

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF MADISON
September 26, 2023
MINUTES**

Selectmen Present – Michael A. Mauro, John Arruda, Adam Price

Others Present –Town Administrator Linda Shackford; Town Clerk/Tax Collector/ Fire Chief Michael Brooks; Police Chief Robert J. King, Jr.; DPW Josh Shackford; MadTV Videographer Kasia Scontsas and members of the public: Doug McAllister, Justino Fernandes, Paulette Lowry, Sarah DeMartino, Joy Gray, Jay Buckley, Joe Dame, MaryBeth Dame, Nicole Nordlund, Marcia McKenna, Sharon Schilling.

Where and When Posted – Notice posted 09/14/2023 at Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices and upper and lower levels of Town Hall and published in the 09/16/2023 edition of the Conway Daily Sun.

Hearing Called to Order – By Mauro at 6:00pm.

Mauro opened the public hearing in accordance with RSA 32:11 to discuss and receive input on an over expenditure of the total amount of the 2023 budget appropriated at Town Meeting.

Mauro explained the reason for this hearing. The storms of May 1st and July 16th caused extensive damage to Colby Hill Road and significant damages to other roads. The amount of damage cost more than the budget can support and the Board is holding this hearing to take input before asking the Department of Revenue (DRA) to allow the use of Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB). The current UFB is \$883,503 of which \$429,000 will be asked to use to pay for the repairing of roads. It was noted that there is already \$32,974.00 of UFB that is committed because of four approved warrant articles at the 2023 Town Meeting.

The spreadsheet distributed explained that the UFB amount requested because of the July 16th storm in the amount of \$429,000 was calculated using the expenses for Equipment Rental, Contracts and Material Costs columns. An additional amount of \$25,000 was calculated from expenses incurred from the May 1st storm.

Tino Fernandes of 104 Peak Vista Lane – asked if the Town can expect to get any assistance from FEMA. Brooks stated that the July 16th storm was declared as a disaster and the Town is eligible for assistance from FEMA for that storm. Any reimbursement from FEMA could be ten or eleven months out. The May 1st storm has not been declared a disaster yet.

Sharon Schilling of 537 Bickford Road – clarified that even if the Town receives funds from FEMA, it will not be in a timeframe to be able to pay vendors for expenses due in this budget year.

Joy Gray of East Madison Road – asked if the list of expenses has been submitted to FEMA. Brooks stated that preliminary damage assessment paperwork has been submitted. Now that the disaster has been declared the it will have to be resubmitted with updated codes.

Sharon Schilling of 537 Bickford Road – noting that only a small amount has been spent on Modoc Hill Road, Schilling asked if there will be an opportunity to amend or add amounts submitted to FEMA. Brooks responded that all work done to repair roads from the July 16th storm can be submitted but the majority of the damage to Modoc Hill Road was from the May 1st storm.

Marcia McKenna of 821 East Madison Road – asked for UFB to be explained to which Brooks explained. McKenna asked if this will affect the tax rate with Brooks responding that the gross calculations would be about \$3.30/thousand.

Joy Gray of East Madison Road – asked how UFB is typically used. It was explained by Arruda that it is for emergencies or to buy down the tax rate. The Selectmen typically buy down the tax rate leaving more than \$400,000 in UFB as recommended by DRA.

Sharon Schilling of 537 Bickford Road – asked how the \$25,000 in expenses from the May 1st storm being accounted for, asking if the purchase of the road plates for Modoc Hill Road in the calculation. The \$25,000 includes paving repairs to East Madison Road, Allard Hill Road and the expenses for a grader rental; it does not include the \$12,000 for the plates.

Motion by Price, seconded by Mauro to add the road plate expense of \$12,000 from the May 1st storm to the amount of UFB to be requested from DRA. The motion passed **3-0**.

Jay Buckley of 44 Oak Ridge Road – thanked the Selectmen, Linda Shackford, Mike Brooks and the DPW crew for keeping the Town running smoothly which was followed by a round of applause from the audience. Arruda was pleasantly surprised and pleased to receive accolades for spending close to half a million dollars, chuckling as he noted that does not typically happen.

Doug McAllister of Plains Road – asked if the timber cut up off of Colby Hill Road contributed to the water runoff ultimately damaging the road. That is something that may be answered once the results of the hydrologic and hydraulic study done by State DOT is published.

Joy Gray of East Madison Road – asked about the status of the repairs of Route 113 and was told that on October 17th at the Selectmen’s meeting there will be a representative from NH DOT available to answer questions.

Mauro asked for any other comments; there were none.

Mauro read aloud the letter to be sent to the Commissioner of DRA noting that the amount of \$429,000 was increased to \$441,000 as per the motion regarding the road plate purchase:

“Dear Commissioner Stepp,

The Town of Madison would like to apply under RSA 32:11 to overspend the 2023 appropriated budget in the amount of \$441,000. The reason for the expenditures is due to road damages during the July 16, 2023 storm. The Town suffered catastrophic damage to Colby Hill Road. One half mile of the road was rendered unsafe for travel because of washouts. Those washouts prevented some of the owners from accessing their property and extending emergency response times. This issue prompted the Selectmen to hire a company to rebuild the road due to the urgency of the situation.

The Town suffered damage to twenty-four other Town roads. Repairs were made by the Department of Public Works. The expenses for those repairs could not have been anticipated and were not budgeted for in our annual appropriations but were paid from the budget.

The revenue source that the Town requests to use to pay for the rebuilding of Colby Hill Road and other road improvements would be Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB). The Town's UFB, as determined by the auditing firm of Roberts & Greene on the Town's 2023 MS-535, is \$883,503 of which the Town requests to use \$441,000. There are no Capital Reserve Fund or trusts that could be used to off set the expenditures.

A public hearing was held at Madison Town Hall on September 26, 2023 at 6:00pm. Notice was made in the Conway Daily Sun on Saturday, September 16, 2023 and posted in four public places on September 14, 2023. Please find attached the minutes of said hearing.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.”

Motion by Arruda, seconded by Price to request of the Department of Revenue Commissioner to allow the Selectmen to use \$441,000 of Unassigned Fund Balance. The motion passed **3-0**.

The Board agreed to sign the letter to Commissioner Stepp out of session.

Mauro closed the public hearing at 6:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator