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**ASHLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020
ASHLAND WATER & SEWER CONFERENCE ROOM – 6 COLLINS ST.
6:30 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER – The Town of Ashland Chairman of the Board Frances Newton called this meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. with a full board present; Vice Chairman Kathleen DeWolfe, Selectman Eli Badger, Selectman Leigh Sharps, and Selectman Casey Barney all signified they were present. Town Manager Charles Smith was also present for the meeting.

II. PUBLIC HEARING – the Chairman Newton opened the public hearing at 6:39 p.m. for public comment about the Ashland Library special bond warrant article to purchase the property on 41 School Street.

- a. Ashland Library Trustees were present: Chairman Alice Staples, started with a presentation about the importance of the town purchasing the property for the library. Alice stated that the following, current Scribner Building does not have enough room for books and projects, there are space issues for the library, accessibility issues to the building, and limited parking. Alice also mentioned benefits for a town creating a new library and purchasing the old high school on School Street. If so, it would be a symbol of a town’s success, it improves our infrastructure, it would become a place of connection for elderly residents whom rely upon the library. The new property would be a better location for the library, with its proximity to the school the library would better serve the kids, would be an opportunity for the town to reclaim a historic town landmark. Also, the library would provide a safe place for kids who use it after school hours, and for residents or student without a computer at home. Alice concluded by saying the trustees did look at other properties to move into, but the renovation costs were extensive, there were traffic and parking issues, and this property is a great bargain compared to what other towns have been paying to purchase new libraries.
- b. Amanda Loud asked about the annual maintenance and if the Library would need to expand staff? Trustee Mardean Badger the library would have to hire an additional librarian and as for overhead, currently Tri-County CAP (resident owner at 41 School Street) pays about \$16,000 year for heat, water, electric, etc.
- c. Charlie Bozello asked about usage of the library. Trustees estimate they have about 1,800 items available. Exact figures are published in the town report.
- d. Jenny Angel asked about expansion of library services. Trustees said with the new library they would expand services to the public.
- e. Leigh Sharps asked if they would expand the computer room? Trustees said they currently don’t have enough space for people to use their laptops at the library, so they expect there to be an expansion with the new building.
- f. Amanda Loud asked about future capital expenditures? Trustee Badger expects there to be minor renovations with the new building.
- g. Ann Richards asked if the trustees have grants for this project? Trustee Badger responded that the library always tries for grants, but they are difficult to find when purchasing a new building.

- 1 h. Financing options were discussed - Tri County CAP have proposed a few
2 owner/finance options. They also said the \$525,000 price of the building was lowest
3 price they could offer. Tri-County CAP mentioned the total cost to refurbish the
4 building was \$1,200,000.
5

6 **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
7

8 **MOTION:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe
9 *To approve the meeting minutes from December 16, 2019.*

10 **SECOND:** Selectman Sharps

11 **VOTE:** 5-0

12 **MOTION PASSED**
13

14 **MOTION:** Selectman Barney
15 *To approve the meeting minutes from December 30, 2019.*

16 **SECOND:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe

17 **VOTE:** 4-0-1 (Selectman Sharps, no vote, absent for meeting)

18 **MOTION PASSED**
19

20 **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- 21 a. **Ashland DPW and Ashland School District Shared Equipment Agreement** –
22 mutual agreement between the town and school that allows both parties to share
23 equipment. Topic was previously discussed by the board with an agreement drafted
24 by legal counsel. School Board sent final agreement, which was previously reviewed
25 by town counsel, to the Selectmen for approval at this meeting. Vice Chairman
26 DeWolfe asked about tracking the equipment use and responsibility for wear-and-
27 tear? DPW and the Town Mechanic does keep track of all their equipment usage.
28

29 **MOTION:** Selectman Badger
30 *To approve the shared equipment agreement between Ashland DPW and the Ashland
31 School District.*

32 **SECOND:** Selectman Barney

33 **VOTE:** 4-1

34 **MOTION PASSED**
35

- 36 b. **Ashland 4th of July Committee fireworks contract** – annual contract between the
37 town and Atlas fireworks.
38

39 **MOTION:** Selectman Sharps
40 *To approve the Atlas fireworks contract and to allow the Town Manager sign on
41 behalf of the board.*

42 **SECOND:** Selectman Barney

43 **VOTE:** 5-0

44 **MOTION PASSED**
45

- 1 c. **Ashland Transfer Station acceptance of cardboard from the Town of Bristol**; the
2 town was approached by Bristol to see if the transfer station could accept their excess
3 flow of cardboard. DPW Director Moore recommended this be on a trial basis for a
4 period of three months. Board members agreed to help a neighboring town on a
5 temporary basis. Town Manager Smith to finalize the MOU with Bristol.
6

7 **V. SELECTBOARD ITEMS**

- 8 a. **Property Tax Map Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) expenditure** – the Board voted on
9 an expenditure from this CRF for the GIS (Geographic Information System) project.
10

11 **MOTION:** Selectman Badger

12 *To expend \$15,720 from the Property Tax Map Capital Reserve Fund for payment*
13 *towards the town parcel mapping project.*

14 **SECOND:** Selectman Barney

15 **VOTE:** 5-0

16 **MOTION PASSED**
17

- 18 b. **Ashland Planning Board appointment** – the Board voted to appoint Paula Hancock
19 to the Ashland Planning Board as an alternate.
20

21 **MOTION:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe

22 *To appoint Paula Hancock to the Ashland Planning Board as an alternate member for*
23 *a three-year term.*

24 **SECOND:** Selectman Sharps

25 **VOTE:** 5-0

26 **MOTION PASSED**
27

- 28 c. **2020 Default Budget** – the Board voted on the final default budget amount (includes
29 the utility default budgets) and signed the DRA form.

30 **MOTION:** Selectman Badger

31 *To approve the 2020 default budget amount of \$6,904,563.*

32 **SECOND:** Selectman Barney

33 **VOTE:** 5-0

34 **MOTION PASSED**
35

- 36 d. **Warrant articles** – Selectman Sharps was absent at the Boards prior meeting when
37 they voted on the recommendations of each article. Instead of re-voting on each
38 article the board took one vote to include Selectman Sharps recommendation on the
39 articles. Board also voted to recommend all the petitioned warrant articles received.
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MOTION: Selectman Badger
To add Selectman Sharps recommendation, in agreement with the quarum, to all the warrant articles.

SECOND: Selectman Barney

VOTE: 5-0

MOTION PASSED

VI. ADJOURNED – Board adjourned their meeting at 8:32 p.m. and are scheduled to reconvene on Monday, January 20, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.