TOWN OF
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
SELECTBOARD

P.O. BOX 360 – 1 Main Street
BROOKLINE, NH 03033-0360

Telephone (603) 673-8855, ext. 213
Fax   (603) 673-8136

Selectboard@brooklinenh.us   *http://www.brooklinenh.us*

Minutes
Selectboard
Monday, December 13, 2021

Selectboard members present: Drew Kellner, Eddie Arnold, Brendan Denehy, and Steve Russo along with Town Administrator Tad Putney.

6:30pm Drew opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the rules for hybrid meetings.

Public Input
Drew acknowledged the passing of life-long resident Elly Austin and said our thoughts go out to the Austin family. He said the Town Hall closed early on Friday, so employees could attend his celebration of life. **Brendan** thanked the volunteers who helped with the recent "Tree Lighting" and "Celebration of Lights" festivities.

Approve Minutes
Eddie moved, seconded by Brendan, to approve the public minutes from the Monday, November 29th meeting as written; Voted Yes 4-0. Eddie moved, seconded by Steve, to approve 8 sets of non-public minutes from the Monday, November 29th meeting as written; Voted Yes 4-0.

Sign Warrants for Payment
Brendan moved, seconded by Eddie, to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #49 in the amount of $3,070,850.69, Payroll Warrant #50 in the amount of $70,571.29, Police Detail in the amount of $1,260.00, Annual Sick-Time Buyout in the amount of $29,560.19, and Public Works Building Project Warrant #8 in the amount of $197,459.53; Voted Yes 4-0.

Update on Tax Collection Rate
Tad said **Patti** advised that the tax collection rate, as of December 8th, was 96.6% versus 95.27% at the same time last year.

Review Year-to-Date Expenses; Unexpected Expenses and Savings vs. Budget
Tad said as of the end of November we were just under 92% of the way through the year and had spent 84% of the operating budget. He said the two line items that are over are Elections, due to COVID-related expenses last March, and Legal. **Tad** said unanticipated savings against the 2021 budget are about $147,000 and unplanned expenses are at about $132,000, so we are about $15,000 ahead, excluding police, fire, ambulance and winter maintenance.

Review Submissions for Vacant Town Trustee Position; Notice Appointment

Drew said the candidates for the vacant Trustee of Trust Funds position are: **Brian Rater**, **Betsy Solon**, and **Deborah Johnson-Hawks**. *Eddie moved, seconded by Steve, to give notice to appoint Deborah Johnson-Hawks to the position of Trustee of Trust Funds, for the remainder of the term ending March of 2024, at the next Selectboard meeting; Voted Yes 3-0-1, Brendan abstained.*

Review Recommendation for Welfare Officer; Notice Appointment

After reviewing **Tad's** recommendation, *Brendan moved, seconded by Steve, to give notice to appoint Angie Dacey as the new Welfare Officer at the next Selectboard meeting; Voted Yes 4-0.* **Drew** said **Angie** has committed to remain in the position for at least two years.

Approve Payment of Volvo Excavator from Public Works Equip. Cap. Res. Fund

Eddie moved, seconded by Steve, to approve payment of $210,190 from the Public Works Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a 2021 Volvo Wheeled Excavator with a five-year extended warranty included; Voted Yes 4-0.

Review 2021 Audit Engagement Letter for Approval

Eddie moved, seconded by Steve, to authorize Chair Drew Kellner and Town Administrator Tad Putney to sign the Audit Engagement Letter with the auditing firm of Plodzik & Sanderson for the 2021 audit; Voted Yes 4-0.

Public Works Building Project Update

Tad said the scheduled December 9th walk-through of the building to develop a comprehensive punch list was deferred to Wednesday, December 15th and will include the Building Inspector. **Tad** said the "Owner's Contingency" has about $7,000 left in it. He said the current phone system in town buildings is past its expected life and he is looking at using the public works building as a test case for a new phone system that could be expanded to other town buildings, if deemed successful.

TAP-2 Sidewalk and Pedestrian Bridge Update

Tad said revised final plans have been submitted to NHDOT and once approved, bidding should occur over the winter months for favorable pricing. He said we have seen an increase in estimated costs primarily due to the state's request that the pedestrian bridges be further from the adjoining vehicular bridges. He said this resulted in a longer, and more expensive, bridge for South Main Street. **Tad** said the changes increased total estimated project costs by $320,000, which will require an additional $64,000 to be approved in March as the town's 20% match.

Review July 4th, 2022 Fireworks Contract

Brendan moved, seconded by Steve, to authorize Drew to sign the $10,500 contract with Atlas PyroVision Entertainment Group for the 2022 fireworks display; Voted Yes 4-0.

Review Approved 2022 Brookline Costs for Souhegan Regional Landfill District

Eddie reviewed Brookline's 2022 portion of the Souhegan Regional Landfill District's budget and advised it is $230,000.32, which is up by 10.2% over 2021.

2022 Mason Ambulance Contract – Chief Stewart

Jeffrey said he updated some minor language and added some clarifications in the contract for 2022. He said the 2022 contract is for $75,082.70. *Eddie moved, seconded by Steve, to authorize the Chair, Drew Kellner, and Ambulance Chief, Jeffrey Stewart, to sign the 2022 ambulance contract with the Town of Mason; Voted Yes 4-0. Jeffrey said the Brookline Ambulance Service has done 506 calls year to date and 113 have been to Mason.*

Review Latest Summary of 2022 Operating Budget; Revisit Fuel Prices for 2022

Tad reviewed the latest 2022 operating budget figures and said we are seeing, at this point in time, an increase of 9.7% over 2021. He said it is important to note that 46% of that increase is what we have budgeted next year for "Legal". Board members agreed to defer any changes in 2022 assumed fuel prices until we get closer to town meeting.

Review Peer Town Pay Survey Results; Discuss 2022 Non-Union Pay Increases

Tad said he contacted 22 NH peer towns and 12 responded. He said 10 of the 12 towns are implementing 2022 pay increases of 3.5% or more and the median increase is 4.5%. Board members agreed to defer a decision on 2022 non-union pay increases until the next meeting.

Review Draft Code of Conduct

The Board reviewed the draft of the Code of Conduct. It was agreed that **Tad** will separate the Code into a version for employees that will be included in the Personnel Plan and a separate version for elected and appointed officials. **Tad** will forward the updated version for officials to **Chris Drescher** for his review.

Review Proposed Changes to Personnel Plan

Tad reviewed with the Board proposed changes he made to the Personnel Plan. Another review will be conducted at the next meeting.

ARPA Update

The Board reviewed the latest update on ARPA funding. **Tad** said the relative narrow areas for spending the funds remain in place, but may be relaxed in the future.

Set Date for Annual Department Head Reviews

Members decided to defer this to the next meeting.

Next Meeting Agenda

It was agreed the following items will be discussed at the next meeting:
- Timing of annual department head reviews
- Vacation rollover requests

- Finalize Personnel Plan
- Appointments for trustee and welfare positions
- Determine 2022 pay increases
- Discuss Capital Improvements Plan
- Review Code of Conduct

Review Mail Folder
The Board reviewed the mail folder

8:19pm *Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation (d) land, and (l) legal; potentially others; Roll Call Vote Yes 4-0.*

9:05pm *Drew moved, second by Eddie, to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes; Voted Yes 4-0.*

9:05pm meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Sturtevant.

_____   _____
Drew Kellner   Eddie Arnold

_____   _____
Brendan Denehy   Steve Russo