

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF MADISON
December 12, 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 Dave Swift; Rec Director Heather O'Donnell; MadTV Videographer Carol Dandeneau; and members of the public

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on December 20, 2022.

Meeting Called to Order – By Mauro at 4:30 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mauro led all in attendance in reciting the Pledge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Arruda, seconded by Price to approve the minutes of November 28, 2023 as written. The motion passed **3-0**.

APPROVAL OF MANIFEST:

Motion by Arruda, seconded by Price to approve the Manifest of December 11-24, 2023 in the amount of \$1,872,942.32. The manifest breakdown is as follows: \$90,619.96 for accounts payable; \$40,040.46 for payroll; \$11,565.48 for payroll liabilities; \$828,653.00 for Carroll County; \$633,797.00 for VDOE; \$44,500.00 for Fire Dept Member Reimbursements; \$23,766.42 for NHRS; and \$200,000 for Madison School. The motion passed **3-0**.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS:

Tre Simpson for Eagle Project at Atkinson Park – Simpson was not attendance. The Board tabled the discussion to another time.

Scrub Oak Scrambler Club Rep Bert Pinard regarding Black Brook Road – Pinard asked the Board for permission to make improvements to Class VI Black Birch Road. Their trail work has found two places that need to be addressed. There is a hole at the beginning of the road and there another deep hole at a culvert. The Club will supply the machine, materials and labor to make the repairs.

Arruda asked when they plan to do the work. Pinard hopes this coming weekend.

The Board gave their permission to make the repairs.

Arruda asked for Shackford to send a letter that reiterates this approval; it will be sent to Pinard via email.

Short-Term Rental Legal Expense Expendable Trust Fund Withdrawal \$7,739.84 -

Motion by Mauro, seconded by Price to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds for \$7,739.84 from the Short-Term Rental Legal Expense Expendable Trust Fund to reimburse

the general fund for the legal expenses incurred defending or enforcing the Zoning Ordinance in respect to Short-Term Rentals. The motion passed **3-0**.

Silver Lake Dam Improvement Expendable Trust Fund Withdrawal \$10,750.00 -

Motion by Mauro, seconded by Price to request the withdrawal by the Trustees of Trust Funds from the Silver Lake Dam Improvement Expendable Trust Fund in the amount of \$10,750.00 to MSK Engineers, Invoice #16311 for the purpose of review, report and analysis of the dam. The motion passed 3-0.

Escrow Agreement – Disbursement 01 - \$61,654 to Allied Equipment – The stainless-steel dump body has been delivered for installation onto the new Western Star truck. Signing this disbursement authorizes Tax Exempt Leasing to make the payment.

Motion by Arruda, seconded by Price to authorize payment to Allied Equipment from Tax Exempt Leasing for Disbursement 01. The motion passed **3-0**.

Paul McKenna questioned the wording of the motion to withdraw funds from the STR ETF. It was explained that the wording came directly from the warrant article that created the fund and Town Counsel was consulted and confirmed this is a proper use of the funds. McKenna feels STR enforcement is at a standstill to which Mauro disagreed. Mauro stated that we are working/consulting with our Town Counsel and awaiting a response from him.

iWorQ Demonstration – DPW Dave Swift gave an overview of the new iWorQ Fleet Management program. On the TV screen, Swift was able to bring up reports and explained how those are created. The program helps to keep track of and alert the user to aging equipment using criteria that includes age, activity, usage, cost and condition. Swift used November 29th trips to Mount Carberry and Eco-Maine as an example of the cost of a solid waste run equating to \$797.00 and \$634.00 respectively. Swift was able to produce a report that gave a cost of the latest snow event too. The Board thanked Swift for the overview with Mauro seeing this as beneficial to the Town.

OLD BUSINESS:

Veterans Monument – Sharon Schilling provided a copy of an email that had the cost to correct the granite stone, versus installing a bronze plaque, at the Veterans Monument. To pick-up the stone, bring it to Vermont, grind, re-engrave and re-install, Arthur’s Memorials gave a price of \$9,796.00.

Price would rather go the route of grinding than covering. Schilling suggested creating an ETF with \$10,000. Arruda expressed his agreement with the concept. Price and Mauro had concerns over the funding with Mauro remembering the monument was created with fund raising efforts and citing the condition of the budget thought maybe that is the way to go.

Arruda suggested encumbering the funds which was the other Board members agreed to with Schilling responding with a yes to Price’s request if she could obtain a contract from Arthur’s Memorials.

Schilling asked if an ETF can still be created to deposit any unused funds from the operating budget each year, suggesting to begin with \$500.00. Arruda and Price agreed that it could be in the budget with Arruda adding that warrant articles usually have to meet the \$10,000 threshold. Schilling maintained that the funds are protected in an ETF. Arruda said the Board will take it under advisement.

Recreation Forms – Shackford reported that Town Counsel reviewed the electronic signature forms and feels confident they will cover the Town. He did question if there is a way to confirm that the person who electronically signed was the person on the application with Price explaining that the sign-in required captures the email address and prints it on the form. Shackford added that Counsel feels that the same form can be used for the entire school year as long as no specific sports are listed. The Board appreciated the information.

2024 Proposed Budget – Arruda read through the proposed 2024 budget stating the percentage increase or decrease over 2023 with pertinent discussion listed below:

DPW Solid Waste – Arruda suggested a decrease to the recycling line of \$20,000 which would leave \$13,500 because the one-time expense in 2023 of a container purchase is not planned for next year. Arruda also suggested an increase to the maintenance line of \$5,000. The changes were agreed upon by the Board.

Arruda noted that we have received correspondence from Eco-Maine that could help with disposal costs, it had not yet been reviewed.

Legal – The increase takes into consideration the \$4,000 - \$6,000 for the negotiation of the cable tv contract.

Planning Board – The \$2,500 cut to the legal line made at a previous meeting will be sent back to the Planning Board to see if they can make do or should the Board reconsider the change.

Shackford will ask Young to bring the issue to the Planning Board.

Police – Chief King stated that he intends to be submitting a revised budget that will be level funded with the 2023 numbers at the next meeting.

Rec Department – The \$30,000 increase is from the director's salary in the warrant article from 2023 being moved into the operating budget. Price hopes to have the Rec Committee take another look at their numbers.

Arruda stated the proposed operating budget for 2024 is at \$3,510,189 which is 6.6% over last year by \$215,961.

2024 Warrant Articles – Arruda read through the proposed 2024 warrant articles with pertinent discussion listed below:

Solid Waste Truck – Arruda would like to see the amount paid for the truck to be around \$200,000 by making a possible trade in.

Transfer Station ETF - \$15,000 is proposed to add to the fund. Swift noted that consideration of a new waste oil collection tank for next year should be made. Swift will get a price.

Arruda stated that the proposed total warrant is \$4,104,513 which is \$263,433 over last year equaling a 6.86% increase. For comparison, Price noted that the County budget increased 6.7% over last year.

Selectman Price's List – Price asked the Board to have a non-public meeting under **RSA 91-A:3II (a)** The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. The Board was in agreement.

Selectman Arruda's List – Arruda stated that the Transfer Station has collected revenue of \$67,079 year to date and about \$6,000 in recycling of metals. Arruda asked Mauro and Price to

please attend the next Advisory Budget Committee meeting on January 16th so they can decide on changes if necessary.

Selectman Mauro's List – Mauro gave an overview of the December Conservation Commission meeting noting that the commission is in continued discussion with Saco Valley Land Trust regarding obtaining the Chain of Ponds. The easement is valued at \$400,000 with the potential of Madison bringing \$200,000. More information is being awaited before scheduling a public hearing on the issue.

Administrator's List – Shackford informed the Board that Ted Kramer of SLAM has asked that a NH Lakes pamphlet be given when people obtain their Silver Lake boat stickers. Kramer will order pamphlets for distribution. The Board was in agreement with Shackford to distribute.

Department Heads' List:

Town Clerk/Tax Collector/Fire Chief Brooks – Brooks reported that the State has sent the absentee ballots for the January primary and once received his office will begin to fill requests. Brooks also mentioned:

- Fire call numbers have already surpassed last year's total by 20 calls.
- There are still Christmas trees for sale at the Fire Station with about 17 left to choose from;
- The Fire Department is holding a public Christmas party scheduled for Sunday, December 17 with no admission fee;
- Property tax collection is on par with an average collection of \$300,000/day.

DPW Dave Swift – Swift gave an overview of DPW activities for the last two weeks. Those activities included but not limited to:

- Repairs were made to Trucks #12, #3, #11 and new tires were installed on the 416;
- The crew has been doing some high limbing to thwart power outages;
- Radio installations are complete on the DPW trucks;
- The newest addition to the fleet is now expected to be delivered in January;
- The trade-in grader offer was committed to another town with the next option offered not being as exciting of a deal;
- Arruda asked if we encumbered funds for another container would we be able to eliminate the delivery charge by getting it ourselves to which Swift stated certainly; and
- Sullivan Tires has given us a municipal deal on taking our old tires.

Police Chief King – King stated that though he was not in attendance at the last Advisory Budget Committee (ABC) meeting he understands that an alternate alleges that the Selectmen are making backroom deals because three former selectmen hold positions within the Town. Chief King explained the hiring circumstances and history of Brooks and J. Shackford then began to explain his own situation noting that he is the sixth chief to work their way up through the department in Madison, a town he grew up in.

Offensively claiming backroom deals minimizes the work of the departments. The departments have never been run better. Chief King asked for proof of a backroom deal short of saying "it looks funny".

Chief King listed his accomplishments and qualifications that got him to the Chief's position while offering his open-door office policy and face-to-face conversations. There are sixteen public agencies in the county with thirteen chiefs being promoted from within adding that his #2 in command is no less deserving to be promoted from within.

Rec Director O'Donnell – O'Donnell reported that twenty people have registered for the “Festival of Lights” event sponsored by the rec department with voting taking place this week; the winner announcement at the Fire Department Christmas party on Sunday. Price reiterated earlier discussion about the Rec Department forms being OK'd with O'Donnell confirming the change to item #9 related to first aid being provided.

SIGNATURE ITEMS

Manifest

Payroll & Accounts Payable Checks

Eastern Propane Gas, Inc Model Certificate P – Exemption from Road Tax

HealthTrust HRA Coverage

Rec Volunteer Appointment: Jeff DeMartino

6:11 PM Motion by Mauro to enter **RSA 91-A:3II (a)** The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. The Board was in agreement.

Roll Call Vote: Arruda – aye; Price – aye; Mauro – aye

6:28 PM Motion by Mauro, seconded by Price to return to public session and to make public the minutes of the **Non-Public Sessions per RSA 91-A:3II (a)** The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. The Board was in agreement. The motion passed **3-0**.

Motion by Mauro, seconded by Price to adjourn at 6:28 pm. The motion passed **3-0**.

NEXT SELECTMEN'S MEETING – The next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for December 26, 2023 commencing at 4:30 pm at the Madison Town Hall meeting room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator