

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Hope Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, April 23, 2019
6:30PM
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

- Brian Powers Jr., Dick Crabtree, Wendy Pelletier, Mike, and Sarah

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Rick Bresnahan, Patrick McGrath, Beth Gindel, Langley Willauer, Thomas Ingraham, Harold Mosher, Matt Winston, Chris Pinchbeck, Cameron Pinchbeck, Bill Jones, Ron Smith, David Hall, Ellie Goldberg, Jim Guerra, Clarence Keller, Chris Wytock, Chris Farley, Math Heath, John Heath, Joe Connley, Butch Russell, and Gabriel Blodgett

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Brian.

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- Dick made a motion to accept the 3/23/19 minutes. It was seconded by Mike.
Motion passed 4-0

Administrator's Report:

- Amend Budget Votes: During the final vote meeting, some of the numbers were figured incorrectly. In addition, the estimated legal cost for solar came in. The budget committee made their recommendations based on the new information. In order to have an accurate view of how the Selectmen and Budget Committee intended to vote, it is suggested that the Selectmen amend 2 categories in the Administration Cost Center. These amendments decrease the Administrative Cost Center by \$4,093.
- Dick made a motion to amend the Selectmen's Budget to reflect payroll cost changes from \$162,444 to \$161,891 and legal services for solar change from \$5,040 to \$1,500. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 4-0
- The Town Meeting Warrant. It needs to be signed no later than Friday, April 26, 2019. The warrant and the proposed ordinances will be sent to Bill Kelly upon your approval. The sign for the South Hope Fire Station has been ordered and is scheduled to be delivered by April 30th. A "Candidate's Night" is being planned. The date is Thursday, May 30th @ 6:30PM at the Hope Corner Fire Station.
- There will be a meeting to present a new initiative at Camden Hills Regional High School called The Hatchery. April 30th at 10 a.m. in the Central Office, on 7 Lion's Lane in Camden.

New Business:

- EMS/Ambulance Discussion – Camden/Rockland Fire Chiefs: Chief Farley from Camden opened the conversation by stating the Camden Select Board asked the Town Manager to see if there were any alternatives for providing ambulance service. Fire Fighter Matt Heath attended a Homeland Defense and Security class and studied how EMS services are distributed. Matt then shared a PowerPoint presentation which included some possible complications with EMS. Ultimately, Mr. Heath concluded that a municipally owned and operated service linked with the fire departments would provide the citizens of the four towns the best level of service.

Patrick McGrath asked how many times has the current ambulance contract not been met and how many times has the current provider used mutual aid? Chief Farley responded that NEMHS is the “keeper of the information” so it is hard to know. Rick Bresnahan wanted to know if we already have a performance standard system in place. Brian said that this current contract is the first performance-based contract in the state. When we were receiving services from Camden First Aid, there weren’t any standards set by the Towns.

Sarah wanted to know if Camden’s proposal was to hire all new people and new equipment. She asked for specifics regarding the proposed infrastructure. Chief Farley made it very clear that this is not a “Camden” proposal. Dick wanted to know what was wanted or expected from the Town of Hope in regard to this presentation and proposal. Both Camden and Rockport have seen this same presentation and are interested in continuing to research the possibility of contracting with the City of Rockland for coverage of the 4-Towns. The City already has a mutual aid agreement with NEMHS to provide services, so what is the expectation?

Sarah stated that the cost and overhead is going to be astronomical for a small town like Hope. We don’t have the economies of scale to support such a thing. Chief Farley pointed out that a good example of going it alone is the Thomaston PD. Now the Town is having a vote during the Town Meeting to decide whether or not to keep the department. Thomaston may end up getting services from the county. We can all work together and have a regional service for 5 municipalities. Sarah reiterated that the costs were going to be what makes the difference.

Chris P. wanted to know where the 2 new ambulances and staff were going to be stationed. Chief Wytock from the Rockland Fire Department said that the ambulances and full-time staff would have one unit in Camden and the other unit in Rockport. Chief Wytock also made it known that the City of Rockland is not looking to make money or expand its territory or current workforce. Any money that is made will go directly back into the program and equipment.

Mike B. stated that “we receive monthly reports from NEMHS and it seems that we are getting a good service. So, why does the Camden Select Board want to look for alternatives if our current service is good? Why do we need to spend more money? Is Camden looking to save money? I just don’t understand what you are doing unless you are totally unsatisfied.”

Chief Farley stated that they have been totally upfront that this proposal was going to cost more money. He said that he wasn’t going to speak for the people who aren’t present at this meeting. “The Camden Select Board asked for alternatives, so we are giving them alternatives - - We don’t know why.”

Chief Keller noted that emergency services in Knox County are rapidly changing. In Hope,

we've been fortunate to have seven new recruits. We don't know where recruits will come from in the future. It is going to be significantly different in ten years. There has been talk about regionalization – it won't save us money as in costing us less. The savings is in the long-term collaboration. Brian said that right now there just isn't any specifics. Camden has 5-times the purchasing power of Hope, which could be to our detriment. Whatever happens, we need to be able to afford it.

- Solar Array Project new Proposal – Solar Committee: Rick B. said that he was here to discuss a new proposal. He said he was here as a private citizen and not as a part of the Solar Committee. In order to make it possible for the Town to go forward with the solar project, Rick is proposing that he would become the PPA which would save an additional \$20,000. The Town could purchase the array at the end of six years for \$48,000. Also, in an effort to lessen any liability associated with the True Park deed restrictive covenants, Rick spoke to his attorney and from his perspective the restrictions do not require all of the space to be a park or for recreation only. However, if there were a problem, the original donor has passed away, but his heirs are willing to provide a letter stating that the solar project is an ok use of the land. If it were to go to court, the True family would have the final say. Rick also stated that this is a part of the property that has not been used for 23 years, and I hope there will be a proposal for the Town to vote on at Town Meeting.

Beth Gindel who is a land abutter, said that she disagrees with Mr. Bresnahan's statement. She says the park is used regularly by the public for hiking, sledding, horseback riding, and other activities.

Brian wanted to know why the heirs would have the final say in the event there is a violation since the property was a gift to the Town. "Wouldn't the Town have the final say?"

Dick said that he wants to have all of the I's dotted and the T's crossed. He said that he only wants what is best for the Town. He noted that there is a DEP history. The Town violated the Tier 1 application it filed and had an enforcement action against it and then filed a Tier 2 after-the-fact application. There were some promises made. There were some documents not correctly recorded. Rick said that he has a wetland expert that could come out next week. We have to get permission from the DEP to build there. When Rick said that he was aware of all of this, Dick wanted to know why it hadn't been disclosed to the Selectmen. Rick apologized. Rick explained that he was only trying to take things one step at a time and was not intentionally hiding anything.

The Selectmen instructed the Town Administrator to contact the DEP to find out what process the Town needs to go through to make the project go forward. Rick asked if he could help coordinate this. Rick will contact the Town Administrator regarding this.

- Use of Space for School – Lindsay Pinchbeck: Postponed
- Discussion with New Sexton – Beth Gindel: Beth has been doing a lot of data collection about the Hope Grove Extension. Much of the data has already been entered into the cemetery software. There is a lot of work to get done. The Selectmen told her to go at a reasonable pace but that they were also glad to have her on board. Beth described some of the upcoming projects she has planned. She has also been recruiting new members for the cemetery committee. The Selectmen asked Beth to let them know if she needed anything and they briefly discussed the cemetery mowing.
- Energy Audit/Engineering Analysis Update: Cordija has collected all of the data and we

are now waiting for the final report. The Selectmen instructed the Town Administrator to find out when the final reports would be available.

- Review and Approve wording for proposed amended/new Town Ordinances: The Selectmen reviewed the Ordinance amendment proposals. Sarah made a 3-part motion to accept the proposed ordinance with some minor formatting changes, to send the proposed ordinances to the Town Attorney for his review, and to accept them as long as there were no substantive changes. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

- Review March EMS/Ambulance Report: Joe Connley, the Director of Operations, for Northeast Mobile Health Services (NEMHS), stated that he is the one who sends the monthly reports of the ambulance runs to the Towns. Brian asked if either Joe or Butch knew why the Camden Select Board are looking for alternatives for ambulance providers? Butch, CEO of NEMHS, said he didn't know because the company has been meeting the performance standards of the contract 100%.

Suspend as Board of Selectmen/Convene as Board of Assessors': Dick made a motion to suspend as Selectmen and to convene as the Board of Assessors at 9:23PM. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 4-0

- Ratio Declaration & Reimbursement Application: The Board of Assessors' reviewed and signed the Ration Declaration & Reimbursement Application.

Adjourn as Board of Assessors'/Reconvene as Board of Selectmen: Sarah made a motion to adjourn as Assessors' and to reconvene as the Board of Selectmen at 9:25PM. It was seconded by Dick. **Motion passed 4-0**

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- Sign Town Meeting Warrant: Sarah made a motion to sign the Town Meeting Warrant on Friday, April 26, 2019. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

Review and Sign Warrants:

- The Selectmen reviewed the warrants. Mike made a motion to approve and sign warrant #'s 73, 74, and 75. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 4-0

Adjournment:

- Dick made a motion to adjourn at 9:35PM. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 4-0