

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S  
MEETING  
Hope Board of  
Selectmen Tuesday,  
May 12, 2020 6:30PM  
Via Zoom Conferencing**

**Board Members Present:**

- Brian Powers Jr., Wendy Pelletier, Thom Ingraham, and Bruce Haffner

**Others Present:**

- Samantha Mank, Langley Willauer, Dick Crabtree, Todd Snyder, Jessica Snyder, Clarence Keller, Lindsay Pinchbeck, Chris Pinchbeck, and Jackson Long

**Call to Order:**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM by Brian.

**Minutes:**

- 5/12/20 Minutes: Tom made a motion to accept the April 28, 2020 minutes with several changes. It was seconded by Wendy.

**Motion passed 4-0**

**Town Administrator Report:**

- I've been in contact with Allie Feener regarding the Broadband Committee. They have met a couple of times but at this point they don't have anything to bring before the Board of Selectmen. Allie said she would keep us posted if things develop.
- I spoke with the Camden Town Manager regarding the purchase of the fire truck. She said that they do need to have the Board of Selectmen approve any sale over \$3000, but she did not foresee there being a problem with the Selectmen approving the sale. We also spoke about having a large payment upfront (\$110,000 - \$115,000) and then providing a remaining payment (\$10,000 - \$5,000) in the new budget year. She did not think that would be an issue at all. Once the Camden Selectmen have approved the sale, Camden will have attorney, Bill Kelly, write up the Sales and Purchase agreement between the two towns.
- Hopefully, everyone received a copy of the newly drafted Snowplowing RFP. I sent it out to five potential snow plowing contractors. It has also been posted on the Town website and will run in print one time in the Village Soup and it should also be in the online edition as well.
- FEMA applicant meetings are beginning to happen regarding potential money coming to Towns to reimburse for ant COVID-19 expenses. I will keep you posted on updates as they happen.

- Vern is expecting to be back in Maine on June 4<sup>th</sup>. He says he has all of the deed work done with the exception of 4 of them that he needs to be in the office to complete. He will also be preparing the Homestead Exemption and Ratio Declaration's for the Assessors to review and sign at the next meeting (May 26<sup>th</sup>). These must be signed and returned to the State by June 1st. These should be available for your review prior to the next Selectmen's Meeting.
- A plexiglass shield for the front counter has been ordered and will be installed once it is in stock. This is an attempt to be ready for when the Town Office is allowed to reopen to the public.
- There are 16 outstanding 2019 real estate tax accounts totaling \$28,490.00 with liens that will go to automatic foreclosure on February 16, 2021 if accounts remain unpaid.
- There are 254 RE 2020 tax accounts totaling \$413,019.14. The second half of real estate taxes were due on April 30, 2020.

**New Business:**

Tree Removal from True Park: Currently there are zero funds to remove trees in the budget this year. Brian's brother, Stephen Powers, the Forrester for the Town of Appleton took a look at the trees. According to Stephen, there were 14 trees that had been flagged but there are only eight or nine trees that should come down sometime in the near future. However, we did just have one of the worse storms so far this year and yet those trees remain standing. All over Hope, the weak trees fell. There are four trees that show no signs of deterioration these trees are fine and healthy and should be left alone. At this particular point in time, it does not appear that any of the trees are in emergent danger of falling. Stephen also said that the two quotes that were received to do the work were right in line with the going rates.

Brian noted that it appears the abutter to True Park has come across the stone wall and has placed some of their personal property in the Park. The Town Administrator has been asked to look into this. Brian also stated that he thinks that this could be funded in the next budget season.

Todd Snyder said that he also looked the trees over and concurs with Brian and Stephen. He also asked that when the time come to remove the trees, if there would be access to the property owners land as opposed to running the equipment across True Park.

Thom was in agreement with adding this to next year's budget.

Bruce said that he thought that we should include money in the budget for only the trees that actually need to be taken down and not for the healthy trees.

Brian said to go ahead and schedule the work for after July 1<sup>st</sup> so that we can get on their busy schedule.

- 2020 Personal Property Taxes - 36 M.R.S. 105 §760-A “Minor or Burdensome Amount: The Town Administrator gave a brief overview of how the Selectmen came to the decision to not collect personal property taxes. The Town Administrator told the Selectmen that there are 27 accounts totaling \$4228.44 of assessed personal property taxes for 2020. Bruce made a motion to consider the 2020 personal property tax as minor or burdensome amounts and to remove \$4,228.44 from the books. It was seconded by Thom.

**Motion passed 4-0**

**Old Business:**

- Clarence asked if he could have a point of clarification regarding where we go next as far as the purchase of the fire truck.

Bruce said that he had been doing some research and have found a 1998 for a truck in Limerick Maine for \$25,000.

Clarence said that he was concerned about the NFPA standards and couldn't say if that fire truck would meet those standards without more information.

Thom thought that a 1998 truck was too old for what we were doing and said that he would be in favor of going forward with the Camden proposal if it's a good deal for a good price.

Brian said he would like to get a third-party opinion on the value of the truck and have some kind of comparisons. Bruce said that there is a fire truck expert who lives in Hope named Andy Swift. The Town Administrator was asked to contact Mr. Swift about firetruck comparisons in order to do due diligence for the taxpayers.

**Other Business:**

- Bruce stated that when there is a Selectmen's Meeting via Zoom, the link should be put on the webpage calendar for anyone to click and enter.

Bruce prepared a new presentation for the snow plowing. He said that right now interest rates are very low and if we decide to research it or not go forward because nobody wants to do the work right now, the cost of waiting would be approximately the same cost as a new garage.

Bruce went on to say that the snowplow trucks could actually be stored in the Hope Corner Fire Station. Bruce as there is a 50' x 50' garage so there will be plenty of room for storage.

Brian said that the Road Commissioner, John Monroe, is starting to get nervous because this is as late as the Town has ever gone without having a snowplow contractor lined up. Right now, we're in the middle of May and it can snow as early as October and we need to get a contractor lined up then we can focus on Bruce's proposal.

- Thom commented that Bruce’s proposals have been very professional and thorough. He appreciates and is impressed by the work that Bruce has done. Perhaps getting a “Roads Group” together working on this alongside of Bruce would be helpful. If other towns find it worthwhile to have a public works department it may be because the economics are good for them and it might be good for Hope as well. Thom went on to say that we need to find a way to make Bruce’s research available online on the Town website and offering information as well as where we are in the process so that everyone in town can be informed. Thom said he wants this to be widely seen and known by all of Hope’s residents as it can be a viable option going forward.

Wendy said that she agrees with going forward in the future, but for now it could be confusing to have it on the website since we are going in a different direction and trying to hire a contractor.

Bruce said that the mindset should be that we can buy three trucks and have them here within a week. Even if we have to wait for Town Meeting, we have trucks here in town by August 1<sup>st</sup>. He also went on to say that unemployment is very high right now so it should be easy to find qualified snowplow drivers. He also asked if the next Selectmen’s meeting could start a half an hour early so that he would use that time as a workshop to talk to Town residents about the proposal.

- Dick Crabtree said that he had some information relevant to fire departments and emergency medical services. As it relates to Northeast Mobile Health Services and Camden. He said if we look at the City of Ellsworth, they have decided to become a licensed EMS provider and there are many conditions that they must meet including responding to every single call. He said it was an article in the Ellsworth American newspaper which might be an important read as we look at our future ambulance service.
- Brian commented that tomorrow is Mary’s last day working at the Town Office and asked if the Selectmen could stop by to thank her for her many years of service and to personally wish her well on her last day.

**Warrants #’s 85, 86, 87, 88, & 89:**

- The Selectmen reviewed the warrants. Thom made a motion to approve and sign warrant #’s 85, 86, 87, 88 and 89. It was seconded by Wendy.

**Motion passed 4-0**

**Adjournment:**

- Thom made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 PM. It was seconded by Bruce.

**Motion passed 4-0**