MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lou Annance, Chair

Wayne Hackett, Vice Chair

Cathy Fifield

Stephen Bolduc

Nicholas Konstantoulakis

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Koriene Low – Town Manager

Miranda Hinkley – Town Clerk

Fred Sturtevant, Fire Chief

Jen Casey, Rescue Chief

Jon Damon, Asst Fire Chief

Matt Fifield, EMT

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Keith Bennett

Paula Stotts

Derek Campbell, Wilderness Way Road Association

Ryan Cook, Wilderness Way Road Association

Councilor Lou Annance called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

We stood and saluted the flag.

**Reports:**

* 1. **Council Meeting Minutes** February 6, 2017
  2. **Departmental Reports Submitted and Code Enforcement**
  3. **Municipal Financial Reports**

Councilor Annance verified that all Council Members had reviewed the meeting minutes and reports. Councilor Fifield made a motion to approve the reports and meeting minutes as submitted. Seconded by Councilor Konstantoulakis. So voted. Unanimous.

**Public Comments:**

**2.01 Public Comments:** Mr. Keith Bennett stated that he has been an electrical inspector for the town for over 30 years and recently was contacted by CMP for a fail to connect. He found that the Code Enforcement Officer was completing the inspections and that his stipend was not carried over to the next FY budget. He was expressing his disappointment that the town did not inform him of this change and feels that after 30 plus years of dedication to the town, the discontinuation of his services should have been handled differently.

Paula Stotts stated that she overheard a conversation at the local grocery store implying that the town is unable to provide life insurance for its Police Officers, however, can afford to purchase a new Ambulance and Pickup truck for the Fire Department. Councilor Annance verified with the Town Manager that the loss of Life Insurance was employee wide and not targeted toward the Police Department. It was explained that the employees transferred to a different health insurance as the insurance purchased from MMA was going to increase substantially in cost. MMA had previously provided the insurance at no cost to the town or employee, whereas the new carrier does not provide life insurance. Mrs. Stotts then had an additional concern that the budget meetings, held up until this point, were not publicly advertised for townspeople to attend. She states she understands that the public hearing will be held next week, but that residents, although they cannot provide input, should be able to attend the meetings per law.

*Reports of the Town Manager:*

Old Business:

Item 3.01 Transport Option Fire/Rescue

The Town of Poland had previously requested a meeting regarding the transportation of rescue patients for the Town of Mechanic Falls and costs associated with the same. Poland then postponed this meeting as they are hiring a replacement Town Manager. Koriene wanted to discuss our options again and see where everyone stands on the subject. Matt Fifield stated that the original model was for Poland to complete all daytime transports with Poland Fire Chief and Mechanic Falls Fire Chief meeting to resolve any issues as they occur. Poland Town Manager stopped the meetings from taking place and is requesting reimbursement from the Town Of Mechanic Falls for transporting patients. Matt feels United Ambulance’s offer to provide 24 hour service to the town will remain open and that we should not make any changes to the current arrangement unless the Town of Poland forces us to. Jen, Fred and Jon agree and do not have strong feelings either way. Poland arrives quickly to scenes, however United has some benefits as well. Councilor Konstantoulakis is leaning toward switching all transports to United Ambulance Service as the misunderstanding of what was placed in the newspaper has prompted this discussion and he does not feel it was handled properly. No decision is needed at this time. Fire/Rescue personnel feel that a contract is needed between Poland and Mechanic Falls.

Item 3.02 Sale of Fire / Rescue Vehicles

The Fire and rescue Departments were looking to place the current pickup and ambulance out for bid to sell. Jon stated that the sale of the ambulance will be delayed as Ford is not accepting special orders for Expedition EL as they are reconfiguring the body style for 2018. Ripley & Fletcher and Rowe Ford are looking to find a vehicle for us that would be similar to what we are needing at a comparable price. Counselor Hackett motioned to allow the Fire Department to request bids to sell their current pickup truck once the replacement truck arrives. Motioned was seconded by Councilor Bolduc and voted unanimously to accept.

Item 3.03 Appointments Expiring

There are several positions within the Budget Committee, Development Committee, and Board of Appeals which will be vacant this year. Recreation has appointments expiring, however all members plan to renew their appointments. Nancy Petersons will renew her Historical Society Membership, however there will be an additional vacancy as well.

Item 3.04 Town Office / Transfer Station Hours

The budget restraints have forced us to look for additional ways to cut spending. The Budget Committee and Council have proposed that the hours of operation be changed for both the Town Office and Transfer Station personnel. The suggested new Town Office hours are Monday and Tuesdays 8a-5p, Wednesdays 8a-4p, Thursdays 8a-5:30p and Fridays remaining at 7:30-11:30a. The suggested new Transfer Station hours are Wednesdays 1-4p, Saturdays 9a-2p, and Sundays 9a-1p. Les Johnson has agreed to the change in Transfer Station hours. There was one resident, Ron Kugel, who was upset with the change in Transfer Station hours, however, Koriene had discussed this with him and he is at ease now. Councilor Bolduc moved to accept the new hours as proposed, seconded by Councilor Konstantoulakis. So voted, unanimous.

Item 3.05 Nomination Papers

There are 2 Council positions, 1 School Committee position and 1 Sanitary District position due for election. Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerk’s Office. There is not a lot of activity regarding the request for nomination papers.

Item 3.06 Historical Society/Anglican Church Update

Councilor Konstantoulakis stated that the Anglican Church seems to be doing well. They have increased members who seem to be in the mid-teen to mid-twenties age bracket. The church has received a $500 cash donation as well as a storage shed, refrigerator and dishwasher. Finance does not appear to be an issue. Both the Church Officials and Historical Society members seem to be happy with the current arrangement. The church will be hosting a quilt show and yard sale during Community Days.

New Business:

Item 4.01 Wilderness Way Road Association

Ryan Cook and Derek Campbell of Miranda’s Way are present to represent Wilderness Way Road Association in their request to discontinue paying taxes on the road. There are a few private roads within the Town of Mechanic Falls and none of the other home owners are charged taxes for the road. Councilor Bolduc motions to accept the request to discontinue taxes imposed on Miranda’s Way and Natasha Place. Motion seconded by Councilor Hackett. Unanimously accepted.

Item 4.02 Building Bids

The gym, vault, and furnace room need to be professionally cleaned for soot and smoke particulates as well as mold. Octagon Cleaning won the bid for this service. The municipal insurance will cover the removal off soot and smoke with a $1000 deductible from the town, however they will not cover any mold. The bid placed by Octagon will need to be revised as the mold treatment will need to be separated out of the bid as well as some other in depth treatments added. Koriene will contact the company for a new estimate. Council discussed the cost of air purifiers at $800-$1500 each to remove the mold and this was believed to not be a needed expense at this time.

Item 4.03 Playground Equipment

In 2015 the Town purchased Xtrainer playground equipment through a grant. The equipment was supposed to be installed on municipal land near the Town Office, however there was not funding to ensure safety of the children. This equipment has been in storage for 2 years and with the Elm Street School trying to raise money for a new playground, it is requested that we allow this equipment to be installed at the school. Council agrees that the children in town could have just as much access to the playground at Elm Street as if it were installed in the Municipal lot. Councilor Bolduc motioned to approve donating the playground equipment to Elm Street School. Seconded by Councilor Konstantoulakis. So voted, unanimous.

Item 4.04 Water Department Truck Bids

O’Connor won the bid for purchase of a new truck for the Water Department. Money is being used from their reserve and a plow package installation will require an additional $47 be transferred from another source which the Water Department is covering. Steve French would like permission to purchase the truck with plow package. Councilor Hackett wants to ensure that the current plow will be kept for use with the new truck. Councilor Hackett moved to allow the purchase of a new truck with plow package by the Water Department. Motion seconded by Councilor Bolduc and voted unanimously to accept.

Item 4.05 Contest for Signage

Fred Collins would like permission to distribute flyers encouraging residents to submit ideas for our new “Welcome” signs that will be placed on major roads entering the town. Council will later need to vote on materials, size, etc. this request is just to open up the contest to the public. All Council Members agree that this is acceptable.

Ordinances, Resolves & Licenses:

Item 5.01 Advertising for Town Manager Position

Koriene would like permission to begin advertising for her replacement. Council agreed, however only advertising with Maine Municipal, local paper and indeed website as we do not want to spend the amount previously spent for advertising this position.

**Item 5.02 DOT Sidewalk Update**

Work will begin on the bridge located this side of the light. This will take approximately 2-4 weeks and is set to be completed by June 30th. In addition, work on 5 corners began today. They will be adding traffic lights in a few days and paving will commence with the warmer weather. Councilor Fifield inquired about painting of the bridge and was advised that painting will not take place until next year as the DOT budget required separating the projects.

Item 5.03 Boy Scout Bottle Drive

The Boy Scouts will be holding a bottle drive on April 8th from 9a-1p in the Municipal parking lot.

Item 5.04 Dad’s Place Restaurant License for Beer/Wine Consumption

Dad’s Place LLC is requesting permission to renew their license to allow people to consume beer and wine while seated at their tables. Chief Goss has signed off on this request as there have been no problems. Councilor Bolduc motioned to approve, seconded by Councilor Konstantoulakis. All in favor, so voted.

Reminder: Wednesday, April 12th at 7pm is the Public Hearing for FY2018 Budget in the Council Room.

Councilor Bolduc motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Konstantoulakis. All in favor – unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.