

**- PUBLIC MEETING -
Hope Select Board
Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, June 27, 2023
Hope Town Office**

-AGENDA-

Call to Order:

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

Public Comment (*Please limit comments to 2-3 minutes*):

Minutes:

- June 27, 2023:

Warrants:

New Business:

- Election of Officers:
 - Chair:
 - Vice Chair:
- Georges River Land Trust Update – Annette Naegel:
- Treasurer’s Disbursement Warrants for Employee Wages & Benefits Policy:
- Treasurer’s Disbursement Warrants for Payment of State Fees Policy:
- Municipal Officer’s Policy on Disbursement of Municipal Education Costs:
- 2023-2024 Assessing Contract:
- 2023-2024 Annual Appointments:
- Final Vote on FY24 Budget:

Old Business:

Other Business:

Town Administrator’s Report:

Executive Session:

- Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405 6(A)(1) - Discussion or consideration of the employment, appointment, assignment, duties, promotion, demotion, compensation, evaluation, disciplining, resignation or dismissal of an individual or group of public officials, appointees or employees of the body or agency.

Adjournment:

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, June 13, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

- Sarah Ann Smith, Dick Crabtree, Mike Brown, Charlie Weidman, and Michael Schultz

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Sarah.

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- The agenda was approved and accepted by consent.

Public Comment:

None

Minutes:

- May 23, 2023: Mike made a motion to approve the 5/23/23 minutes. It was seconded by Michael.
Motion passed 3-0-2 (Charlie & Michael)

Warrants 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, & 96:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Charlie made a motion to approve and sign warrants 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, and 96. It was seconded by Mike.
Motion passed 5-0

New Business:

- Application for Committee Service – Reappointment Molly Luce, Planning Board: Dick made a motion to reappoint Molly Luce to the Planning Board for a five-year term expiring on June 30, 2028. It was seconded by Mike.
Motion passed 5-0
- 2023-24 Contract with Interstate Septic: Dick made a motion to approve and sign the annual contract with Interstate Septic. It was seconded by Mike.
Motion passed 5-0
- Renew Liquor License for Pushaw’s Trading Post – Susan Pushaw: Dick made a motion to renew the liquor license for Pushaw’s Trading Post. It was seconded by Michael.
Motion passed 5-0

Old Business:

- Sarah gave an update on the ground penetrating radar project in Morey Hill Cemetery. There was discussion surrounding the location of plots that had already been purchased. The Select

Board agreed to allow the purchase to stand, however Morrey Hill Cemetery is now closed for any additional or new plots.

Other Business:

- None

Town Administrator Report:

- I received an email from the auditors yesterday indicating the FY2022 audit was close to being completed. It is being reviewed for editing purposes. There wasn't a definitive date of when the physical audit would be in hand. There are still a few procedural things that must happen before either special town meeting can be held.
- The Public Hearing for some ordinance amendments and the mining moratorium is scheduled for tomorrow evening. The Alford Lake/Lermond Pond Association has submitted a story to the pen Bay Pilot urging all residents to attend. The article states that they will be seeking a ban on mineral mining.
- The School Union 69 Finance Subcommittee is also meeting tomorrow evening at the Hope Elementary School at 6:00 p.m. The full Joint School Board will be meeting on Tuesday, June 20th. The subcommittee will be making recommendations regarding their findings at that time.
- There still has not been a presidential declaration for the May 1st storm yet. However, FEMA did come and I have submitted some documentation through the Knox County EMA. Everyone is saying that it appears quite likely that it will be coming at some point.
- We are finally making some headway on the Highfield Rd. violations. The town's attorney has set aside some time to draft some documents. Once things progress a little bit more, we will have an executive session to review and discuss those documents.
- There were 9 new building permits and 3 plumbing permits since the 5/23/23 Select Board meeting:

○ Brady Clark	34 Maple Dr.	Accessory Structure (Garage)
○ Chris Stone	34 Island Ln.	Dock
○ Ezra Howell	77 Barrett Hill Rd.	Accessory Structure (Barn)
○ Cheryl Pease	117 Beaver Lodge Rd.	Shoreline Stabilization
○ Dan Ford	318 Hatchet Mountain Rd.	Accessory Structure (Garage)
○ Rick Catalano	22 Heritage Ln.	Excavation/Fill & Clearing
○ Bernie Garrigan	160 Ludwig Rd.	Addition
○ Paul Belcher	Overlook Ln.	SFD w/ Garage
○ Megan Patterson	23 Seacoast Rd.	Accessory Structure (Barn)

- There are 5 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$20,120.16. Unpaid 2022 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 27, 2024, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 100 RE accounts for 2023, totaling \$151,849.24.
- There have been pre-payments totaling \$12,850.22 for the 2024 RE taxes.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the Select Board meeting on 5/23/23.

Adjournment:

- Charlie made a motion to adjourn at 7:22 p.m. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Hopes Edge Farm Conservation Project

Request for a letter of support from the Town of Hope
Regarding: Application to Land for Maine's Future to be submitted by
Georges River Land Trust by August 4, 2023



Background: The state has funded farmland protection since 1990 through the Land for Maine's Future Program because agriculture is critically important to our economy, food supply and contribution to our communities and quality of life. The state is also keenly interested in knowing the local municipality, for any particular project, supports the proposal to have the farm permanently conserved.

To this end the Land Trust would like to request a letter of support for an application from the Land Trust to the Land for Maine's Future Program for the protection of Hopes Edge Farm.

The following items can be included in your letter:

- The consistency of conserving this land with the local Comprehensive Plan
- Farm's connection to locally grown produce
- Farm's contribution to local economy
- Farm's contribution to Hope's quality of life, and other farms as well
- Include that you understand GRLT is leading the effort to create a conservation easement that will protect the farm property from development forever and that will encourage its continued use for agriculture.
- If you feel so inclined, you can thank the GRLT, Land for Maine's Future Board and Maine Farmland Trust for considering Hopes Edge Farm for conservation.

Timeline: Please send a letter to the Land trust, addressed to by July 21st:

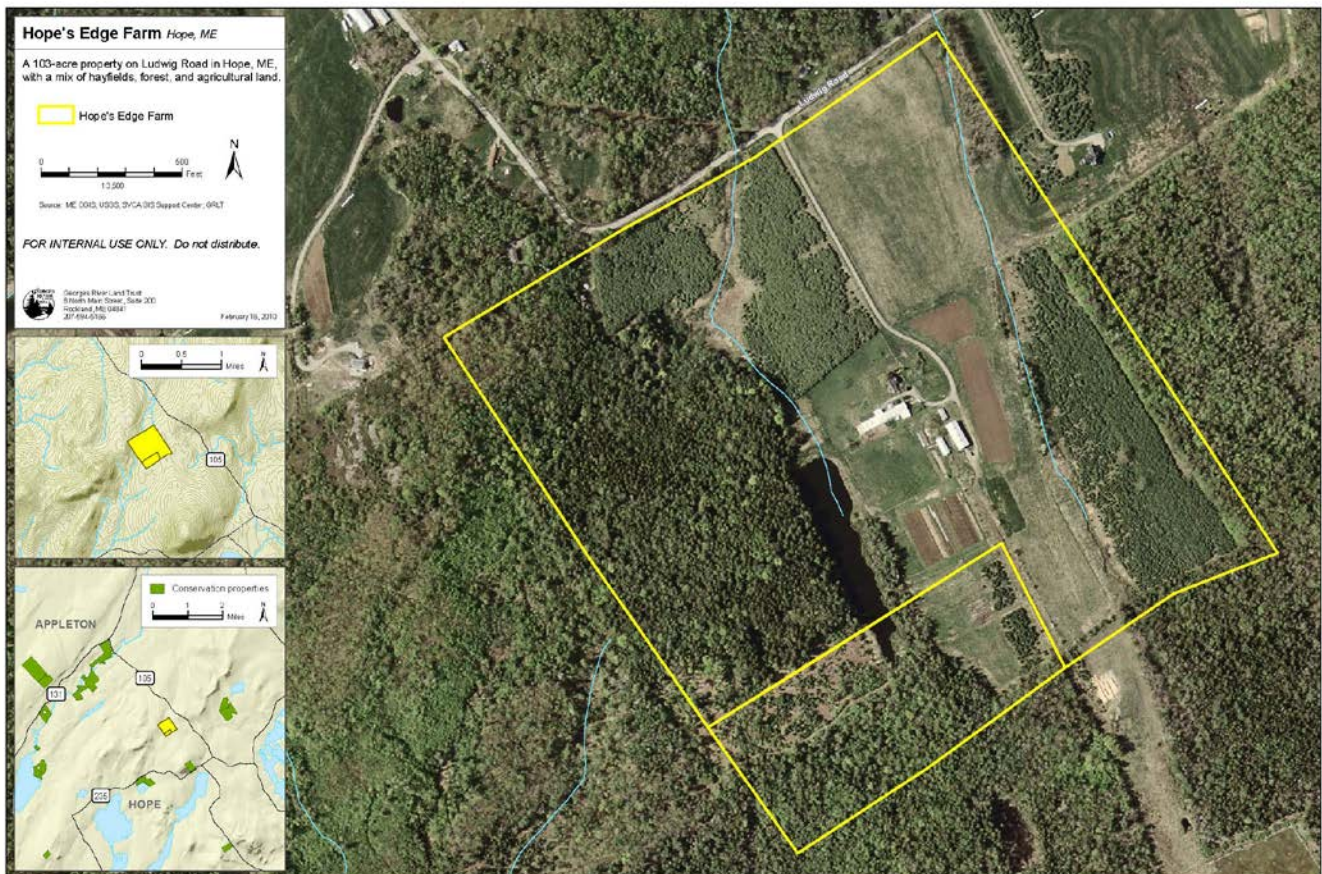
Annette Naegel, Director of Lands
Georges River Land Trust
PO Box B
Rockland, ME 04841

OR send it via email (an attached letter OR even just an email would be fine). My email is annette@GRLT.org.

You can see the Land Trust's website at www.GeorgesRiver.org

If you have any questions about your letter, feel free to reach out to Annette Naegel via email as above or by phone at 207-594-5166. Or to landowner Holly Miller, hollymiller@tidewater.net, 542-6251. Thank you!

Map of the Property



Hope's Edge Farm Proposed for Conservation

Comprised of 103 acres of open fields and mixed woodlands, Hope's Edge Farm is in northwest Hope, off Ludwig Road. Historically this land was home to three generations of the Morse family who, up until the mid-1980's, ran one of the preeminent dairy farms in the region. After the Morses sold the property it was not farmed again until the current owner purchased it in 1998 and started Hope's Edge. Since that time at least seven large new homes have been built in the area, several of them on what had been a 220-acre hilltop farm. One of those large new homes was built on 20 acres that were originally part of Hope's Edge Farm but were sold by the Farm's prior owner. Just in the last year, the landowner to the west of the Farm clear-cut many acres of forest preparatory to development. Blueberry fields to the south, on the slopes of Hatchet Mountain and facing the Farm, were sold by the Wright family; a large barn is currently being erected and 10 acres were subdivided and sold to a family now building a home.



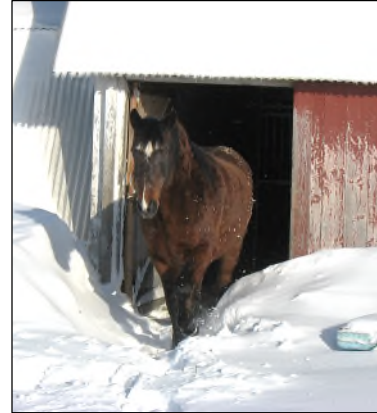
In 2005, the owner contacted the Georges River Land Trust (Annette Naegel) to start discussions about conserving the Farm. Those discussions expanded to include from Maine Farmland Trust and the state of Maine so Hope's Edge Farm could apply for funding from Land for Maine Futures Board and perhaps the Federal Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program. The Farm was placed just below the tier of applicants that received Land for Maine's Future funding in 2007. In 2011, given the changing political landscape, funding availability and the owner's financial needs at the time, the conservation project was placed on hold until this year. The owner and Georges River Land Trust agree that the time is right for the project to go forward.

The conservation goals for Hope's Edge Farm are to:

- Protect this exceptional piece of productive farmland and forest from development forever.
- Preserve the scenic and open character of this traditional Maine farm.
- Protect the historical use of this property by continuing sustainable agriculture and forestry practices.
- Enable the current owner of the farm to continue to own and develop the Farm as well as plan for its future.
- Preserve wildlife habitat on the property.
- Position the farm as a local source of food, health, knowledge, and community.



The owner, who works full time off the Farm, has a written agreement with Tom Griffin, Farmer, under which Farmer Tom leases acreage and buildings and operates a CSA program and small farm market. About 3 acres are under cultivation for vegetables. Farmer Tom also keeps a small flock of sheep for wool and chickens for eggs. Chicken and sheep manure, along with vegetable waste, are composted and used to dress vegetable gardens and create potting soil. Starting in 2010 Farmer Tom tested out keeping a small dairy herd. The state-certified dairy operated for several years until, given the time and resources needed for vegetable production, it was disbanded. In Summer, 2022, Farmer Tom is taking a well-deserved two month sabbatical, bicycling across the country. Two farm assistants are stepping in and operating a smaller CSA/market in Tom's absence.



Hope's Edge Farm promotes other local growers by offering their products through the Farm's CSA. For instance, a local producer of organic tofu (Heiwa Tofu in Camden) offers tofu and organic blueberries from another grower are offered every year.

Crops currently grown on the property include vegetables and flowers for the CSA; vegetables for sale to restaurants and retail stores (Good Tern Co-op and Primo Restaurant, for example); and occasional crops for Avena Botanicals. Oat straw is harvested for bedding and mulch. Hay is harvested for Farm livestock. Hope's Edge is also invested in preserving wildlife habitat and hosts a large flock of bobolinks every year.

Through the CSA and other activities, Hope's Edge Farm educates the public about sustainable agriculture and the benefits of eating locally. Shareholders learn by virtue of visiting the Farm every week. Besides picking up their produce and strolling through the gardens, they can read articles and borrow books about sustainable agriculture or preparing fresh vegetables. Their children, the next generation, learn as well: many shareholders bring their small children and introduce them to fresh produce, acquaint them with Tom the farmer and with the Farm's animals. Apprentices and other Farm helpers learn by doing. Farmer Tom, who holds two soil science degrees, has written articles and served on panels for MOFGA. He has often hosted and taught MOFGA seminars on Bio-Dynamics on the Farm. Children from the local Waldorf School and Sweetland School come to the Farm in spring to plant potatoes or other crops and harvest them in the fall. This year has also seen artists and photographers (from the Maine Media Workshops) visit the farm resulting in artwork featuring plants and animals. All these are educational moments help spread knowledge about local agriculture.

I wish to sell development rights in exchange for the grant of an Agricultural Conservation Easement that will permanently protect Hope's Edge Farm. I have a serious interest in farmland conservation, especially since 2004 when my brother and sisters and I were able to donate an easement on the farm in Vienna, Maine, that had been my mother's. Now I am in the position of owning a wonderful working farm, but one that still carries a debt burden. Selling development rights would enable me to continue to own and improve the Farm as well as, with my daughter, plan for its future.

Holly Miller 8/20/22

Town of Hope

Treasurer's Disbursement Warrants for Employee Wages and Benefits Policy

Purpose . This policy allows designated municipal officers (Members of the Select Board), acting on behalf of the full board of municipal officers, to review, approve, and sign municipal treasurer's disbursement warrants, for wages and benefits only. This policy is additional to, not in lieu of, majority power. Nothing in this policy is intended to replace the authority of the full board of municipal officers, acting by majority vote, to act on any treasurer's warrant, including warrants for wages and benefits.

Delegation of authority. Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S. §5603(2)(A)(1), the following authority is granted with respect to treasurer's disbursement warrants for municipal employee wages and benefits only.

Current municipal officers . The municipal officers in office at the time of execution of this policy are: Sarah Ann Smith, Charles Weidman, Michael Brown, Michael Schultz, and Wayne Luce.

Any one of the municipal officers named above, acting alone, may review, approve and sign such warrants.

Effective date. This policy will become effective on the date indicated below.

Copies. The Town Administrator will furnish copies of this policy to the municipal clerk and to the municipal treasurer. If the clerk and the treasurer are the same person, a copy shall nonetheless be provided to that person in each capacity.

Lease. This policy lapses one year after its effective date, if not sooner amended or canceled.

Renewal. This policy may be renewed at any time before its lapse. Thereafter, it may be readopted at any time. Any renewal is valid for one year from its effective date, unless a sooner date of expiration is specified.

Reminder. The municipal treasurer shall remind the municipal officers to consider renewing this policy annually, on the first Select Board meeting after the annual town meeting or June referendum election, whichever comes last.

Original. The original copy of this policy will remain on file at the Town Office.

June 27, 2023

Municipal Officers

Sarah Ann Smith

Charles Weidman

Michael Brown

Michael Schultz

Wayne Luce

Town of Hope Treasurer's Disbursement Warrants for Payment of State Fees

Purpose . This policy allows designated municipal officers (Members of the Select Board), acting on behalf of the full board of municipal officers, to review, approve, and sign municipal treasurer's disbursement warrants, for payment of state fees only. This policy is additional to, not in lieu of, majority power. Nothing in this policy is intended to replace the authority of the full board of municipal officers, acting by majority vote, to act on any treasurer's warrant, including warrants for payment of state fees.

Delegation of authority. Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A § 5603(2)(A)(3), the following authority is granted with respect to treasurer's disbursement warrants for payment of state fees only.

Current municipal officers . The municipal officers in office at the time of execution of this policy are: Sarah Ann Smith, Charles Weidman, Michael Brown, Michael Schultz, and Wayne Luce.

Any one of the municipal officers named above, acting alone, may review, approve and sign such warrants.

Effective date. This policy will become effective on the date indicated below.

Copies. The Town Administrator will furnish copies of this policy to the municipal clerk and to the municipal treasurer. If the clerk and the treasurer are the same person, a copy shall nonetheless be provided to that person in each capacity.

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Original. The original copy of this policy will remain on file at the Town Office.

June 27, 2023

Municipal Officers

Sarah Ann Smith

Charles Weidman

Michael Brown

Michael Schultz

Wayne Luce

Town of Hope
Municipal Officers' Policy
on Disbursement of Municipal Education Costs

Pursuant to 20-A MRS §15006(1) and 30-A MRS §5603(2)(A), the municipal treasurer is hereby authorized to disburse funds to pay municipal education costs when the treasurer has been presented with a disbursement warrant signed by the school superintendent and approved by a majority of the school board, or by all of the members of any finance committee appointed or duly elected by the school board.

Before disbursing any funds on such a warrant, however, the municipal treasurer shall satisfy herself that the warrant is indeed signed by at least a majority of the school board or by all of the members of any finance committee appointed or elected by the school board. The treasurer may accept as such satisfaction a written and signed certification of the pertinent fact from the school superintendent, or, if the warrant itself indicates the fact (as, for example, by bearing the statement "being at least a majority of the school board" or "being all of the members of the school board's finance committee" beneath the signatures appearing on the warrant), then the Treasurer may rely on the representation of the warrant without further inquiry. The Treasurer shall not, however, pay any item on a warrant if payment of that item would result in an overdraft, and shall report her refusal to honor the item in writing to the superintendent and to the municipal officers promptly.

The Town Administrator shall file a copy of this policy with the municipal clerk and provide a copy to the municipal treasurer and shall ensure that this policy is brought to the attention of the municipal officers annually for consideration of renewal. The municipal clerk shall, after approval by the municipal officers of any meeting in which they have voted a renewal of this policy, attest to such renewal by endorsing the policy below, and shall then file a copy of the policy bearing that renewal endorsement in the clerk's files and shall deliver a copy to the municipal treasurer.

Adopted on: June 27, 2023

Certified date: _____

Clerk's initials: _____

Municipal Officers

Sarah Ann Smith

Charles Weidman

Michael Brown

Michael Schultz

Wayne Luce

CONTRACT FOR ASSESSING SERVICES FY 2023-2024

AGREEMENT made and executed between the TOWN OF HOPE, acting through and by its elected officials, herein after referred to as "TOWN" and FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS represented by C. Vernon Ziegler herein after referred to as "CONTRACTOR".

Now therefore, in consideration of the mutual covenants herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. REPRESENTATION OF CONTRACTOR: The Contractor makes the following representation upon the Town of Hope and the Town of Hope is justified in relying without further inquiry, to wit:
 - a. FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS is a sole proprietor company operated by C. Vernon Ziegler. Caitlin D. Anderson is a subcontractor to Fort Halifax Appraisals.
 - b. The person assigned to the Town of Hope will be C. Vernon Ziegler, a Certified Maine Assessor or in his absence, Caitlin D. Anderson, a Certified Maine Assessor. No other person will be assigned or subcontracted without the prior approval of the Town of Hope Board of Selectmen.
2. TYPE OF SERVICE: The Town of Hope enters into this agreement for assessors' agent services as a CONTRACTOR. FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS will be the primary assessors' agent to the Town of Hope.
3. REPORTS: Any periodic progress report requested by the Town will be presented in written form.
4. ACCESS TO THE TOWN OFFICE: Access to the areas of the town office necessary for completing the specifications of the contract will be made by providing the contractor with keys to the town office. Contractor's monthly work schedule will be provided to the town office prior to the first of the month. The contractor recognizes the importance of being available to the citizens of Hope and will be reasonably available during normal business hours. Contractor will make reasonable accommodations to be available to taxpayers when not in the town office. The parties acknowledge that the contractor provides services to other small municipalities in Maine. Maine municipalities have a long-standing tradition of cooperation. When Town employees or Selectmen need assessing services and the contractor is not scheduled at the town office, C. Vernon Ziegler is available to them by phone and e-mail. To provide that service, the Town agrees to provide the contractor with secure remote access to the assessing department's computer. Other hours and days will be scheduled as needed at the discretion of the contractor and at the need of the service.
5. SUPPLIES: The Town of Hope will provide a budget for supplies for completion of the duties such as professional completion of the town tax maps, stocks of real estate record cards, copy paper and all other items currently located in the office utilized by the Town of Hope for its assessing functions. The contractor will be responsible for work items such as measuring tapes, clipboards, digital camera, etc.
6. OTHER REPRESENTATION: The Town of Hope agrees that the contractor will represent the Board of Assessors with appropriate assistance provided at the expense of the town when completing other town business such as abatement appeals to District Court, state board or other required representation type function.

7. **PAYMENT:** The Town of Hope agrees to pay FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS, the primary contractor an amount not to exceed \$15,750 for the contracted period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Payment is to be made to FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS from invoice at a rate of \$525.00 per full day of service. A 'day' of service will be as reasonably equivalent as possible to the normal business hours of the town office. Payment will be made on a pro-ration in one half-day increments only, as necessary. Payment is to be made by invoice. Taxpayer identification number is to be presented on all invoices.

The primary contractor will be available to the Town not to exceed 29 days for the period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The Town of Hope agrees to pay the Contractor the daily fee for one day of continuing education class approved by the Maine Revenue Service. Primary contractor will consult with Town Administrator on monthly schedule. Exceeding the contract days will be at the mutual agreement of the Town of Hope and the contractor on an as needed basis with prior notice.

8. **SEVERANCE:** Should the contractor not be performing to expectations of the Board of Assessors, the contractor will receive in written form from the Board of Assessors areas of concern. Items pertaining to legally obligated duties for assessing standards will not be deviated from in any manner and will not be grounds for severance.

This agreement shall terminate on June 30, 2024.

9. **ADDITIONAL COSTS:** The Town of Hope will not be responsible for any additional educational costs beyond those specified in the contract.

10. **DUTIES OF THE CONTRACTOR:** The Contractor shall update tax cards, process deeds, perform inspections, prepare state returns, prepare tax commitment, update ownership records and other reports and all other duties that are responsible to the Board of Assessors except for those items bound to the Board of Assessors by laws of the State of Maine such as signing valuation abatements, supplemental assessments, and the municipal commitment. Such duties will be completed by the due dates, and submitted on time to the requesting agency. The Contractor shall advise the Board of Assessors and the current Town Manager or their successor in office.

11. **PROHIBITION OF CONFLICTING REPRESENTATION:** During the time of the contract period, the person assigned to the Town of Hope as the Assessors' Agent will not perform any other services within the Town of Hope pertaining to property valuation in any way, shape or form for any reason unless so directed by a court of competent jurisdiction.

12. **CONFLICT OF LAWS:** This agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Maine.

13. **SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS:** In case any one or more provisions contained in the Agreement should be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, the validity, legality and enforceability of the remaining provisions contained herein shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby.

14. EMPLOYMENT STATUS: FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS is an independent contractor and not an employee of the Town of Hope. As a sole proprietorship, FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS is not required to provide worker's compensation insurance for the owner and the Town is not required to provide coverage for the independent contractor.

15. ENTIRE AGREEMENT: This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter thereof, and the Agreement supersedes all previous negotiations, discussions, and agreements between the parties as to the subject matter thereof, and no parole evidence of any prior or other agreement shall be permitted to contradict or vary the terms hereof. Amendment of the contract will be in written form only and such amendments will be made at the agreement of the contractor and the Town of Hope.

16. CONTRACT COMPLETION: This contract is valid only when:
a. The contract is signed and witnessed with original signatures. Facsimiles and other copies are not valid;
b. The contract is without any handwritten corrections, Blank lines (ex.) or other non-typed items; and
c. This contract is of three pages only with two (2) original copies, one to the Town of Hope, and one to Fort Halifax Appraisals.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, THE PARTIES OR DULY EMPOWERED REPRESENTATIVES, EXECUTING THIS AGREEMENT ON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY OF JUNE, 2023.

FOR FORT HALIFAX APPRAISALS

(Witness)

C. Vernon Ziegler CMA

FOR THE TOWN OF HOPE

(Witness)

Town of Hope

2023-2024 Annual Appointments

There are several positions within the Town of Hope that require appointments by state law.

The Town Administrator is hereby requesting that the following personnel are appointed to their corresponding titles for a period of 1-year in accordance with 30-A M.R.S. §2601, beginning July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.

Samantha Mank:

- Town Administrator {per contract}
- Deputy Code Enforcement Officer {38 M.R.S. §441}
- Deputy Local Plumbing Inspector {30-A M.R.S. §4221 (1)}
- Treasurer {30-A M.R.S. §5603}
- General Assistance Administrator {22 M.R.S. §4301 (12)}
- Registrar of Voters – {21-A M.R.S. §101}

Pamela Smith:

- Town Clerk {30-A M.R.S. §2601 (2)}
- Tax Collector {36 M.R.S. §751-766}
- Election Warden

Chelsea Summers:

- Bookkeeper
- Deputy Town Administrator

Matthew Deane

- Code Enforcement Officer {38 M.R.S. §441}
- Local Plumbing Inspector {30-A M.R.S. §4221 (1)}

C. Vernon Ziegler:

- Assessors' Agent {per 2023-2024 contract}

Clarence Keller:

- Fire Chief {per Fire Department Ordinance}
- Addressing Officer
- Emergency Management Director

Beth Gindel:

- Sexton

Deputies: In accordance with 30-A M.R.S. §2603 & 21-A M.R.S. §102

- The Clerk shall appoint the deputy clerk
- The Tax Collector shall appoint the deputy tax collector
- The Treasurer shall appoint the deputy treasurer
- The Registrar of Voter's shall appoint the deputy registrar of voters

The Select Board have appointed the above stated personnel to the specified positions for a period of 1 year, commencing July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Sarah Ann Smith

Charles Weidman

Michael Brown

Michael Schultz

Wayne Luce

Dated: June 27, 2023