**Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes**

**December 11, 2023**

**7:00 PM** Selectman John **Quinlan** called the meeting to order. Also present was Selectman Jack **Esposito** and Selectman Howard **Brown.**

**Brown** stated that the Library Trustees have requested a town email address. Joan Cleary will have Becci Schwarz contact Twin Bridges tomorrow to facilitate that.

The Board reviewed the minutes of 12/4/23. **Esposito** motioned to accept the minutes of 12/4/23 as written seconded by **Brown.** All in favor. **Esposito** motioned to accept the non-public minutes of 12/4/23 as written seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

We have received a one-time special bridge payment in the amount of $10,921.95 in accordance with HB2, Payment for Maintenance, Construction and Reconstruction of Municipally Owned Bridges. **Esposito** motioned to accept the funds seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

**7:15PM Department Head Meeting**

**Chief Mark Slavin – Police Department**

* Chief Slavin was invited with other Chiefs to judge the Christmas trees at SHARE for their Festival of Trees.
* Ordering new computer systems for the cruisers. There is a 75% grant match from the state. These are tablet style; the state also funded the E -printers for the cruisers. Installation should be complete within the next 3 weeks. This will greatly improve what they can do roadside. The tablets come out of the docking station; they will be able to go onto a crime scene and use the tablet to take photos, etc.
* Wednesday starts their Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over state funded DUI enforcement shifts. That will run through January 1st.
* **Quinlan** noted that he is seeing a lot of large trucks speeding on Francetown Tpke. Slavin stated that he can increase enforcement. **Esposito** noted that he is seeing people out walking on the streets without any reflective clothing on; someone is going to get hit. Slavin said they can put out a PSA

**Chief Jay Wilson – Fire Department**

* They hosted another chili cookoff at Tree Lighting which was a lot of fun; they had a lot of people come in and out.
* Finished servicing the apparatus for the year.
* Waiting on backorder of radio/communications equipment for the Fire Dept. and some truck equipment and firefighter equipment.

**Heather Kennedy – Recreation Department**

* Tree Lighting was a success. The weather was great as was attendance. There were crafts for the kids inside and the chorus was outside along with Santa & Mrs. Claus.

 MaryJo Marcely gave a quick history blurb to share with the community because it’s the

 220th birthday of Mont Vernon. David Brooks was Honorary Tree Lighter. Fire and Police

 Had a Toys 4 Tots collection and the Girl Scouts were collecting coats.

* Heather gave a thank you to Becci Schwarz for her great job decorating the Town Hall. She thanked Ray Lyons and Ben Crosby who got our tree to actually light; it was an effort this year to make that happen.
* Crotchet Mountain Youth Development Program has transitioned into something called Slope Days. It’s a 3 or 6-week program of lessons. The sign up has been extended through this Friday. The program will begin January 12th and run for 6 weeks.
* Through the NH Recreation and Park Association we have joined the Southern NH Tour of Lights. She will post tonight the map of all suggested routes to follow.
* **Brown** questioned who purchased the ornaments that were given out at Tree Lighting. Kennedy responded that the commemorative ornaments were purchased by the Rec Dept. **Brown** said that there are people who did not have the chance to make it to Tree Lighting who were told that they can buy them after the fact. Kennedy said that they bought extra this year because it’s the 220th birthday of MV. Typically, they run out of ornaments; this year there were a few remaining. They have been donated to the Heritage Commission so that they can offer them at their event next week when they are doing their celebration. People don’t have to make a donation, but it’s a suggested donation to be able to put towards the Town Hall project. **Brown** said he had one constituent complaining because they couldn’t make it to the tree lighting and then they were told that they would have to buy the ornament when it was supplied by the Town. They were a little irate about that. They didn’t ask for donations from the people at the Tree Lighting. Kennedy said that the ones given out that night were for the people who attended Tree Lighting. For the people who did not attend but still want one, they now have an opportunity to get one next weekend. If they would like to make a donation towards the Town Hall project, that would be wonderful. If they don’t, they can still go next weekend. Zoe Fimbel said that’s how it’s always been; you have to show up and be there to be able to participate in that. She thinks it’s a shame that somebody is concerned about not getting one. Had she not ordered extra, they would not have gotten one anyway. **Brown** stated that the concern is that the Town paid for them out of the Recreation budget; and now they’re going to ask for a donation. Lorri Hayes spoke via zoom. She said that since we have paid already for the ornaments, why not give the ornaments away and have people make a donation to the Heritage Commission separate and apart from making a donation for the ornaments. Heather Kennedy said that is essentially what they are doing. There are extra ornaments remaining. They are passing them on to the Heritage Commission for two reasons: 1) It directs people to their event and improves their attendance 2) It allows more people who were not able to attend last week to get the ornament. They are fundraising at that event; they will have other items there such as the calendars that they will be selling. This is an addition to what they already have and it’s by donation. By all means, if someone does not feel that they should be donating for it, they don’t want to put money towards the Town Hall, they can’t afford it, or whatever reason, they can choose to not make a donation.

**Ben Crosby – Highway Department**

* New culverts are holding up well with all the heavy rain
* Waiting to hear back from VHB out of Bedford; they are doing the surveying for the Town line on the old 2nd NH Tpke – Caesars Road. **Esposito** feels we need to get some guidance on this; we have a Class VI road with the potential for 5 or more houses to be built. We need to know what our liability would be.
* Crosby will be attending the NRPC TTAC meeting tomorrow. This is where they go over the State’s 10-year plan as far as projects for roadwork, etc.

**Bonnie Angulas – Library Director**

* Seats and Feets donation to SHARE went out for the 3rd year.
* They attended the PTA Winter Wonderland Event where JoAnn Kitchel did a story time and Amy Wyman did some face painting.
* They had 22 bakers at the Cookie Swap and hosted Holiday Pajama Storytime.
* Letters to Santa runs through December 19th.
* Library Building Committee set up at the Transfer Station to advertise their event. They invited the community to view the new library project last Wed. night. There were lots of discussion/questions on MV Chatter before the event which was great if you’re on Chatter, but not everyone on the Library Building Committee is. This is why the Library Trustees are asking for an email address.
* She clarified that she is required by state RSA to track and report the number of people to enter the library.

**Quinlan** noted that we are still in limbo with the ambulance situation.

Jay Wilson told the Board that they will be putting in a Warrant Article for PPE; new firefighter gear. This will be a 3-year non-lapsing; they will also be applying for a grant for that. It will be over 100K for the gear. They are spending some of the funds they have now for trial gear; the cost is about 3K for coat/pants. Gear needs to be replaced every 10 years; packs every 20 years.

Wilson asked will the Board agree to meet with the Library Trustees, the Daland Trustees, the Building Inspector, the Fire Department and the experts they hired to talk about the sprinkler system and why it is required for the proposed new library. He would really like to get the facts out there and get everyone on the same page. He is required by state RSA to enforce the state fire code. If he fails to do so the town is liable and he is personally liable as well. He feels he does his due diligence with no personal objective.

The Board went over the numbers for the Elderly Exemption. **Esposito** recommends using an income limit of $65K and an asset limit of 125K. For ages 65-74, 104K reduction is assessed value; 75-79; 156K reduction in assessed value; 80+ 206K reduction in assessed value. This will bring us more in line with Amherst’s numbers. We will work on the wording and submit to Town Counsel for review.

The Board went over the Town Building Usage policy. **Quinlan** spoke with the NHMA regarding this. The Library Trustees have full control over everything having to do with the library even though the building is town owned; they are the only ones to set policies for that building. You can possibly ban buildings usage but the problem is that you can’t ban because of content because of everyone’s rights under the 1st Amendment. If you ban religious or political usage, you have to ban everything else.

**Brown** handed out the four policies he’s been working on. The Board will review and discuss at a later meeting.

The office will be closed on Monday the 25th and Monday the 1st. The Board set a meeting date for Wednesday, 12/27/23 at 3:00pm and tentatively set another for 1/3/24, time TBD.

**8:30 PM Brown** motioned to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel issue **seconded** by **Esposito.** All in favor.

**8:40 PM Brown** motioned to come out of non-public session seconded by **Esposito.** All in favor.

**Esposito** motioned to seal the non-public minutes of 12/11/23 seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

**8:45 PM** As there was no further business before the Board **Esposito** motioned to adjourn seconded by **Brown.** All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Cleary