

**Town of Grafton
Board of Selectmen
Wednesday, November 4, 2020**

Members Present: Steve Darrow, Chairman, Jennie Joyce, Cindy Kudlik, Sue Smith (recorder)

Others Present: Russell Poitras, John Babiarz, Gary Whitney, Bob Bassett, Shawn McCadden, Catherine Mulholland

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Cindy motioned to accept the minutes of October 20, 2020 and October 22, 2020. Jennie seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Selectmen Announcements:

Steve appreciated all those who worked at the polls during the election.

Ex-Officio Reports:

Steve stated that the Planning Board did not meet in October due to no quorum present. November's meeting will be Tuesday, November 17, 7pm at the Town Office.

Jennie stated that the Budget Committee met on October 28th. A few budgets were reviewed but no decisions were made.

Public Comment:

Shawn McCadden inquired if it would be possible to plow upper Riddle Hill Rd (beyond the 'not winter maintained' sign) for those who park their vehicles and snow mobile to Halfmoon Pond Rd. Bob stated that he is willing to have his crew plow beyond the farm house (mailbox side of road) for those who need parking. Bob stated this should keep people from parking in the turn-around and out of the way of the plow trucks.

Appointments:

Bob Bassett, Road Agent, met with the selectmen to discuss the 2021 Highway Budget. The requested budget for 2021: \$411,339.00. This is an increase of \$23,050 from 2020. The increases are reflected in the following line items: Chloride from \$10,000 to \$15,000; Paving & Patching from \$20,000 to \$40,000; Phone from \$450 to \$500; Uniforms & Shoes from \$3,500 to \$4,700. The following line items decreased: Fuel from \$32,000 to \$30,000; Heating Fuel from \$4,000 to \$3,000; Electric from \$2,200 to \$2,000. The main focus of the budget discussion was paving. Hardy Hill Road is scheduled to be paved in 2021 and Bob provided the following quotes: \$79,000 for base coat only or \$117,000 for both base and top coats to be completed in 2021. After a brief discussion, the selectmen made the decision to increase the paving & patching line item to \$79,000 in order to have the base coat done in

2021. This amount increased the bottom line to \$450,339.00. The selectmen also recommended that a paving warrant article in the amount of \$40,000 be put on the 2021 Warrant. Should the warrant article pass, the top coat of paving material will be placed on Hardy Hill Rd and the project will be completed in 2021. Jennie motioned to move the Highway Budget as amended to the Budget Committee. Cindy seconded the motion. Steve agreed. Motion passed.

New Business:

2021 Budget Review – The selectmen reviewed the following budget requests:

- Police Department – requested budget for 2021: \$215,708.00. This is an increase of \$17,708. The increase reflects in the following line items: Ammunition from \$500 to \$600; Retirement from \$35,836 to \$43,647; Wages from \$125,350 to \$136,755 (includes 2 full-time officers and 1 secretarial position). The following line items decreased: Fuel from \$4,800 to \$3,284. Jennie motioned to pass the budget as is the Budget Committee. Cindy second. Steve agreed. Motion passed.
- Fire Warden – requested budget for 2021: \$1000. This is the same amount as 2020. Jennie motioned to pass the budget as is to the Budget Committee. Cindy second. Steve agreed. Motion passed.
- Emergency Management – requested budget for 2021: \$500. This is an increase of \$300 from 2021. The increase reflects in the following line items: Mileage \$100 and Emergency Management Stipend \$200. Jennie motioned to pass the budget as is to the Budget Committee. Cindy second. Steve agreed. Motion passed.
- Fire Department – Tabled; will be reviewed during the November 17, 2020 selectmen meeting.
- Library Trustees – requested budget for 2021: \$22,139.00 (\$19,139 Operating; \$3,000 Gross Basis). This is an increase of \$4,765 from 2020. The increases reflect in the following line items: Media/Subscriptions from \$1,000 to \$1734; Phone/Fax Internet from \$982 to \$1,050; Wages from \$12,272 to \$16,355. The following line items decreased: Heating Fuel from \$1,100 to \$1,000; Electric from \$395 to \$375. Cindy recommended that \$4,000 be cut from the wages line item. Upon a negotiation, the wages line item was cut \$2,000. This amended the budget to \$20,139 (\$17,139 Operating; \$3,000 Gross Basis). Jennie motioned to pass the budget as amended to the Budget Committee. Cindy second. Steve agreed. Motion passed.

2021 Health Insurance Options – Cindy presented health insurance options for the selectmen to review. After a brief discussion, the selectmen decided to keep the current insurance plan but offer employees a \$5,000 opt-out option should they decided to use their spouse's/parent's insurance plan.

Proposed Assessing Contracts – One proposed assessing contract was received from a list of 8 potential companies. The proposed contract received was from Avitar Associates of NE, Inc. The 5-year Contract Assessing & cycled Inspections and Full Update is \$125,256, (\$15,672 per year for years 2021 through 2024 and \$62,568 for 2025) this is an increase of \$5,772 from the last 5 year contract. Jennie motioned to continue using Avitar Associates and to sign the contract. Steve second the motion. Roll Call Vote: Yes: 2 No: 0 Abstain: Cindy. Motion passed.

Junkyard Ordinance – 17 Johnson Lane – Cindy updated the selectmen stating that 17 Johnson Lane has not complied with the junkyard ordinance. Cindy also stated that a certified letter was not sent to

the property owner back in June. The selectmen will speak with Russell and will ask him to hand deliver a Notice of Violation to the property owner.

Other Business:

Abatements – The selectmen signed abatements for the following properties taken for property tax deed in 2020: Map 5 Lot 156, Map 5 Lot 712 and Map 11 Lot 581.

The selectmen reviewed and discussed the following correspondence:

- Approval for Operation – Map 16 Lot 211
- Letter from Mascoma Regional Valley School Board and Budget Committee – response to the selectmen’s letter dated September 1, 2020.

Public Comment: None

Final Comments from Selectmen:

Steve informed the Board that he heard back from Chris Rollins regarding the Halford property.

Cindy, referring to the condition of the Fire Station, volunteer fire department driving issues, maintenance of the fire station, etc., she commented that the Fire Chief has too much on his plate. Jennie stated that the Fire Department needs to go by their regulations. Copies of the regulations will be given to the selectmen for review.

Jennie proposed that if there is money in the budget at the end of the year, to give each selectmen an extra \$500 in addition to their annual stipend of \$2,000. Steve stated that he would go along with it as long as it is okay with NHMA.

Jennie informed the selectmen that she will be resigning her position and will stay until March 2021. Steve thanked Jennie for her many years of service with the Town. Cindy thanked Jennie for helping her this year and answering many of her phone calls.

Cindy motioned to adjourn. Jennie second. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Smith, Administrative Assistant