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**TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2024
UTILITY CONFERENCE ROOM
6 COLLINS STREET, ASHLAND**

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Selectmen Semiao opened the meeting with Selectmen Chris Janosa and Charles Bozzello present, Ann Barney late with notice, and Andy Fitch absent with notice.

MOTION: Chris Janosa

To accept the minutes of November 18th, and December 2nd as amended

SECOND: Charles Bozzello

AMENDMENTS: November 18th, line 122 change “Copia power” to “Kearsarge” and line 129 to “road”

VOTE: 3-0

MOTION PASSED

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **QUESTION OF THE TRUCK SIZE PURCHASE FOR DPW** – Selectman Janosa asked Public Works Director Craig Moore to get quotes for a F350 as previously Mr. Moore had presented the Board with wanting to purchase a F150. The Board chose to add the difference in funding for the trucks to the budget to allow for the purchase of the F350.
- b. **AMBULANCE DATA – TOWN OF PLYMOUTH** – The Board discussed the increase in the price per call amount which went from \$1,140 per call to \$1,373.23 per call.
- c. **QUESTION OF APPROVING A 3-YEAR PAVING CONTRACT** – Mr. Moore presented the Board with 3 quotes from different paving companies for their consideration.

MOTION: Charles Bozzello

To approve the 3-year paving contract with GMI

SECOND: Chris Janosa

VOTE: 4-0

MOTION PASSED

- d. **APPROVAL OF 2025 BUDGETS** – Selectmen Janosa asked some questions regarding the proposed budget. He asked Chief Ulwick about the part-time wage line in the Police Budget, Chief Ulwick responded that there has been an open part-time position since last year, the funds have been kept in the budget as they are still trying to hire a part-time employee. Selectmen Janosa also questioned the 4th of July line, Chief Ulwick explained that previously outside details were billed as employees through the Town but that it was changed due to requirements from

47 Primex that the Town would need to pay the detail rate of each department that
 48 takes the detail shift. The rates are variable therefore additional funds were asked
 49 for in the 2025 budget. Selectmen Janosa asked about the training line in the Fire
 50 Department budget, Chief Heath shares that there is always ongoing training as
 51 they continue to hire on more staff. Selectman Janosa asked about the Fire
 52 Department uniform line as it was underspent, Chief Heath explained that the
 53 department received a grant in 2024 to replace uniforms that that the amount in
 54 the budget is for the matching portion.

55 Selectmen Bozzello asked how the budget affects the tax rate. Town
 56 Manager Fred Welch explained that any remaining funds from the budget go into
 57 the unassigned fund balance which can be used to offset taxes.

58
 59 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

60 *To approve the 2025 budget with changes, increase the Town Manager salary line to*
 61 *\$120,000, add funds to the Parks & Rec Director line for \$27 per hour, change the*
 62 *Ambulance line to \$190,000 and take the stipend out of the Electric department.*

63 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

64 **VOTE:** 4-0

65 **MOTION PASSED**

66
 67 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

68 *To approve the 2025 proposed budget for the General Fund totaling \$3,980,572, the*
 69 *Water Department totaling \$403,578, the Sewer Department totaling \$877,838, and*
 70 *the Electric Department totaling \$3,508,859*

71 **SECOND:** Ann Barney

72 **VOTE:** 4-0

73 **MOTION PASSED**

- 74
 75 e. **LIBRARY REQUEST FOR A WARRANT ARTICLE** – Alice Staples
 76 presented the Board with information regarding the next steps for the current
 77 library building and its expansion. The library trustees have asked that a warrant
 78 article be included in the 2025 warrant for \$25,000 to go into the library capital
 79 reserve fund.

80
 81 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao

82 *To include a warrant article for the library capital reserve fund for \$25,000*

83 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

84 **VOTE:** 4-0

85 **MOTION PASSED**

- 86
 87 f. **KEARSARGE ENERGY LETTER OF INTENT** – Selectmen Semiao
 88 discussed with the Board that she talked with Kearsarge more on the letter of
 89 intent and got the price per mega watt to \$62 for years 1 through 10, and \$66 for
 90 years 11 through 20, and that Kearsarge would pay the interconnect fee up to
 91 \$250,000.

93
94 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao
95 *To sign the Kearsarge letter of intent so that it may be included in the warrant for the*
96 *people to vote on in March*
97 **SECOND:** Ann Barney
98 **VOTE:** 3-1
99 **MOTION PASSED**

100
101 g. **BOARD OF SELECTMEN 2025 SCHEDULE**

102
103 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao
104 *To approve the 2025 Board of Selectmen schedule*
105 **SECOND:** Ann Barney
106 **VOTE:** 4-0
107 **MOTION PASSED**

108
109 h. **BROADBAND** – Selectmen Semiao gave an update on the County’s effort for
110 broadband. The county has partnered with Hub 66 to install the middle mile, X2
111 said that they would be willing to lower the rate for customers in Ashland in
112 exchange for a pole agreement. Broadband would cover the entire town including
113 the rural areas.

114
115 i. **TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUNDS REQUEST**

116
117 **MOTION:** Chris Janosa
118 *To approve the expense of \$10,420 to be paid from the Police Station CRF to Stewart*
119 *Associates*
120 **SECOND:** Meghan Semiao
121 **VOTE:** 4-0
122 **MOTION PASSED**

123
124 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao
125 *To approve the request to the Trustees of the Trust Funds for \$19,955, the Police*
126 *Department Building CRF for \$15,130, the Roads & Bridges CRF for \$129,884, and*
127 *the Town Building CRF for \$5,927.40*
128 **SECOND:** Ann Barney
129 **VOTE:** 4-0
130 **MOTION PASSED**

131
132 j. **BUILDING INSPECTOR**

133
134 **MOTION:** Meghan Semiao
135 *To approve having the building inspector report to the Town Manager*
136 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa
137 **VOTE:** 4-0
138 **MOTION PASSED**

- 139 **III. OLD BUSINESS – None**
- 140 **IV. SELECTMENS ITEMS – None**

141

142 **MOTION:** Ann Barney
To enter into a non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3 (c)

143 **SECOND:** Chris Janosa

144 **VOTE:** 4-0

145 **MOTION PASSED**

146

147

148 **MOTION:** Ann Barney
To seal the minutes of the non-public session

149 **SECOND:** Meghan Semiao

150 **VOTE:** 4-0

151 **MOTION PASSED**

152

153

154 **MOTION:** Ann Barney
To adjourn the meeting at 8:04pm

155 **SECOND:** Meghan Semiao

156 **VOTE:** 4-0

157 **MOTION PASSED**

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