

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2016  
HOPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
6:00 P.M.**

*Note: These minutes may not be considered an official public record until such time as they are read and accepted by the Board of Selectmen.*

**Board Members Present:** Jim Annis, David Bosken, Chris Pinchbeck, Wendy Pelletier, Brian Powers Jr.,

**Others Present:** Jon Duke, Rick Bresnahan, Thom Ingraham, Carole Gartley, Diann Helprin, Ann Bresnahan, Kate Bracher, Lee Lingelbach, Lee Goss, Hilda Livingstone, Judith Jones, Bill Jones, Christine Alberi, Alina Smith, Danielle Fagonde, Jason Hall, Janessa Robbins, Kate Ryan, Mark Dierckes, Amy Powers, Richard Crabtree, Rosie Bowman, Nancy Ford, Tom Ford, Jim Guerra, Ginny Ryan, Florance Merrifield, and 21 others.

**I. Call the Meeting to Order**

Brian Powers called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**II. Minutes**

**a. Minutes of the January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Selectmen**

Jim Annis moved, and Chris Pinchbeck seconded, a motion to approve the minutes of January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Selectmen as written. **Motion passed 5-0.**

**III. Selectmen's Roundtable**

- Next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will take place Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Hope Town Office.

**IV. Town Administrator's Report**

Jon noted that the Planning Board met last week to approve a minor subdivision off of Crabtree Road which merely created three lots out of two lots developed in the last five years.

Maine Municipal Association's property and casualty insurance division visited the Town last week to review the Town's workplace safety. Only a couple of minor issues rose to the surface within the review.

The proposed changes to the Floodplain ordinance were sent to the Town last week. What has been a long process of gaining approvals of the proposed floodplain maps in Knox County, finally came to an end at the start of the year. The Town will have until July 1<sup>st</sup> to approve a change to the floodplain management ordinance which reflects the revised maps.

Work on the FY 17 Town budget has begun. The budget books are due to be completed on the week of February 9<sup>th</sup> and available for the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Town auditor William Brewer will be attending the Board's next meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> to answer any questions the Board may have in the aftermath of the Town's recently completed audit.

## **V. Public Hearing**

### **a. Hope Elementary School Pre-K Program Proposal**

Superintendent Dianne Helprin and pre-K committee consultant Carole Gartley shared with those in attendance the background behind the pre-K proposal and the nature of the donation which will be considered by Hope voters on February 9<sup>th</sup>. The donation includes a gift of \$600,000 to operate the program for a five-year period and a modular classroom which will be used to house the program's operations. The Hope School Committee approved a memorandum of understanding between REDCO foundation and the school which sets forth the standards governing the gift and the pre-K program. At the end of the five-year period, the Hope's taxpayers will be responsible for fully funding the program's operations.

In the fall of 2014, Hope Elementary School staff conducted a needs survey of the school, and the issues surrounding school readiness for those entering the school in kindergarten were the areas of greatest need. The proposed program will operate Monday through Thursday with half day sessions and a maximum of 16 students per session. If the need exists, there could be two sessions (one in the afternoon and the other in the morning) per day. The building will consist of two classrooms and will be placed behind the school adjacent to the playground. There is no guaranteed amount the program is expecting to receive during the five-year period from the state, though the program is being designed such that it would be eligible for state funding. The Town will be responsible for funding \$1500 for the purpose of heat and electrical costs of the building itself.

Mark Dierckes noted that he had previously seen parts of the proposal which called for two ed-techs in the proposal, but Carole Gartley stated the funding includes one full time teacher and one full time ed-tech. Previous proposals suggested that there might be two ed-techs, but there would be one ed tech for each session. Dierckes stated that he's unsure that the Town will be able to fund the program at the costs currently within the proposal. Dianne Helprin replied that the any additional amounts will need to go through the annual budget process, so the residents will have a chance to consider any possible costs when that time comes.

Amy Powers asked what might occur if the costs to operate the program increase unexpectedly at some point over the five years. Dianne Helprin answered that there are always a number of variables in operating a school, but it will be up to the school committee to determine how to resolve a deficit such as raising taxes, requesting an additional amount from the foundation, or finding savings through special education costs elsewhere in the school due the use of child development services.

Richard Crabtree suggested that the question the community should be asking is at what age society should be educating its children. Crabtree stated that he has read information on all sides of the debate, but one area that he did question was at what age a child should be educated in a structured environment. School psychologist Lee Goss stated that educational psychology is not unlike other areas of medicine and what is understood at a

given time can evolve and change. Goss said that what is seen across the county is that there are wide gaps between children who have pre-k opportunities and those who do not. Thom Ingraham added that there is no requirement for students to attend the Town's pre-K, but instead it is up to each family as to whether their child is ready for pre-K.

School Board chair Kate Ryan said that her Board asked many questions throughout the last year and that while some still exist, the fact this is a pilot program that comes with next to no risk overcomes any risk that might exist.

Amy Powers asked what assessment factors will be used to indicate whether the pilot program is a success. Lee Goss stated that the use of the AMES WEB tests already in use will be a great start. Dianne Helprin also stated that the results of kindergarten screenings and the number of special education referrals will be used as important benchmarks to measure success of the program.

Florance Merrifield asked how many four year olds will be impacted by this program. Danielle Fagonde stated that the average class size for incoming kindergarten classes is 21 students, so that can serve as a guide for that number.

Brian Powers asked if there are superintendent's agreements for four year olds, and Dianne Helprin indicated that there are superintendent's agreements and that the state funding follows that student.

## **VI. Unfinished Business**

### **VII. New Business**

#### **a. Municipal Solid Waste Disposal Options discussion**

Jim Guerra, manager of the Midcoast Solid Waste Corporation, and Hope's representatives on the Midcoast Solid Waste Corporation's Board of Directors, Tom Ford and Jim Annis, spoke with the Board on the ongoing study into the options for disposal of municipal solid waste after April 2018. At that time, the towns in MCSWC (as well as 183 other communities in eastern Maine) will see their contracts end with the PERC incinerating plant. Midcoast Solid Waste Corporation has been working to assist Rockport, Camden, Hope, and Lincolnville with their decision making on this issue as each community contracts with the solid waste vendor, not MCSWC. Therefore, the four communities will be reliant on the expertise and opinion of the MCSWC Board of Directors. Midcoast Solid Waste Corporation's Executive Committee, which comprises the managers and administrators from the four towns, has engaged the engineering firm of Sevee & Mahar to conduct a study of the options available for disposal and to rate the positives and negatives of each option. The Midcoast Solid Waste Corporation Board heard the results of this portion of the study last Wednesday. In February, the MCSWC Board will hear the results of an RFP circulated to five potential vendors which could accept municipal solid waste from our communities: PERC, MRC/Fiberight, Crossroads Landfill, EcoMaine, and the City of Augusta's Hatch Hill landfill.

Once the MCSWC Board has completed its review of the options, they will present to the four communities, its recommendation as to the best vendor for disposal of municipal solid waste. However, it will be up to each community to accept that recommendation, and potentially place an item on their annual town meeting warrant for approval by voters in June.

Brian Powers asked if any of the towns could individually choose an option which could conflict with the other MCSWC communities. Jon responded that while technically any town could make its own choice, the logistics and cost of doing so are not feasible.

Jim Annis suggested what might happen if some of the communities choose to go to PERC, and some go to Fiberight/MRC, but neither facility has enough waste to operate in a financially feasible manner. Jim Guerra replied that possibility does exist and it is likely that it would require involvement by the Legislature to break such a logjam.

**b. Approval of Updated Banking Account Signatories**

David Bosken made a motion to approve changes to the Banking Account signatories by adding Bobbi Oxtan and removing Rosanna Bowman. Jim Annis seconded. **Motion passed 5-0.**

**c. Approval of Warrants**

Jim Annis made a motion to approve Warrants 53-56. Jim Annis seconded. **Motion passed 5-0.**

## **VIII. Future Agenda Items**

## **IX. Adjournment**

Chris Pinchbeck moved to adjourn at 8:59 pm. David Bosken seconded. **Motion passed 5-0.**