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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020
ASHLAND TOWN OFFICE
5:30 P.M.**

Note: this meeting was conducted over zoom video and teleconference, per the exception provided by the Governor's Emergency Order #12 (in relation to the Covid -19 pandemic). Emergency Order #12 waived the physical presence of board members (RSA 91-A2, III (b)).

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Town of Ashland Chairman of the Board Eli Badger called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked for a roll call; Chairman Eli Badger, Vice Chairman Kathleen DeWolfe, Selectmen Frances Newton, and Selectman Alan Cilley all acknowledge they were present via the video conference, signifying a quorum of the board. Chairman Badger notified attendees that the meeting was considered public and occurring via video and teleconference that was authorized pursuant to Emergency Order #12.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Selectman Newton

To approve the meeting minutes of June 15, 2020.

SECOND: Vice Chairman DeWolfe

DISCUSSION: a few grammatical changes on page 1 and 3.

VOTE: 4 – 0

MOTION PASSED

III. NEW BUSINESS

a. Ashland Electric Department (AED)

- i. **Collection agency** – Ashland Electric Superintendent Rob Kuell forward the board a contract from “All Debt Solutions” a collection agency that would collect on past due Ashland Electric bills. Over the past 14 months AED has accumulated a customer past due balance of over \$20,000. Most of the past due bills are from renters, which the department can not lien. Board asked that the contract be reviewed by legal before approval.

- ii. **Deposit fees** – Ashland Electric Superintendent Rob Kuell requested the Board of Selectmen approve a ‘new customer account fee’ and ‘deposit schedule.’ The new customer account fee, \$30 charge, would be on the first billing and help with the administrative expense of setting up the new accounts. The deposit schedule would be for new Ashland Electric utility customers and overall would help reduce the departments reliance on a collection agency. The proposed deposit schedule would be as follows; *New homeowner with no prior account history or credit references that can be provided will have a minimum deposit charge of \$125.00 for non-electric heat homes and for electric heat homes will be \$225.00. Rental and Lease properties nonelectric heat rating would have a*

1 *minimum deposit of \$150.00 for residential and \$500.00 for commercial use.*
2 *Rental and Lease properties with electric heat rating would have a minimum*
3 *deposit of \$300.00 for residential and \$500.00 for commercial use.* Deposits
4 can be paid before the start of service or billed over a span of three months on
5 the first three months of electrical billing. Deposits would be held in a non-
6 escrow account for a minimum of one year from the start of service, payments
7 after that time could be used as a credit or refunded by check. Board of
8 Selectmen agreed to add the new customer fee and deposit schedule.

9
10 **MOTION:** Selectman Newton

11 *To add a new customer account fee and deposit schedule for new Ashland*
12 *Electric customers.*

13 **SECOND:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe

14 **VOTE:** 4 – 0

15 **MOTION PASSED**

16
17 **b. Ashland Scribner Trustees**

- 18 i. **Landscape maintenance and capital expenses** – to save costs from the
19 Scribner trust funds, Ashland Trustee Amanda Loud requested the town remove
20 a tree and take over mowing responsibilities at the Scribner Library building.
21 Trustee Loud estimated between the tree removal, tree trimming and annual
22 mowing the trust would save \$3,850 (\$1,100 annually). The Scribner Trustees
23 estimate the building needs \$18,000 in capital expenses to replace the roof, oil
24 tank, electric and plumbing work. Trustee Loud said the total capital expenses
25 would be about 1/3 of the available trust funds. Consensus of the board was to
26 have Public Works and Ashland Electric work together and remove the tree –
27 mowing responsibilities to be revisited later as Public Works does not have the
28 necessary equipment.

29 **c. Sale of town property**

- 30 i. **14 Winter Street** – on behalf of his client, Commerce Properties, NH Licensed
31 Land Surveyor Anthony L. Randall inquired about purchasing town owned land
32 at/near 14 Winter Street. Through his surveying work for his client Mr. Randall
33 discovered that the town property (0.77 acres) was tax deed by the town years
34 before the town had tax maps. Mr. Randall’s client is willing to pay \$1,000 for
35 the land, along with the expense of a quitclaim deed and recording fees.
36 Selectmen agreed to send the proposed sale of the land to the Planning Board
37 for a recommendation (RSA 41:14-a).

38
39 **MOTION:** Selectman Newton

40 *To initiate the process of selling town owned land by sending the proposal to*
41 *the Ashland Planning Board for recommendation.*

42 **SECOND:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe

43 **VOTE:** 4 – 0

44 **MOTION PASSED**

1 **IV. OLD BUSINESS**

2 a. **Ashland Parks & Recreation**

- 3 i. **Campground bathhouse** - Parks and Recreation Director Barney forwarded
4 the Board of Selectmen an agreement for Edward N Doggett Campground
5 renters about reopening the campground bathhouse. New rules would include
6 having one person at time, masks worn, social distancing, hand sanitizing, and
7 cleaning after use. Prior to board vote, Director Barney had all but three
8 campers commit to the new rules.

9
10 **MOTION:** Selectman Newton

11 *To allow the campground bathhouse reopened under the guidelines submitted*
12 *by Parks and Recreation Director Barney.*

13 **SECOND:** Vice Chairman DeWolfe

14 **VOTE:** 3 – 1 (Chairman Badger vote nay)

15 **MOTION PASSED**

- 16
17 ii. **Town beach** - Director Barney asked for clarification on a prior vote by the
18 board about use of the town beach. Board of Selectmen previously voted to
19 only allow residents and taxpayers to use the town beach this summer (out of
20 concerns with the public's health during pandemic). Director Barney was
21 approached by Cold Springs Resorts and Ames Brook Campground about their
22 ability to use the town beach. Director Barney did not allow Cold Spring
23 Resorts visitors to use the beach as owners are timeshare holders, and Ames
24 Brook Campers has many out of town visitors. Board agreed with Director
25 Barney's decision not to allow their attendance at the beach this time, as the
26 board continues to try to do their best to protect the health of the town.

27
28 **V. SELECTBOARD ITEMS**

- 29 a. **Vendor permit and Fireworks ordinance(s)** – for consideration by the Board of
30 Selectmen, Town Manager Smith sent the Board two sample policies to adopt. First
31 being a new vendor permit ordinance with new permit application. Second was a new
32 fireworks ordinance. Board are take the sample ordinance under consideration and at a
33 later date would prefer to setup an 'ordinance workshop' meeting, in which the focus of
34 the meeting would be on all the adopted town ordinances – to see if revisions are
35 necessary.
- 36 b. **Physically present Selectmen meetings** – being that the board has been meeting
37 remotely, Selectman Cilley added this item to the meeting to see when the board was
38 going to consider meeting physically present? Selectman Cilley felt it might be
39 necessary to meet as a group to work on upcoming projects such as preparing the town
40 budget. Selectman Newton felt the video conference meetings are a necessary option
41 until the Covid virus has subsided. Town Manager Smith, looking into installing video
42 cameras at Water/Sewer Conference so public officials can meet but also allow public
43 access remotely.
- 44 c. **Dilapidated buildings** – Town Manager Smith asked the Board of Selectmen about
45 their interest in notifying property owners of hazardous/dilapidated buildings and their

1 responsibility with the maintenance of the building. Board asked Town Manager to
2 work with legal and prepare a memo to notify property owners of these buildings.

- 3 d. **Delay reopening Town Office** – July 6, 2020 was the scheduled date to reopen the
4 Town Office and Utility Building. Town Manager Smith informed the Board of
5 Selectmen that the offices did not receive the necessary safety equipment (sneeze guard
6 and disinfectant) as items were backordered. Board agreed to move the reopening date
7 back to the first week in August.

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10 **VI. ADJOURNED** – the Board of Selectmen adjourned their meeting at 7:58 p.m. and will
11 reconvene at their next meeting on Monday, July 20, 2020.