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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024
UTILITY CONFERENCE ROOM
6 COLLINS ST, ASHLAND NH**

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- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Fitch opened the meeting with roll call for the Selectmen, Charles Bozzello, Ann Barney, and Meghan Semiao were all in attendance.

Chair Fitch noted that Board would be accepting resumes for the open Selectmen position until April 4th.

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II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOWN CLERK & TAX COLLECTOR** – Chair Fitch asked the Board for their opinions on the letter that newly elected Town Clerk & Tax Collector Rebecca Hartley had written in support of Luann McAndrews becoming her deputy.

MOTION: Ann Barney

To appoint Luann McAndrews as the Deputy Town Clerk & Tax Collector

SECOND: Meghan Semiao

VOTE: 4-0

MOTION PASSED

- b. APPROVAL OF AFG GRANT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT-**

The Fire Department received a grant that would cover \$41,710.70 of a total purchase of \$43,906 for a new compressor. The Board was asked to accept the funds and allow them to be expended.

MOTION: Charlie Bozzello

To accept and expend the AFG funds totaling \$41,710.70

SECOND: Andy Fitch

VOTE: 4-0

MOTION PASSED

- c. AUDIT LETTER** – Chair Fitch discussed with the Board a letter from the Auditors that needs to be filled out by the Board. Chair Fitch stated that he assumes the Chair usually fills it out, but asked if the entire Board would like to add any input. The Board gave their consensus that the Chairman should fill the form out.

- d. SWEARING IN** – Chairman Fitch performed the swearing in of newly appointed Luann McAndrews as the Deputy Town Clerk & Tax Collector

- e. MEETING WITH TOWN TRUSTEES** – Amanda Loud, Chair of the Trustees of the Trust Funds along with Lisa Rollins met with the Board to discuss some of the ongoing issues with the cemetery trusts. Amanda Loud gave a PowerPoint

48 presentation with a timeline of events regarding the cemetery trusts. Amanda
 49 showed Ashland Town Report pages from prior trustees that showed the
 50 accounting of the cemetery trusts back to 1920 all the way to 2007. Mrs. Loud
 51 outlined that the cemetery funds are funds that people left so that their grave/stone
 52 would be maintained with the interest that was gained off of the original money
 53 which was usually around \$50. Mrs. Loud showed that in the town reports prior to
 54 1999 had each individual accounting of who left money for their cemetery spot. In
 55 1999 the Green Grove Trust appeared in the town reports with no date of
 56 inception and seemed to combine the 30 or so individual accounts and was
 57 invested at Paine Webber. (Amanda noted that the other trusts were all held at
 58 Meredith Village Savings Bank or Ashland Savings as it was previously named.)
 59 The expenditures of the cemetery trusts had been consistently expended from the
 60 early town reports but expenditures stopped around 1994. There was an
 61 expenditure in 2001 for \$1,000 however Mrs. Loud made an educated guess that
 62 the expenditure was for fees.

63 Mrs. Loud also showed the correspondence that she had going back to
 64 2020 when she was first elected, surrounding the issues with the Green Grove
 65 Trust with the Attorney Generals' Office, Fred Welch who became the Town
 66 Manager in 2021, and Town Council. However the process for undoing the issue
 67 of the combined funds has not yet been resolved. Mrs. Loud added that the DRA
 68 form MS-9 which is to be filed yearly, had not been done since 2007. Herself and
 69 the current trustees have worked on the MS-9 filings since 2020, but DRA would
 70 not accept their filings due to the outstanding issue with the Green Grove Trust.

71 Town Council was present for this meeting, Laura Spector-Morgan from
 72 Mitchell Municipal was in attendance and spoke with the Board and the Trustees
 73 on how to move forward on this issue. Mrs. Spector-Morgan feels that we can get
 74 the issue resolved but it will take time to do so.

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- 76 **f. LETTER FOR SIGNATURE** – The Board was asked to sign a letter certifying
 77 Rebecca Hartley's elected appointment as the Town Clerk & Tax Collector for the
 78 State.
- 79
- 80 **g. SIGNING OF MS-232** – The Board signed the MS-232 which is the certification
 81 of funds voted at the 2024 Town Meeting.
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83 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

84 *To enter into a non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3 (I)*

85 **SECOND:** Ann Barney

86 **VOTE:** 4-0

87 **MOTION PASSED**

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89 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

90 *To adjourn the meeting at 6:55pm*

91 **SECOND:** Charles Bozzello

92 **VOTE:** 4-0

93 **MOTION PASSED**