, and we have had some difficulty getting a prompt response from our service requests.
 - a. Vacancies. Interviews are proceeding and references are being checked.
3. Motion passed to approved minutes of the Jan. 12, 2022 regular meeting.
4. 2021 budget to actual review. 2021 budget is in good shape. Savings came from Tyson bridge painting (delayed till 2022), employee costs, reduced demand for chloride and lower equipment maintenance costs. Unexpended funds from 2021 will be allocated to reserve accounts and the balance forward for the 2022 budget.
5. 2022 draft budget. Review and discussion of first draft of budget, how reserves are managed and set, how donations are tracked vs. tax contributions, whether unexpended tax funds should be returned to the general fund. Selectboard intends to ensure that taxes do not go up but wants to address the urgent town office issues. ARPA funding not yet included in the budget because VLCT has advised that we wait for final guidance from State and Federal gov't before allocating or spending the funds. Need to get clarification of reserves, clarification of constable duties and activities, anticipated tax rates, and equipment fund to finalize the 2022 budget for next week's board meeting. Chair met with Fire Dept to understand the budget request and the reserve fund. Motion passed to reduce the Fire Dept budget line request of \$71,000 to \$61,000.

Motion passed to pause the Meeting to join the BCA meeting at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned 7:00 pm

Meeting reopened at 7:10 pm

6. Town Office Article for Warning. Discussion re wording for article to move forward with addressing Town Office issue.

7. Town Owned Properties Update. Paul Gillies provided guidance for how to proceed with two options for the sale of town-owned properties. Discussion about how best to inform the town and move forward with sale of selected parcels.
8. Town Meeting planning. BCA has approved holding the 2022 Town Meeting vote at the Town Office on March 1, 2022; hours for voting will be 9:00 am to 7:00 pm. Use of a counting machine was approved.
9. General Correspondence:
 - a. US Census 2022 Boundary and Annexation Survey
 - b. John Freitag, RE: The People I love Best and RE: house insurance and fire protection
 - c. Paul Gillies provided a letter responding to Byron Breese. Board agreed to forward the letter.
10. Liaison Updates.
 - Ashley Forest closing planned for later this month. Paul Gillies will be in attendance. Request to be added to agenda next week.
11. Other.
 - Certificate of highway mileage is due Feb 20, 2022.
 - Input for the Town Annual report requested from Board members

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan
Recording Secretary