

During the discussion of the snow plowing contract Bruce laid out the choices before the

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Hope Board of Selectmen

Tuesday June 9, 2020

6:30PM

Via Zoom Video Conferencing

Board Members Present:

- Brian Powers Jr, Sarah Ann Smith, Wendy Pelletier, Thom Ingraham, and Bruce Haffner

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Alexenia Payor, Langley Willauer, John Monroe, Amy Gertner, Bill Jones, Jake Boyington, Tom Farley, Dick Crabtree, and Ellie Goldberg

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:43 p.m. by Brian.

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- 6/9/2020 Meeting: Sarah made a motion to accept and approve the June 2, 2020 minutes. It was seconded by Bruce.

Motion passed 4-0-1 (Wendy)

Town Administrator Report:

- Clarence reported that successful pump test for the fire truck we are purchasing from Camden was done on June 7, 2020. The Camden Town Manager and I have talked. Camden will have Bill Kelly draw up a Purchase and Sales Agreement.
- In order to get the Winter Maintenance Contract completed and signed, I'd like the Selectmen to schedule an Executive Session with Mr. Boyington to finish the contract negotiations.
- There are 13 outstanding 2019 real estate tax accounts totaling \$23,558.64 with liens that will go to automatic foreclosure on February 16, 2021 if accounts remain unpaid.
- There are 198 RE 2020 tax accounts totaling \$296,832.40. The second half of real estate taxes were due on April 30, 2020.

New Business:

- Town Meeting Format - Town Meeting or Ballot: Bruce made a motion to have a Town Meeting on July 16, 2020. There was no second. The motion failed.

Brian said if we go against the Executive Order and we end up with an illegal meeting, we could be in a lot of trouble or at least have a mess. It just isn't worth the risk. Sarah made a motion to have a Public Hearing no later than the last week of June and have a ballot vote on July 14, 2020. Wendy seconded the motion. Sarah then suggested Tuesday, June 30 at 6:30 for the Public Hearing.

Bruce wanted to know how the amendment process would work with a ballot vote. Brian told him

that we would lose the option for amendments this year.

Brian said by putting the individual cost centers on the ballot instead of just one number for the entire budget seems like it would be the most transparent way to conduct a ballot meeting.

Bill Jones said that the only option for changing or disagreeing with a warrant article would be to vote it down. He thinks having too much information on the ballot would be too confusing. He then said, “maybe the budget committee should just vote itself out of existence”.

Sarah said that she really likes the idea of putting separate cost centers instead of one budget number because then we can really see if there is something that the voters don’t like but it also gives them the opportunity to vote down just one cost center and we would have to go to a Special Town Meeting on just that one cost center.

Bruce thinks we should still have a Town Meeting with only 50 people, then if anyone else who was late would be given an absentee ballot and they could return it within the hour after the meeting. Brian and Sarah both said that would allow for way too many opportunities for voter fraud or impropriety. Bruce said that the people could be on zoom if they could not attend in person.

Bruce then made a motion to allow Citizen Initiatives to change from the required 10% of registered voters to sign a petition to only require 25 signatures. This would allow the residents to change an Article on the ballot. It was seconded by Thom.

Motion failed 2-3 (Brian, Sarah, and Wendy)

Brian called for the vote on Sarah’s original motion.

Motion passed 4-1 (Bruce)

- Appointments to Roads Committee: The Town Administrator presented the Selectmen with a purpose statement and seven names as possible candidates. (*attached*)

Thom said he wanted to have a little more time before deciding. He said he didn’t know all of the people and wanted to make sure that they are all open and fair minded. He went on to say that maybe we should check with some residents to see who they might like to have on the Roads Committee. This is important to our budget and Thom really would like to hold off on this just to make sure it is a really open minded and realistic look for our future of our roads.

Brian said the purpose is beyond just having a look at creating the Public Works Department.

Sarah said that there has been a big push to get this committee going so, the Selectmen can appoint these people now there are seven people who are willing to serve on it and we can add more later.

John Monroe said we don’t need to keep pushing this down the road. Thom said we don’t need to be in a rush this can wait a couple of weeks until the budget process is over. I’m sure these are all fine people, but it can wait a couple of more weeks. Brian said we can appoint these seven folks now and appoint more later as well.

Doug Merrill said he served on the Roads Committee in the past and that perhaps we could look back and see how many people were on the previous committee. He went on to say that he really thinks the Selectmen should appoint these seven people to the committee.

Brian said this cannot wait, the beginning of the new fiscal year is within a month from now.

The Selectmen took no action on appointing a Roads Committee.

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- John Monroe said that he had talked with Jake Boyington. Jake has other opportunities for employment, so he really needs to know about the snowplowing contract, and he said that he really wasn't feeling very secure about working with the Town of Hope right now.

The Selectmen decided to schedule an Executive Session to discuss snowplowing with the contractors and their various proposals. Executive Session was scheduled for June 16, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

Warrants:

- The Selectmen reviewed the warrants. Sarah made a motion to approve and sign warrant #'s 95, 96, and 97. It was seconded by Wendy.

Motion passed 5-0

Adjournment:

- Sarah made a motion to adjourn at 7:49 PM. It was seconded by Thom.

Motion passed 5-0