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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020
ASHLAND TOWN OFFICE
4:00 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER – Town of Ashland Chairman of the Board Eli Badger called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and requested a roll call of the Selectmen; Vice Chairman Kathleen DeWolfe, Selectman Frances Newton, Selectman Alan Cilley, Selectman Andy Fitch and Chairman Eli Badger all acknowledged they were present via the video conference. Chairman Badger notified attendees that the meeting was occurring over video and teleconference, a provision authorized by the Governor’s Emergency Order #12 that waived the physical presence of board members during the Covid-19 pandemic.

II. 2021 DEPARTMENT BUDGET EXPENDITURE REQUEST – UTILITY DEPTS.

a. Ashland Water and Sewer

i. **Water Department** – Superintendent Cross presented a relatively level funded budget request from the 2020 voted budget – overall requested increase was \$1,804 from the \$224,470 budget in 2020. Superintendent Cross did mention the water rate might need a slight increase at start of the year to keep up with ongoing expenses. Significant expense in this budget was to replace the roof at the water pump station on Cedar Lane, roof is 28 years old.

ii. **Sewer Department** – like the water rate, sewer will also need an increase. Requested sewer budget (\$425,599) is \$5,129 lower than 2020. Significant expense; department budgeting for replacement truck as part of the truck rotation.

b. **Ashland Electric Department** – Town Manager Smith presented the budget on behalf of the department. Requested budget for 2021 is \$2.79M which is lower than the \$3.25M budget approved in 2020. Notable increases: line maintenance for reclosure work near Rochester Shoe Tree, and equipment line for the truck rentals. Power purchase line decreased as forecasted expense to be \$1.8M versus the \$2.1M budgeted in 2020.

i. **New meters** – Town Manager Smith took the opportunity to notify the Selectmen about recent meetings with vendors to change the electric meters. Once proposals are received a meeting between the Board and vendors will be scheduled.

III. SELECTBOARD ITEMS

a. **Petitioned warrant articles** – nonprofit “Lakes Region Mental Health” contacted Chairman Badger about the board waiving the town provision requiring appropriation request be submitted through petitioned warrant article (petition articles require the signature of 25 registered voters). LR Mental Health was asking if it could be waived because of Covid. Board decided to keep the provision in place.

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MOTION: Chairman Badger
*The Board of Selectmen keep the requirement that 25 signatures are required for
petition warrant articles.*
SECOND: Vice Chairman DeWolfe
VOTE: 5 – 0
MOTION PASSED

IV. Meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

V. Next meeting – the Board scheduled, Thursday, October 22nd at 4 p.m. to vote on the proposed 2021 expenditure budget.