

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

6:30 PM

Via Zoom

View the meeting in its entirety at

https://townhallstreams.com/towns/hope_me

Board Members Present:

- Sarah Ann Smith, Brian Powers Jr., Bruce Haffner, and Amy Gertner

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Margaret Morse, Paul Smith, Amy Powers, Ellie Goldberg, and Hunt

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by Sarah.

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- Sarah asked to have a discussion regarding ballots and tally sheets added. The Town Administrator asked to have the 2020 General Ordinance Approval removed. Brian made a motion to adjust the agenda as requested. It was seconded by Amy.

Motion passed 4-0

Public Comment:

- Paul Smith asked the Town Administrator if a letter of apology from Select Board member Bruce Haffner had been received yet. Samantha responded that none had been received. Paul asked Bruce why he hadn't sent the letter yet since he said he would two weeks ago. Bruce said that he would not write anything until he was allowed to read the Maria Fox report. Paul told him that would not look good for him when it was time for the recall vote.

Minutes:

- January 12, 2021: Bruce made a motion to approve the January 12, 2021 minutes as written. It was seconded by Brian.

Motion passed 4-0

Town Administrator Report:

- I have conducted eight interviews so far with an additional eight scheduled for Thursday.
- I have already set a schedule for the second interviews which will begin on Wed. Feb. 3rd for the Bookkeeper. Paula and Jodie from the Superintendent's Office will be joining me for those interviews.

- On Thursday, Feb. 4th, David and I (and possibly one other person) will conduct the second interviews for the Clerks position. I am very hopeful that I will be able to present people to you for the Select Board confirmation on February 9th. David said he would stay on for a few additional weeks to help train the new Clerk if it is needed.
- There are a few Code Enforcement/Planning Board projects that are happening that have required much more of my time than usual.
- I have been in touch with Mr. Leppanen and let him know that this matter has been shared with the Select Board and that I would be researching it further and that he has not been forgotten. He seemed pleased to know that it is still being discussed.
- There have been three individuals who have expressed interest in being the CEO/LPI. I have told them that I would pass this along to you all but for now, the funding is not available to make the change.
- I sent out a “meetings, budget, and elections” proposed schedule. I will reach out to Bill Pearse to find out if the proposed schedule will work for the Budget Committee.
- I received a notice that the interest on delinquent property taxes is going to decrease lower than it has been since the early nineties. Last year the maximum was set at 9% and dropped to 8% this year. Next year, the interest can be anywhere between 4% and 6%. This is something that will have to go on the Town meeting warrant for the voters to approve. This is a response to Covid-19.
- Maine Local Roads Center has sent out notice that municipalities can enter a “lottery” to be able to have the speed radar trailer for two weeks as an effort to promote speed awareness within the Town. The deadline to enter is February 19, 2021 (see included flyer)
- There are 5 real estate accounts totaling \$9,777.05 that will automatically foreclose on February 16, 2021 if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 20 real estate accounts totaling \$38,820.98 that are liened and have interest added to the outstanding balance. Unpaid 2020 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 10, 2022 if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 1007 RE accounts for 2021, totaling \$1,537,201.76. The second half of taxes are due on April 30, 2021.
- Since the last regularly scheduled Select Board Meeting on January 12, 2021, the daily cash out has not been out of balance.

New Business:

- ~~General Assistance 2020 Ordinance Approval:~~ See agenda adjustments/approval.
- General Assistance 2020-21 Adoption of Maximum Assistance Appendices: Bruce made

a motion to approve and adopt the State suggested maximum limits for the 2020-21 General Assistance Appendices A-H. It was seconded by Brian.

Motion passed 4-0

- Liquor License Renewal – Pushaw’s: A renewal for a liquor license for Pushaw’s Trading Post was submitted. The Select Board reviewed the application. There are changes from the previous years. It was seconded by Amy.

Motion passed 4-0

Old Business:

- Discussion Amending the “Retail Marijuana Establishments and Retail Marijuana Social Clubs Prohibition Ordinance” – Seth Haskins: Sarah said she had some questions about production. Unfortunately, Seth was not in attendance and the question could not be answered.

Brian said, since Camden has already enacted an ordinance and we share the same Town Attorney, perhaps we should ask Camden where and how they found the ordinance language. Also, get feedback from Camden as to how is it working or not working.

Amy said that she would make contact with Camden as well as the attorney. In addition, she is willing to be the liaison between the Select Board and Botany.

It was agreed that this matter should be referred to the Planning Board as they are more familiar with the Land Use Ordinance. Botany will attend the next PB meeting and have the Planning Board provide recommendations/suggestions on possible ordinance amendments to go before the voters at Town Meeting.

Other Business:

- July 14th Election Ballots & Tally Sheets: Sarah sent a letter to attorney Kristen Collins and sent her some documents asking her to give the Town her legal opinion on the ballots and the tally sheets that are still sealed. Brian made a motion to authorize spending up to \$500 for Kristen Collins to render a decision. Brian said that this must bring some finality to the July 14th election. Whatever advise she gives... this ends it. This is for peace-of-mind only. He went on to say we need to be done, it’s nearly a year later.

Sarah reminded the Board that Thom had suggested also putting a six week time frame in place as well which was two weeks ago. Now we have four weeks left.

Bruce disagreed and said all that Sarah conveyed is incorrect. He said that the Town is virtually unregulated, and we can do whatever we want. We don’t have a charter; we don’t fall under 21-A. Bruce asked to see the words from the attorney saying we can’t see them [the ballots].

Bruce made a motion to amend Brian’s motion increasing the amount to \$1,000.

Paul S. commented that jacking up the price is concerning to him. He said the Town has

already spent \$15,000 on trying to iron out Langley Willauer's stuff.

There was no second to Bruce's motion.

Motion failed

Amy seconded Brian's motion.

Motion passed 4-0

Warrants #'s 57, 58, & 59:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Brian made a motion to approve warrant #'s 57, 58, and 59 with the caveat that no money is released until all of the appropriate signatures have been obtained by the School Committee.

Amy asked if the Board could meet with the School Committee and Superintendent and make it an agenda item. It was noted that when Dianne Helprin was still here, the issue was handled, and it got much better. Amy then seconded the motion.

Motion passed 4-0

Adjournment:

- Brian made a motion to adjourn at 7.27 pm. It was seconded by Bruce.

Motion passed 4-0

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