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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024
UTILITY CONFERENCE ROOM
6 COLLINS STREET, ASHLAND**

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

MOTION: Ann Barney
To approve the minutes of March 18th 2024 as written
SECOND: Meghan Semiao
VOTE: 3-0-1 (Selectman Janosa abstained)
MOTION PASSED

MOTION: Ann Barney
To approve the minutes of April 1st, 2024 as written
SECOND: Meghan Semiao
VOTE: 3-0-1 (Selectman Janosa abstained)
MOTION PASSED

MOTION: Meghan Semiao
To approve the minutes of March 8th 2024 as written
SECOND: Ann Barney
VOTE: 3-0-1 (Selectman Janosa abstained)
MOTION PASSED

MOTION: Ann Barney
To approve the minutes of April 15th 2024 as written
SECOND: Andy Fitch
VOTE: 3-0-1 (Selectman Janosa abstained)
MOTION PASSED

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. BOARD MEETING WITH STATE REP SALLIE FELLOWS** – Ms. Fellows was not present for the meeting.
- b. DISPOSAL OF TAX DEEDED PROPERTY BY AUCTION OR SEALED BID** – The Board met with JSJ Auctions. They explained their process which includes meeting with the Town, reviewing tax deeded properties that can be sold, holding an auction at which all properties can be sold, they have a listing of contacts that they reach out to and will do the advertising for the auction. There is a buyer’s premium that is assessed, but no fees are assessed to the Town, unless there is an issue from the Town’s side during a sale at which point the Town would be responsible for advertising. Selectmen Janosa asked how many tax

47 deeded properties they have sold over the last year, the response was that they
 48 held 22 auctions at which 512 properties were sold. JSJ Auctions indicated that if
 49 the Town would like to pursue the auction process it's about 5-6 week lead time.
 50

- 51 **c. MEETING WITH RICK ASH, ASHLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH, USE**
 52 **OF PROPERTY FOR A CHURCH PARKING LOT** – Rick Ash of the Church
 53 on Main Street discussed the parking issue on Main Street. Mr. Ash shared that
 54 the Common Man allows use of their parking lot on Sundays, however they are in
 55 need of their own parking area. The proposal is to put a parking lot behind the
 56 Church on the Historical Society property. There was discussion around a lease
 57 agreement and potential taxes, at this time the Board felt that the idea would need
 58 to be run by Town Council to see if the project would even be allowed.
 59

- 60 **d. MEETING WITH WHITE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY CLUB** – Phillip
 61 Hastings met with the Board to discuss the easement that is currently in effect by
 62 the golf course that has been used as a parking lot. The lot is owned by the Town
 63 but the Country Club would like to pave the area and make parking spaces, the
 64 plans that were discussed included a larger area than is currently in the easement.
 65 Chair Fitch made sure to discuss that the RSA's have changed and should the
 66 easement be changed, the Country Club will need to pay taxes on their portion of
 67 the land. The Board felt that Town Council should be contacted for regarding the
 68 easement.
 69

- 70 **e. MEETING WITH DAVID HALEY** – Mr. Haley talked with the Board about
 71 some issues with the property he purchased in 2023. Mr. Haley was concerned
 72 with the tax increase which was due to the revaluation. Mr. Haley's property is a
 73 rental property with two families living there. He discussed that he is going to
 74 have to raise the rent, and that he does not want to do it, but he doesn't have much
 75 choice. Mr. Haley asked the Board what they are doing about affordable housing
 76 in the Town.
 77

78 Mr. Haley also discussed another issue he is having, which is with his property
 79 and a large lake that has formed in his yard. He discussed that the water comes in
 80 his yard from the street. Mr. Haley also made a shout out to the Dew Drop In and
 81 said that he loves it. Chair Fitch asked Mr. Haley if he applied for an abatement
 82 on his property, which Mr. Haley said that he did not. Public Works Director
 83 Craig Moore discussed the water problem and explained that the house across
 84 from Mr. Haley has a pipe that runs the water out onto the road and that the road
 85 does not have a catch basin.
 86

- 87 **f. MEETING WITH TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR ON**
 88 **ABATEMENTS** – Rebecca Hartley came before the Board to discuss
 89 transparency of abatements she has made which by statute she is allowed to make
 90 so long as they are under \$25. Mrs. Hartley had previously given the Board a
 91 report of the abatements that she made. Mrs. Hartley also advocated for an
 92 abatement for site 205-002 for \$135.12 which she explained was interest for non-

93 payment which the individual was instructed to wait until August to pay but was
94 not told the interest would continue accruing. The individual paid their balance,
95 but the abatement would be for the remaining interest.
96

97 **MOTION:** Charles Bozzello

98 *To approve the abatement of \$135.12 for site 205-002*

99 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

100 **VOTE:** 5-0

101 **MOTION PASSED**

102
103 Mrs. Hartley had an additional request for an abatement for site 111-037 which
104 was previously voted by the Board in 2022, however it was not carried out through
105 the tax system. The Abatement encompasses the charges from 2016 to 2023 and total
106 \$19,279.32.
107

108 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

109 *To approve the abatement of \$19,279.32 for site 205-002 for the years of 2016-2023*

110 **SECOND:** Ann Barney

111 **VOTE:** 5-0

112 **MOTION PASSED**

113
114 **g. PARK & REC FEE SCHEDULE** – Ann Barney presented new fee
115 schedules for the After School Program, Beach Passes and Booster Club
116 Rentals. Ms. Barney discussed that during her time as the Director of Parks &
117 Rec she has not changed the fees. Ms. Barney went on to discuss that the
118 After School pricing will change be increased by \$1 per child per day. For the
119 Beach, daily passes will increase by \$1 for both resident and non-resident,
120 resident day pass will be \$3 and non-resident will be \$5. For season passes,
121 resident passes will increase by \$5, and non-resident will increase by \$10,
122 resident passes will now be \$30 and non-resident passes will be \$60.
123

124 The increases for the renting the Booster Club will still include a \$30 key
125 return credit. A full day will increase to \$170, and a half day will increase to
126 \$130.
127

128 **MOTION:** Charles Bozzello

129 *To approve the new rate schedules for the After School Program, Beach Passes and*
130 *Booster Club Rentals*

131 **SECOND:** Andy Fitch

132 **VOTE:** 4-0-1 (Selectman Barney abstained)

133 **MOTION PASSED**

138 **h. SIGNING INTENT TO CUT TAX MAP 202 LOTS 75 & 76, N.**
139 **ASHLAND ROAD –**

140
141 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

142 *To approve the intent to cut for Map 202 Lots 75 & 76 on N. Ashland Road*

143 **SECOND:** Charles Bozzello

144 **VOTE:** 4-0-1 (Selectman Fitch abstained)

145 **MOTION PASSED**

146
147 **i. APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDER FOR WORK ON WATER**

148 **WELL 2 \$19,955** – The Board was presented with a purchase order for
149 improvements to be made to Water Well 2. It was discussed if this purchase
150 can be used from the Water Tank CRF, Chair Fitch asked Alan Cilley if he
151 was familiar with the purpose of Water Tank CRF to which Mr. Cilley said
152 the intent of that CRF was to include maintenance on the wells.

153
154 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

155 *To approve the purchase order for \$19,955 to repair the well pump from the Water*
156 *Tank Capital Reserve fund*

157 **SECOND:** Meghan Semiao

158 **VOTE:** 5-0

159 **MOTION PASSED**

160
161 **j. ACCEPTANCE OF SUMMER CAMP DONATION \$1,500 –**

162
163 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

164 *To accept the donation of \$1,500 for summer camp for kids in need*

165 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

166 **VOTE:** 5-0

167 **MOTION PASSED**

168
169 **k. ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR NEW POLICE FACILITY**
170 **\$10,000 -**

171
172 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

173 *To accept the donation of \$10,000 for the Police Department Facility*

174 **SECOND:** Charles Bozzello

175 **VOTE:** 5-0

176 **MOTION PASSED**

177
178 **l. BUILDING DEPARTMENT – NEW FORMS FOR BOARD REVIEW -**

179 Building Inspector Devon Thibeault put together a form for building permit
180 extension requests and asked if the Board would allow it to be put into use, as
181 well as the updates to the other building permit applications. Chair Fitch said
182 that there will be a public hearing on May 20th for the building forms.

184 **m. TRANSFER STATION INCREASE IN FEES AND TIPPING RATES –**

185 Town Manager Fred Welch discussed that the Town received a letter
 186 regarding an increase in fees from Casella and discussed with the Board
 187 increasing the Town's Transfer Station rates. The Board decided to hold a
 188 public hearing on the fees at the May 20th meeting.

189
 190 **n. REACH THE BEACH RELAY SEPTEMBER 13-14 –**

191
 192 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch

193 *To approve the reach the beach relay permit*

194 **SECOND:** Charles Bozzello

195 **VOTE:** 5-0

196 **MOTION PASSED**

197
 198 **o. 4TH OF JULY PERMITS -**

199
 200 **MOTION:** Charles Bozzello

201 *To give the Town Manager authority to sign 4th of July permits*

202 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

203 **VOTE:** 5-0

204 **MOTION PASSED**

205
 206 **p. CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS POLE TRANSFER**

207 **REQUEST –** The Board briefly spoke about the pole transfer and that
 208 Consolidated will need to pay a pole fee, however there is no action to take
 209 until after July 1st.

210
 211 **q. TOWN TRUSTEES QUESTION ON CEMETERY FUND ISSUE –** Chair

212 Fitch said that the Trustees need to work with legal council on the issue with
 213 the cemetery funds.

214
 215 **r. QUESTION OF PERFORMING BOUNDARY SURVEY FOR TOWN**
 216 **OF HOLDERNESS –** Mr. Welch received a request from the Town of

217 Holderness regarding a boundary survey which both towns will need to work
 218 on together. There is an issue with one of the boundary markers which is in
 219 the water. Mr. Welch asked for the Boards approval to put up a new marker,
 220 the Board gave their consensus.

221
 222 **s. CABLE TV FRANCHISE –** Mr. Welch and Selectman Semiao talked about

223 the cable agreement and that there will need to be work put in on a pole fee
 224 and work with legal to have the cable lines moved from the old poles to the
 225 new poles on N. Ashland Road. The Board gave their consensus for working
 226 on the new agreement.

227
 228 **t. REQUEST FROM PLANNING BOARD TO USE TOWN COUNCIL –**

229 The Planning Board has asked permission to use Town Legal for review of

230 regulations. The Board gave their consensus to allow the Planning Board to go
231 to legal.

232

233 **u. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** – Benoit Lamontagne who works at the
234 NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs came to the meeting to talk
235 with the Board about economic development in the Town of Ashland and he
236 added that he is a resident of the Town. The discussion included working on a
237 master plan for the Town, tax deeded properties, potential grant opportunities,
238 and the loss of a local factory in Town. The Board made mention that they
239 would like to stay connected with Mr. Lamontagne as they work on economic
240 development.

241

242 **v. BROADBAND** – Hub 66 spoke with the Board about their interest in the
243 upcoming bid for the broadband hosting in Ashland. Their focus is on being
244 part of the community, helping to keep people connected by way of the fiber
245 line and even hiring local people as part of their team. They discussed that
246 they have much faster ping than your average provider and that they have not
247 changed their pricing in the last 5 years. Selectman Semiao asked if there is a
248 way to keep the pricing affordable for the residents and Hub 66 said they
249 would be open to discussing ways to keep it affordable. The Town will be
250 bidding out the project by way of the Grafton County Broadband Initiative in
251 the coming months.

252

253 **w. TOWN INCENTIVES** – Selectman Semiao discussed that she has met with
254 the Town of Plymouth and with Fire Chief Heath to discuss a potential
255 agreement to continue with the Plymouth ambulance service. The agreement
256 would cover the time period of 5pm to 8am when the Ashland fire house is
257 not usually staffed. The agreement would need a \$50,000 retainer and
258 Ashland would be charged for every call that Plymouth transports during the
259 above noted time period. The charges that are collected from the transport
260 would be sent back to Ashland. There will be another meeting held with both
261 Fire Chiefs, the Town Manager of Plymouth and Selectman Semiao to further
262 discuss the agreement.

263

264

265 **III. CONTINUING ITEMS –**

266 **a. Board Representatives** – Selectman Janosa will be the ex-officio to the Planning
267 Board, Chair Fitch will be the alternate. The Ambulance Committee
268 representative will be Selectman Semiao. The Waste to Energy committee will
269 continue to meet but will be focused on general economic development.

270

271 **b. DPW Paving Approval** – The paving would be of Hicks Hill Road, Mountain
272 View and Libby Lane.

273

274

275

276 **MOTION:** Andy Fitch
277 *To approve the paving of Hicks Hill, Mountain View and Libby Lane with funding to*
278 *come from the Roads and Bridges Capital Reserve Fund.*

279 **SECOND:** Meghan Semiao

280 **VOTE:** 5-0

281 **MOTION PASSED**

282

283 **IV. SELECTMENS ITEMS –**

284 a. Selectman Bozzello brought attention to a warrant article from 2013 that asks for
285 authorization from the Planning Board before selling any Town Properties.

286

287 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

288 *To enter into a non-public session pursuant to 9-A:3(a, b & c)*

289 **SECOND:** Andy Fitch

290 **VOTE:** 5-0

291 **MOTION PASSED**

292

293 **MOTION:** Charles Bozzello

294 *To seal the minutes of the non-public session*

295 **SECOND:** Ann Barney

296 **VOTE:** 5-0

297 **MOTION PASSED**

298

299

300 **The meeting adjourned.**