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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 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. PROPOSED 2021 BUDGET EXPENDITURE REQUEST

- a. **Ashland Trustees of the Trust Funds** – Trustee Amanda Loud requested the Board appropriate \$500 for the Trustees in 2021. Trustee Loud requested the funds for subscription to a post office box and training. Currently the town has \$600 appropriated for the Trustee which has been used as a stipend. Present Trustees have declined to receive a stipend. Consensus was the current appropriation could be reduced to \$500 and used for Trustee expenditures in 2021.
- b. **Ashland Parks & Recreation** – Director Barney started the budget review with the board by mentioning that most of the Parks & Recreation budget this year was not expended due to many programs being closed because of Covid -19. A few highlights from the Parks & Recreation proposed budget – heating fuel line was increased as the Booster Club now uses the downstairs section of the building. Field expenses were increased to replace wood chips at the playground. Beach salaries were increased to raise the hourly wage for lifeguards to \$12/HR, the state average. Revenue for the Parks & Recreation Department were discussed, last year the department received \$101,363 in revenue that offset the expenditures.
- c. **Ashland Town Library** – the Library Trustees presented their proposed 2021 budget to the Selectmen with a few changes from prior year. Most notable increase was the general expense line increasing \$8,300 from the not knowing whether the Scribner Trust fund will be able to pay for maintenance expenses related to the library building.
- d. **Land Use** – Ashland Planning Board Mardean Badger presented the land use budget, which combines expenditures for the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Total request for the budget was a \$2,869 decrease from prior year appropriation of \$13,185.
- e. **Patriotic Purposes** – the board discussed lowering this section of the budget to \$1 placeholders for potential expenditures. Under this budget the expenditures are for July 4th celebrations detail work, Memorial Day supplies and Heritage Commission. Last year the board agreed to not continue the 4th of July Committee. Memorial Day supplies pay for the installation of flags by the American Legion. Board members felt the appropriation should be petitioned warrant article.

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- f. **Building Inspector** – requested expenditure for 2021 was \$18,802 a reduction of \$3,729 from the \$22,531 appropriation in 2020.
- g. **Fire Department** – the ambulance contract with Plymouth, NH might see a slight increase in 2021. Increased amounts based on consumer price index and is determined in November. Chief Heath proposed an increase to the fire department salaries for further funding per diem staff. The warrant article that provided funding for per diem was only for half the year. Currently the Chief has filing in for open per diem shifts saving the town an estimate of \$7,600. Call volume for the department has increased 60-70% with a year-to-date of 400 calls, last year the department did not reach that total until November. In 2020 fire department staff did not receive a salary increase. Total proposed request for 2021 is \$329K an increase of \$22K. Chief Heath informed the board that the breath apparatus needs to be replaced. The ambulance needs a new cardiac monitor. Board and the Chief talked about planning for purchasing a new ambulance which is 23 years old. Chief Heath to research into vendors to help the department with grant writing. Grants will help offset the expenditures for the department.

III. Board of Selectmen adjourned their meeting at 6:20 p.m. Next meeting – Monday, October 5th at 5:30 p.m.