



**ITEM 3: To allow Greater Franklin Economic Development Council Executive Director Charlie Woodworth to address the Board**

Greater Franklin Economic Development Council (GFEDC) Executive Director Charlie Woodworth reviewed a December 8, 2022, email and memo, RE: “Request for the County to invest in themselves by putting Greater Franklin in the budget,” which included a data sheet outlining “Incidents of Service” by the organization and their costs to deliver services to Farmington residents.

Return on investment model considering just the community service organizations:

- Farmington funds approximately 11.4% of the county budget.
- Farmington’s share of the \$164,000 investment in the consortium to help seniors be independent is \$18,618.
- The total investment by these organizations exceeds \$5.1 million (\$1.00 equals a \$278 return on their tax dollars).
- Currently, 30% of the population is over 60 years old. In ten (10) years, an additional 8% will reach over 60 years old (38%).

Executive Director Woodworth’s stated that the aging and shrinking population. It stresses our school districts, healthcare facilities, and labor pool. The mission of Greater Franklin is to work with our community leaders, business leaders, and citizen leaders to understand the priorities. What is holding you back from having success as a landlord, a town manager, and a Selectman? Right now, it’s internet connectivity across the county and childcare. It’s preventing people from reentering the workforce and is shutting down our labor pool. We have a pre-pandemic unemployment rate of 3.6%. This is not a scenario for growth; we have businesses that are not working at total capacity because they cannot get the people. He stated that Franklin County needs workforce housing. Franklin County’s economy was built on heritage industries (paper, wood, et cetera..), and it’s been flipped on its head. A recreational economy is now driving economic growth in Franklin County. Mr. Woodworth reported that in everything GFEDC does, return on investment drives their work. They identify issues, design solutions with input, and then chase funding from State and Federal sources. He stressed that no one else in Franklin County is doing this. Mr. Woodworth relayed that he is here for two reasons, to share about the work GFEDC does and to advocate for our community service organizations. He asked the audience what issues were holding them back. He received the following responses: lack of transportation, workforce training and development, low and moderately-priced housing, and adequate childcare. GFEDC was awarded 9 million dollars for bringing high-speed broadband to Franklin County (11,000 addresses). A lengthy discussion ensued; Mr. Woodworth answered the Selectmen’s questions.

Danielle Flannery, Data Manager (Housing Department) Western Maine Community Action, provided a brief overview of the assistance supplied to Farmington residents: Fuel Assistance (400 households), Emergency Fuel-MHSA (41 households), Electric Lifeline (79 households), Telephone Lifeline (400 households), Emergency Fuel/Local (72 households), Senior Food (61 households), Total Community Services (1,053), Weatherization (6 households), Central Heat Improvement (14 households), Home Repairs (7 households), Emergency Rental Assistance (1,179 instances), H & E totals (1,206), WIC # of Food Purchases (14,380), FHS Emergency Housing (\$453,268), Town Total of Households (16,639). The total dollar amount for services rendered is \$2,819,955. Ms. Flannery answered the Selectmen’s questions.

**ITEM 4: To approve a request for a new road name of Pine Ridge Drive for a new home just off Route 156/Map R03, Lot 051, Sub C**

Fire Captain/E-911 Addressing Officer Terry Bell reviewed the homeowner’s request for a new road name and answered the Selectmen’s questions.

**Joshua Bell moved to approve a request for a new road name of Pine Ridge Drive for a new home just off Route 156/Map R03, Lot 051, Sub C; Byron Staples seconded.**

**VOTE            AFFIRMATIVE            4            ABSENT            1            MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

**ITEM 5: To grant approval to Farmington Emblem Club #460 for Beano/ Bingo and games of chance on Sunday, March 12, 2023**

**Scott Landry moved to approve Farmington Emblem Club #460’s application for Beano/ Bingo and games of chance on Sunday, March 12, 2023; Joshua Bell seconded.**

**VOTE            AFFIRMATIVE            4            ABSENT            1            MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

**ITEM 6: To grant approval to Farmington Elks Lodge #2340 for Beano/ Bingo and games of chance for the period of January 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024**

**Scott Landry moved to approve Farmington Elks Lodge #2340's for Beano/ Bingo and games of chance for the period of January 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024; Joshua Bell seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Smith)**

**ITEM 7: To allow Ricky Collins to address the Board regarding a hotel conference center**

Ricky Collins asked the Board members if they had friends coming to visit, where would they put them up? Most replied that they would put their friend up at the Comfort Inn, Wilton. Mr. Collins, the former owner of two hotels in Farmington, stated that he believes the town needs a new hotel and conference center. He announced that he had put money down on a property in Farmington and planned to build a hotel. Mr. Collins said he would need assistance in the form of a TIF to make the project work. He estimates the new hotel would be a \$15 - \$20 million build. He stressed that he would need help to make this work. The two hotels that he owns have been bought. However, he has kept his staff and plans to keep them on so that he will have staff when the new build is complete. Mr. Collins said the hotel would be a Best Western Premiere, located on the property across the street from Palmer Realty. It would offer 95 units. He was ready to move forward with a new hotel project two years ago but was delayed due to COVID-19. He said that hotel financing deals with futures, and when COVID-19 hit, he had zero income, preventing him from proceeding. He reported that he hired a company out of New York to assist him with this project. He asked for approval from the Town before he moved forward. Joshua Bell mentioned that what the Town has done in the past is a Credit Enhancement Agreement (CEA), where a percentage or a specific amount of the tax dollars are given back to the business owner for a set amount of years. The CEA is based on the amount of the initial cost to build the facility. Mr. Bell said he had yet to learn what that amount would be, but with a breakdown of the numbers/costs, the Board could determine the potential CEA amount. Mr. Collins said his goal tonight was to learn what the Board felt about the project. Mr. Bell said he thought it was a great idea and encouraged Mr. Collins to keep moving forward with the project. Christian Waller requested a business plan with projected financials so that the Board could assess the situation and determine if they would like to pursue a TIF. In response to Scott Landry's question, Mr. Collins said the hotel would employ approximately 40 people. The twenty that he has retained and an additional twenty new hires. Mr. Collins reported that the parcel is 20 acres, 5 acres would be used for the hotel, and he hopes to have a chain restaurant behind the hotel (under separate management). A lengthy discussion ensued. Mr. Collins answered the Selectmen's questions.

**ITEM 8: To approve an expenditure of \$43,772.40 to purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV and up to \$5,000 to outfit the vehicle out of the Fire Department Reserve Account SX-7946**

Fire Chief T.D. Hardy reviewed a memo dated December 13, 2022, requesting approval to purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV. The new vehicle, if approved, would replace the 2013 Ford Interceptor SUV that Chief Hardy is currently using. The 2013 SUV has 143,000 miles, has some body issues, and is at the end of its life span. Chief Hardy and the Board discussed the radio communication issues, the ongoing national vehicle shortage, the increasing cost of goods, and the life expectancy of new vehicles.

**Joshua Bell moved to approve an expenditure of \$43,772.40 to purchase a 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV and up to \$5,000 to outfit the vehicle out of the Fire Department Reserve Account SX-7946; Scott Landry seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Smith)**

**ITEM 9: To consider switching to DS200 programmed combined ballot for the Annual Town/School elections. The estimated cost is \$526, or when shared, it is around \$263**

Christian Waller reviewed a memorandum from Interim Deputy Town Clerk Twila Lycette's request for a DS200 programmed combined ballot.

**ITEM 9: To consider switching to DS200 programmed combined ballot for the Annual Town/School elections. The estimated cost is \$526, or when shared, it is around \$263. (continued)**

**Scott Landry moved to approve the expenditure of \$526 to purchase a DS200 programmed combined ballot; Byron Staples seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 OPPOSED 1 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Bell) (Smith)**

**ITEM 10: To Approve Municipal Quitclaim Deeds (Municipal Taxes and Sewer)**

The Board reviewed Municipal Quitclaim Deeds releasing any interest the Town might have on account of undischarged liens on the following real estate: Heirs of Christine V. Stevens at 237 Mason Road/Map R-1, Lot 31A, William H. and Glenice B MacDonald at 237 Mason Road/Map R-14, Lot 26D, and Virginia Riddle at 183 Marvel Street/Map U-30, Lot 41.

**Joshua Bell moved to approve the Municipal Quitclaim Deeds for Heirs of Christine V. Stevens at 237 Mason Road/Map R-1, Lot 31A, William H. and Glenice B MacDonald at 237 Mason Road/Map R-14, Lot 26D, and Virginia Riddle at 183 Marvel Street/Map U-30, Lot 41; Scott Landry seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

**ITEM 11: To Consider an Expenditure of \$428 from the Special Projects Account to Purchase an Advertisement in the 2023 Western Maine Edition of "Paper Talks" Magazine**

**Scott Landry moved to approve an Expenditure of \$428 from the Special Projects Account to Purchase an Advertisement in the 2023 Western Maine Edition of "Paper Talks" Magazine; Stephan Bunker seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

**ITEM 12: To Approve the Minutes of November 22, 2022**

**Scott Landry moved to approve the Minutes of November 22, 2022; Joshua Bell seconded.**

**VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

**ITEM 13: To Discuss Other Business**

A.) Christian Waller updated the Board on new employee recruitment. He has extended an offer letter for the Town Clerk/Human Resources position. The candidate has accepted, pending the background check results; they will start on December 27, 2022. In addition to the MMA training, it will be wise to train one-on-one with Ms. Lycette.

Mr. Waller stated he is in the process of interviewing candidates for the Counter-Clerk position and hopes to fill that position soon.

Alli Brochu has filled the Assessor position; she started on December 12<sup>th</sup> and is jumping right in. John O'Donnell has been very helpful in providing the methodology that he has used. She is available for the public to meet, and he believes she is an excellent addition. We are lucky to have her. Ms. Brochu will attend the next Board meeting and be sworn in by the Board.

B.) Scott Landry noted that he was happy to see E.L. Vining complete the Front Street project before the bad weather broke.

C.) Byron Staples asked if the Town had looked for potential candidates to do the revaluations. Mr. Waller said no, but they are having conversations about this.

**ITEM 13: To Discuss Other Business (continued)**

D.) Byron Staples asked that before the COLA meeting, the Board be provided with a dollar amount they can use for a factor. What would the gross budget impact be? And a rough idea of any new revenue or loss of revenue that should be considered during the budget process. Town Manager Waller said he would be glad to provide the requested information.

E.) Joshua Bell asked Town Manager Waller if he had compiled the cost analysis for the end of the High Street/Route 2/Bare Foot Farms project. Mr. Waller reported that, yes, we have. And he talked with Public Works Director Phil Hutchins, and it is somewhat complex, but he can break it down and explain it. Mr. Bell asked that this item be added to the next Board meeting, and Mr. Waller agreed. Mr. Bell requested a copy of the contract.

**Joshua Bell motioned to have the cost analysis, plans, and contract for the High Street/Route 2/Bare Foot Farms project at the December 27, 2022, Board meeting; Byron Staples seconded.**

**VOTE            AFFIRMATIVE            4            ABSENT    1            MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

F.) Stephan Bunker stated he is looking for the annual audit reports.

G.) Stephan Bunker noted that the decorative street lights are up past the college dorms and outwards towards town and he asked when they would be operational. Mr. Waller believes they will work next spring, and Phil Hutchins has a light pollution survey. Mr. Bunker is looking long-term and perhaps discontinuing some lights.

H.) Joshua Bell inquired about the High Street sidewalks towards the Route 2 end of the road and if they would be rebuilt? Christian Waller stated that the curbing towards Route 2 would be slightly different, but he would ask Phil Hutchins to address this question at the next Board meeting.

**With no further business to come before the Board, Scott Landry moved to adjourn at 8:03 P.M.; Joshua Bell seconded.**

**VOTE            AFFIRMATIVE            4            ABSENT    1            MOTION CARRIED**  
**(Smith)**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nancy L. Martin.

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Byron Staples - Secretary