

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Hope Board of Selectmen & Assessors'
Tuesday, August 14, 2018
6:30 PM
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Robert (Butch) Russell, Joe Conley, Kitty Stevens, Nancy Connon, Beth Guisley, Jim Guerra, Owen Casas, and John Monroe

Call to Order:

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

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- Dick made a motion to accept the 7/10/2018 minutes. It was seconded by Wendy.
Motion passed 4-0-1 (*Sarah*)

Administrator's Report:

- Locked in the heating oil for \$2.50/gal and propane at \$1.65/gal.
- Attended the MCSW meeting on 7/25/18. During that meeting a majority of the MCSW Board of Directors voted against changing the by-laws and inter-local agreement to allow for an equal vote in place of the weighted voted.
- I did make contact with Danielle regarding adding language into the plowing contract for the school in order to be protected from costs associated with damage caused by the plowing.
- 34 liens were placed on 2018 RE accounts that remained unpaid. These liens will be automatically foreclosed in 18 months if they are not paid in full. In 2017, there were 42 liens. In 2016, there were 57 liens. In 2015, there were 63 liens. This is the lowest number of liens placed on properties for non-payment of taxes since 2005.
- There are 1,177 outstanding 2019 real estate tax accounts totaling \$3,054,497.82.
- There are 34 outstanding 2018 real estate tax accounts totaling \$112,475.86 that were lienied today. Automatic foreclosure is 18 months if accounts remain unpaid.
- There are 15 outstanding 2017 real estate tax accounts totaling \$32,353.55 with liens that will automatically foreclose in January 2019 if the accounts remain delinquent.

New Business:

- Stevens Lawn Care – Mowing Contract 2-Year Review & Update: The Selectmen told Kitty that there have been several complaints regarding the mowing since her

company was awarded the mowing contract 2 years ago. Some specific incidents were discussed. Kitty explained that there had been some miscommunication and that she incorrectly thought that the mowing had been done. Dick wanted to know if she felt that the contract and job in Hope was working for her company. Kitty said that it was and that she wants to provide a good quality service to the Town. There were questions about the weeding and the general look of the municipal facilities and parks. Kitty stated that she was following the contract and that those items aren't specifically explained out in the contract and that she does adhere to the guidelines of the contract. Brian said that the Selectmen viewed last year as a learning curve but that the complaints have continued. The Selectmen said they are taking some responsibility for the complaints because the previous contractor did much more than what was in the contract and the specifications and scope of work was not adjusted to reflect that. The expectation of service is greater than what was actually contracted. The Selectmen asked Ms. Stevens to let them know if she felt that their expectations were unreasonable. Kitty said that now that she is aware of the greater expectation, she will not let it happen again. Her goal is truly to make the Town of Hope look good.

- Hope Library Signage and Wi-Fi: Nancy and Beth provided the Selectmen with information regarding the Children's Internet Protection Act which includes filters on the Library's open Wi-Fi. Other documents that were provided included the Hope Library Electronic Information Network Policy as well as the form internet users sign when using the Library equipment. The Maine State Library provides the internet for our community and requires all of the filters and protections available for such a network. Dick commented that after reading the material that was provided, and all of the filters that are in place, it should discourage inappropriate activity. He was curious if there was a way to have it on a timer so that the wi-fi usage could be limited to certain hours. All of the Selectmen liked the internet protection provided by the State. In addition to the Wi-Fi discussion, the Selectmen asked about the Wi-Fi Hotspot sign that appeared on the outside of the Town Office. Nancy stated that the Library Board did not approve the sign and they were unaware that it was going to be put up. The Selectmen stated that they don't have a problem with the actual sign but rather the way it happened. Nancy and Beth both stated that it was not handled in the proper way and also were not ok with the way it was handled as proper channels weren't followed. The Selectmen all agreed that they see no reason to take the sign down and that it could remain.
- MCSW – Corporation Layout & Function – Owen Casas & Jim Guerra: Jim began the conversation by stating that the MCSW by-laws are the road map for the organization. The relationship between MCSW and the Towns is in the inter-local agreement. It is important that by-laws and the inter-local agreement are parallel with each other. The by-laws were updated in 2015 while the inter-local agreement was last updated in 2002, so the two documents do not align well now. Secondly, Jim stated that MCSW is looking at ways to make hauling more efficient, but it will cost money. When the time comes, Owen and Jim will be back to speak with all of the Board of Selectmen from each town in order to have it put on the ballot for a town-wide vote. Thirdly, Jim said that there has been a lot of turn-over on the MCSW Board of Directors. When people leave the Board for any reason, new people come on. New people generally come with new ideas then the old reports,

studies and ideas get shelved and money is wasted. It seems that we're starting over. It gets very frustrating because things can't get done. Owen stated that he thought that we should be having 2 separate conversations. The first is dealing with general housekeeping, non-controversial items such as aligning the by-laws and the interlocal agreement. The second conversation would cover the more contentious topics such as eliminating the weighted vote system and instituting an equal vote for each Town. He outlined three needs that should be addressed at the MCSW facility. 1.) Switching the facility over to a single-stream collection but maintaining enough flexibility to have a functioning facility regardless of how the markets change in the future. 2.) Create an organized traffic flow to make sure everyone remains safe and allows for easy access to each part of the facility that may be needed at any given time without blocking or delaying others who are also using the facility. 3) Lastly, is hauling efficiency. We can't necessarily predict the future, but we need to have more tonnage per load no matter where we are hauling to and the type of hauling whether it be roll-off trailers or open-top trailers. We need to be able to ebb and flow with whatever is happening around us and we can still maintain hauling efficiency. Owen went on to say that we also have some "wants such as replacing buildings. He stated that the current facility was never designed. Many years ago, people just began showing up and throwing their trash in the quarry and then the facility was built hodge-podge around that tradition but not designed. He said as an organization we are "surviving" – we haul trash, but we are not "thriving". Dick asked what they wanted from us. Owen said "nothing". Jim said that Hope is important to MCSW and wanted to hear our ideas.

- Road Commissioner Update – John Monroe:
 - John reported that the paving work has already been completed and that it came in under budget. He said that in his 28 years as Road Commissioner, F.C. Work is by far the best company he has ever worked with.
 - John updated the Selectmen about the beaver dam that had completely blocked off the culvert on Robbins Rd and was flooding the area. After two different trappers refused to trap the beaver for various reasons, the Game Warden finally gave John permission to remove the beaver dam so that the flooding would be alleviated and so that the trapper could get in to the right location to actually trap the beaver.
 - The salt is being delivered as we are already preparing for winter.
- Ambulance Contract with NEMHS – Robert Russell & Joe Conley: Dick and Sarah reviewed the final draft of the ambulance contract with NEMHS. Dick stated that he believes we now have a workable contract for both parties. He recommended a minor change to the wording in the contract – changing Town Manager to Town Administrator. Butch Russell from NEMHS said that was acceptable. Dick made a motion to approve and sign the final draft of the ambulance service contract with North East Mobile Health Services. It was seconded by Sarah. Mike added that he wanted to thank everyone involved for their time and effort.

Motion passed 5-0

- Annual Appointments: Wendy made a motion to appoint the following people to the following positions for the 2018-2019 year: Samantha Mank - Treasurer, GA

Administrator, CEO/LPI; Chelsea Summers - Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Deputy Treasurer, Deputy Registrar of Voters, Election Warden; Tolles - Bookkeeper, Registrar of Voters, Deputy Town Clerk, Deputy Tax Collector; C. Vernon Ziegler - Assessors' Agent; Clarence Keller - Fire Chief, Addressing Officer; Michael Mank - Emergency Management Director; Heidi Blood - Animal Control Officer; Janice Campbell – Sexton. It was seconded by Dick.

Motion passed 5-0

- Discussion about local ordinance to exempt excise tax for active duty military personnel: The Town Administrator presented the Selectmen with a sample ordinance to allow active duty Hope residents to be exempt from vehicle excise tax while serving on active duty. The Selectmen were open to the prospect of allowing one personal vehicle and will review it further closer to the June election.

Old Business:

- None

Suspend as Selectmen/Call to Order as Board of Assessors':

- Sarah made a motion to suspend as the Board of Selectmen and to convene as the Board of Assessors' at 8:56PM. It was seconded by Dick.

Motion passed 5-0

- 2018 Municipal Valuation Return (MVR): The Assessors reviewed the MVR with making the correction that Hope was in Knox County rather than Waldo County. Dick made a motion to approve and sign the MVR with the noted correction. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Adjourn as Assessors'/Reconvene as Board of Selectmen:

- Sarah made a motion to adjourn as the Board of Assessors' at 9:14PM and to reconvene as the Board of Selectmen. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Other Business:

- None

Review and Sign Warrants:

- The Selectmen reviewed the warrants. Dick made a motion to approve and sign warrant #'s 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 5-0

Adjournment:

- Sarah made a motion to adjourn at 9:38PM. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Disclaimer: Many of the agenda items were taken out of order to accommodate those in attendance