

MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Hope Board of Selectmen
Tuesday September 24, 2019
6:30PM
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Mike Brown, Owen Casas, and T. Baridi Nkokheli

Call to Order:

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

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- 9/10/2019 meeting: Thom made a motion to accept the September 24, 2019 minutes. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 4-0-1 (*Bruce*)

Town Administrator Report:

- Update Sweet Tree Arts: The school has started holding classes in the library. From the Town Office point of view, they have been very quiet and unnoticeable. I think this working out well. Marc from the Fire Marshall's Office did respond and sent a packet of information for the school to fill out and complete before he would come and inspect.
- Update Town Office Roof: The contract has been signed with the roofers. They are expected to be completed with all of the work by October 15th.
- Update Planning Board and Solar Project: There was a Planning Board meeting on September 11th to review the application to make sure it was complete for the Site Plan review. The PB did conclude that all of the required documentation was adequately provided. There is a site walk planned for tomorrow at 6:00pm in True Park at the proposed location of the solar array. Following the site walk, there will be a Public Hearing to hear public comments regarding the solar array, at 6:30 at the Town Office. After the Public Hearing, hopefully the Planning Board will have enough information and input to make a decision. They are allowed deliberation time if they don't think they can make a decision on Wednesday.

- Update EMS Review Committee: A meeting has been scheduled on Thursday October 17, 2019 at 6:30PM in Camden for the EMS Review Committee to go over the past reports from North East Ambulance.
- Update on items being advertised (*Public Hearing, Bookkeeper, and Facilities Snow/Ice Removal*): These 3 items are being advertised in the local paper. I have spread a wider net for the bookkeeper ad and also included it in the Bangor Daily News. The bids for the snow/ice removal and the resumes for the bookkeeper position are due on Friday, October 18th.
- FYI Information on the Elderly Residents Property Tax Deferment Act: I have included a couple of pages regarding a program that is voluntary to the Town that is supposed to help provide senior citizens with property tax relief. There has been some concern that the senior citizens in town may not be able to continue to pay their taxes.
- Memo from the Town Clerk regarding an increase in the BMV Agent Fees.
- Update Knox County Fish & Game Shooting Range: I met with Walt Simmons, the president of the Knox County Fish and Game shooting range on September 12, 2019, to answer some questions regarding range protocols and safety.

New Business:

- MCSW Discussion with Nkokheli Baridi and Owen Casas: Owen began by stating the reason for them coming is two-fold, first, to have an annual check-in with the Towns and update all of the Selectmen about what's been happening at Mid Coast Solid Waste, and secondly, to introduce the new MCSW Manager, T. Baridi Nkokheli.

Baridi said that he is very grateful to have been selected to be the MCSW manager and that he appreciates the opportunity to serve with a great staff, facility, and to work for the 4 communities.

- Hauling: Last week, September 16th was the 30-day mark that he has been managing the facility. During those 30 days, the negotiations for a hauling contract is underway. There is a possibility to have the current cans hauled away for approx. \$11,000 annually. Another option is to replace the current cans with a more universal style that can be transported by a larger number of haulers, for approx. \$20,000 annually. MCSW has been operating without a hauling contract for quite some time. Right now, Baridi is looking for the most cost effective and efficient hauler.
- Landfill Leachate: Baridi also gave a lengthy update on the leachate pumping at the landfill. In addition, he is working with others to include the leachate as a possible means to fire suppression rather than using so much potable water. The current temperature reading at the hot spots of the landfill averages 130° - 160°. The corporations Schedule of Compliance requires the fire department to be

called if temperatures rise above 180°. The leachate pump has not been working since July 27th, but it is expected to get repaired beginning tomorrow. Baridi explained that the landfill has an underground berm around it and that if the water levels (leachate) rise above 113 feet, then the overflow would go into nearby Lily Pond, which is an extreme DEP violation. It is imperative to have the leachate pump working.

- Weighted Vote: Owen stated that as the Chair of the MCSW Board of Directors, he is open to have the weighted vote issue on the agenda again, whenever the Town of Hope wants to discuss it again. However, the weighted vote is governed by the Interlocal Agreement which means it would have to be voted on as a ballot questions by all four towns. The corporation by-laws can be changed by the vote of the Board of Director's.

Mike Brown stated that MCSW now has a governance committee among other committees that are researching items and helping MCSW to function better as a corporation. Mike knows the four towns getting an equal vote is a long process to work through. He said that it is very frustrating to sit at the table with the other Director's knowing the whole time that his vote doesn't count. Owen told the Selectmen that he is appreciative that Mike has continued on the Board of Director's as it as really helped with the continuity and reduced the turnover.

Owen commented that it is not uncommon to have weighted voting in small communities that operate solid waste facilities. Locally, Tri-County Solid Waste Organization, and Owls Head, South Thomaston & Thomaston Solid Waste Co-operative, also conduct business using a weighted vote system.

- Recent Changes: Brian stated that he hopes things at the facility will actually be run like a corporation by consistently using and following policies and procedures.

Baridi explained that just in the 30-day time frame, he has already made some changes. There were 2 containers near the front entrance that were used as metal bins. There have been several incidents of people "picking" or "savaging" from the bins. The reason this is not ok, it first, it is a safety concern, Secondly, metal is a commodity that can be sold. If the metal is taken from the facility, it is removing a revenue stream. In the past, the employees and costumers have considered taking items from the bins as diversion. Baridi considers it theft. The bins have been moved to a different place on the property to discourage the "savaging" practice. He has always instructed employees to not allow it to happen anymore. There have been some drive-off's where people will put things in the landfill but not pay the fee for doing so. Camera's will be installed to record license plates and those who drive off without paying will be turned over to the police department.

There has also been a trend, that people are “donating” items to the swap shop in an effort to avoid paying a fee. In some cases, the donations are trash and the corporation still has to dispose of the items. Therefore, all items coming into the facility regardless of disposal method (landfill, swap shop, cd&d) will have an associated fee.

- Revised Budget: MCSW recently sent out a revised assessment statement asking the Towns to pay a different amount than had been approved at Town Meeting. The Selectmen asked Owen why this happened. Owen was not sure of the reason but said that he would find out and let the Town know. In the meantime, he said to only pay the original amount until there was a more definitive answer. Owen thanked the Selectmen for their time. He assured the Selectmen that “Everyone does have an equal voice at the table even there isn’t an equal vote.”
- NEMHS August Report: The Selectmen reviewed the August ambulance report and see that all of the performance measures required in the contract have been satisfactorily met.

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- None

Review & Sign Warrants #'s:

- The Selectmen reviewed the warrants. Sarah made a motion to approve and sign warrant #'s 25, 26, 27, and 28. It was seconded by Thom.

Motion passed 5-0

Adjournment:

- Sarah made a motion to adjourn at 8:45PM. It was seconded by Thom.

Motion passed 5-0