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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024
ASHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA
16 EDUCATION DRIVE**

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I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Letourneau called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Selectmen Ann Barney, Andy Fitch, Charles Bozzello and Rebecca Hartley were all in attendance.

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MOTION: Rebecca Hartley
To approve the minutes of December 18th as written
SECOND: Ann Barney
VOTE: 4-0-1 (Andy Fitch abstained)
MOTION PASSED

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II. NEW BUSINESS

a. PUBLIC HEARING – WASTE TO ENERGY \$135M BOND – The Board voted to open the public hearing at 5:32pm. Chairman Letourneau thanked all those that were in attendance. Jeremy Smith and Grant Page from Waldron gave a similar presentation to the previous Board meeting in December where they gave an overview of their engineering firm (Waldron), applicable experience with these types of projects, and provided information about the proposed project for Ashland. Mr. Smith described the process on how the plant would work including how the traffic would enter off a road from the 93 junction and not through Town. Currently the project is estimated to cost up to \$135 Million.

Many citizens asked questions about the project. David Ruell inquired on where the customer will be coming from and the efforts that will take place to recruit customers. Mr. Smith responded by citing that they have looked at all the trash that is available now and that it will need a place to go in the future from this long term contracts is what the facility would be looking to get into as well as having a “gate rate” for customers not on a contract. Mr. Smith discussed that the majority of the revenue would come from the tipping fees which would be set at a competitive rate.

Fran Newton asked for more specific details on the traffic flow, Mr. Page responded that the traffic flow would be from the 93 junction to off of Route 3 with a direct line to the facility with no access by way of Collins Street. Craig Moore added that the road location would be near Cedar Lane. Carole Learned asked how the railroad would be crossed due to the drop off in that location, Mr. Smith responded that there would be a traffic study done.

A physician that lives in Town voiced some environmental concerns specifically regarding plastics that may come into the facility and asked how the facility will process them. Mr. Smith spoke about the environmental standards that the facility will abide by and noted that the facility will have stricter regulations than currently exist in New Hampshire and it will follow which will mimic the standards in Florida. Mr. Smith also talked about the chemical solution that will be used in the facility that will also take care of any plastics that may come through the facility and noted that the solution is not of the hazardous nature and that there is no special transportation needed and also noted that you could buy it in your local grocery store.

49 Many citizens voiced concern about the amount of the bond. Chairman
 50 Letourneau explained that the bond is a revenue bond, meaning that it will not be paid
 51 back until the facility is operational and the revenue collected from the facility will be
 52 used to pay for the bond. Alan Cilley who is chairman of the Waste to Energy Committee
 53 made a comment that over the next 2 months the committee will be working to provide
 54 all the information that the public is looking for.

55 A citizen from Thompson Street asked what would happen if no one wanted to
 56 buy the electricity that will be generated by the facility. Mr. Smith responded that there
 57 will be an agreement with ISO New England which would be done prior to building the
 58 facility. Craig Moore added that he has talked with the waste district that the Town is in
 59 and all of the 19 Towns in the district want to come to Ashland.

60 It was reiterated that more information will be available to the public before
 61 voting day.
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63 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

64 *To close the public hearing*

65 **SECOND:** Rebecca Hartley

66 **VOTE:** 5-0

67 **MOTION PASSED**
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69 **b. MEETING WITH VERONICA METCALF AND MIKE FURDA ON**

70 **WATER ISSUE** - The Board talked with Mrs. Metcalf and Mr. Furda about the
 71 ongoing water issues on Brunt Ave/Winona Rd. Chair Letourneau discussed that
 72 he has been in contact with Senator Shaheen and Senator Hassan to help with the
 73 available grants for water projects. Mrs. Metcalf asked the Board for an abatement
 74 for her water bill, to which the Vice Chair Fitch said that the Board will take it
 75 under advisement and the Board will make a decision at their next meeting.
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77 **c. APPROVAL OF DEFAULT BUDGET –**
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79 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

80 *To approve the default budget of \$3,287,081*

81 **SECOND:** Rebecca Hartley

82 **VOTE:** 5-0

83 **MOTION PASSED**
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85 **d. QUESTION OF AMBULANCE FUNDING –** The Board discussed that
 86 additional funds will be needed by the fire department to run the town ambulance
 87 once the contract with Plymouth ends on June 30th.
 88

89 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

90 *To add \$76,000 to the ambulance line in the budget*

91 **SECOND:** Robert Letourneau

92 **VOTE:** 5-0

93 **MOTION PASSED**
 94

95 **e. WARRANT ARTICLES –** Finance Director Marissah Gallien asked for
 96 clarification from the Board about the Public Works Capital Reserve Fund

97 articles, the Board confirmed that there would be the regular article for the Public
98 Works CRF for \$25,000 and the second article will be for \$200,552 for the plow
99 truck. The other warrant article discussed was for the bandstand that needs to be
100 removed from the park. The Board decided that no warrant article would be
101 needed.

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103 **f. WORDING ON WASTE TO ENERGY WARRANT ARTICLE** – Town
104 Manager Fred Welch had provided the Board with a proposed warrant article, and
105 Chairman Letourneau had also written an article. Vice Chair Fitch shared that he
106 felt the total project should not be on the warrant this year and to put an article in
107 for a feasibility study instead until all the information has been made available.

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109 **MOTION:** Rebecca Hartley

110 *To use the longer version (written by Fred Welch) for the Waste to Energy Warrant*
111 *Article*

112 **SECOND:** Charles Bozzello

113 **VOTE:** 5-0

114 **MOTION PASSED**

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116 **g. APPROVAL OF VETERANS EXEMPTION, RONALD BALLOU AND**
117 **FRANK GARCIA –**

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119 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

120 *To approve the Veterans exemption for Ronald Ballou*

121 **SECOND:** Rebecca Hartley

122 **VOTE:** 5-0

123 **MOTION PASSED**

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125 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

126 *To approve the Veterans exemption for Frank Garcia*

127 **SECOND:** Rebecca Hartley

128 **VOTE:** 5-0

129 **MOTION PASSED**

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131 **h. REQUEST FOR FUNDING BY LIBRARY TRUSTEES - \$7,000 –**

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133 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

134 *To approve the \$7,000 advanced payment for the Library*

135 **SECOND:** Robert Letourneau

136 **VOTE:** 5-0

137 **MOTION PASSED**

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139 **III. OLD BUSINESS – None**

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141 **IV. SELECTMEN'S ITMES - None**

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143 **MOTION:** Ann Barney
144 *To adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm*
145 **SECOND:** Andy Fitch
146 **VOTE:** 5-0
147 **MOTION PASSED**