

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING
Hope Select Board
December 10, 2024
5:30 p.m.
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

- Sarah Ann Smith, Charlie Weidman, Wayne Luce, Crystal Robinson, and Joe Tassi

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, John Monroe, Clarence Keller, Brad Dodge, & Jason Simms

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Sarah.

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- Charlie made a motion to approve the agenda as written. It was seconded by Joe.
Motion passed 5-0

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- November 26, 2024: Crystal had made some proposed amendments. After some discussion, it was reduced to just one edit. Charlie made a motion to approve the 11/26/24 minutes as amended. It was seconded by Crystal.
Motion passed 5-0

Warrants 44, 45, 46, and 47:

- Charlie made a motion to approve and sign the Treasurers and Payroll warrants 44, 45, 46, & 47. It was seconded by Wayne.
Motion passed 5-0

New Business:

- Application for Committee Service, Planning Board – Jason Simms: The Select Board reviewed the committee service application from Jason Simms. Charlie made a motion to appoint Jason Simms to the Planning Board for a term expiring on June 30, 2030. It was seconded by Wayne.
Motion passed 5-0

- Five Towns CSD Warrant & Notice of Election: The select Board reviewed the documents. Charlie made a motion to approve a sign the Warrant and Notice of Election to call Five Town Community School District Referendum. It was seconded by Wayne.

Motion passed 5-0

- Roads Update – John Monroe, Road Commissioner: John gave an update regarding the roads not being plowed or sanded on November 28th, and 29th. On Thanksgiving, November 28th, there were reports of icy roads, cars had slid off of the road, and there was even an accident. The Fire Chief contacted the Road Commissioner to find out where the plowing Contractor was at 5:40 p.m. John was unable to make contact with the Contactor until 6:54 p.m.

The following day, on November 29th, John received a complaint about Ludwig Rd. He contacted the Contractor at 8:30 a.m. and at that time the Contractor said he would take care of it. At 11:30 a.m. John went up to check Ludwig Rd. because he was still getting complaints and saw that the road had not been touch yet. John contacted the Town Administrator and was told to install cameras at the sand shed in order to document when and how many trucks are being utilized and how often they are getting sand. The Contractor finally contacted John. When John told him about the complaint, the Contractor told John he had been out since 4:00. John told him that he had gone to check on Ludwig Rd. and put up cameras at the sand shed. The Contractor told John that his driver had quit yesterday, and he only has one for the Town of Hope at the moment.

In addition, the Contractor has asked for more salt to be delivered. John is very concerned about this because the winter storms haven't really started yet and there is no way he should have already gone through \$6,000 worth of salt in just 2 storms. There is definitely a problem.

The Select Board discussed several options for a remedy of the breach of contract going forward. No decision was made. It will be on the December 26th agenda.

- Fire Truck Replacement Committee Proposal: Approximately a year ago, Clarence formed a 7-person truck replacement committee. There are currently five apparatus (fire trucks) that have different functions and different anticipated department serviceable lifespan; ranging from 0-2yrs through 15 years. The plan would be to reduce the number of apparatuses to four by not replacing the 1989 tanker once it was no longer serviceable or safe. The specific replacement plan for three of the trucks was not a part of this proposal.

- Utility Truck Purchase: Clarence submitted an itemized quote for a New 2023 custom built International CV in the amount of \$228,882.81.

He is asking the Select Board to include this as a bond item for the voters to consider at a Special Town Meeting potentially in February.

“While we don’t have the exact financing figures yet as we are waiting for your approval to move forward with the apparatus proposal. I have some rounded off numbers to explain the minimal tax impact for your consideration.

The Truck Replacement Fund has a current balance of \$56,330.47

In the current fiscal year, we are already raising and appropriating \$10,000 for the truck replacement fund, and the last station payment of \$34,478 for a total of \$44,478.00.

So, if we take the proposed truck \$225,000 and subtract the \$56,330.47 from the truck replacement fund, that would leave a balance of \$168,669.53

Therefore, if the bond was \$175,000 (estimated)

A zero percent tax increase from current outlay would be a 4 year note with first payment being in July of 2025.”

- Utility Truck Repair: The Utility #3 truck will not be able to pass inspection as of December 2024, because of rust and decay on the body of the truck. However, the cab and chassis are inspectable. The proposal is to remove the body and replace it with a flatbed and mounting the brush skid unit on to it so that it could be used in the spring. This would keep the fire department in business until the new proposed truck replacement arrived. This would cost approximately \$11,030 and could be funded with the Fire Truck Repair/Maintenance Reserve Fund. The current balance is \$20,500. This can be approved by the Select Board without going to a Special Town meeting.

Sarah said she would like to move forward with purchasing the new truck but doesn't want to continue to dump money in vehicles if they are no longer serviceable.

There was much discussion about the justification for the larger wheelbase and why a bigger truck with more space is needed. Wayne says it is a lot of money to just decided tonight and would like to come back and discuss it in 2 weeks.

Wayne would like the utility truck to go to his shop to be inspected by a non-interested 3rd party, and possibly discuss repair alternatives. The Select Board asked the Truck Committee to meet and discuss possible alternatives. What if the \$11,000 is not approved?

The Select Board wants the truck committee to help them understand why this new truck is needed.

The item will be on the next Select Board agenda.

Sarah made a motion to have a 3rd party individual inspect utility #3 at Wayne's shop before the next select Board meeting. It was seconded by Wayne.

Motion passed 3-0-1 (Charlie)

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- None

Town Administrator Report:

- I met with the CEO of North East Ambulance, Camden Town Manager, and the Lincolnville Administrator today to discuss next steps for service. The Maine EMS Board is waiting for

Rockport to provide a study to show the impacts of surrounding communities. It is not known if anyone will contact members of the each of the three towns. The EMS Bord normally meets on the first Wednesday of each month. The cost of Hope's ambulance service may be contingent upon whether or not the Maine EMS Board grants Rockport a transporting license.

- Additional interviews for the Deputy Clerk position will be conducted next week.
- I have completed the training for the new website. There was a lot of information to absorb. I am still hopeful to be able to launch it in January or February.
- The Code Enforcement Officer/Plumbing Inspector has completed and passed all of his required plumbing testing. He will be issued his LPI certification number from the state. He will begin the testing and certification for the land use portion in January.
- There were no new building or plumbing permits issued since the 11/26/24 Select Board meeting.
- There are 1,009 RE accounts with remaining balances for FY2025, totaling \$1,831,548.17 The first half of taxes was due on October 1, 2024. The second half is due on April 30, 2025.
- There are 21 RE accounts with remaining balances for FY2024, totaling \$39,553.30 Unpaid 2024 real estate taxes will automatically be foreclosed on February 20, 2026, if those accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 8 RE accounts with remaining balances for FY2023, totaling \$24,237.63. Unpaid 2023 real estate taxes will automatically be foreclosed on February 1, 2025, if those accounts are not paid in full.

Adjournment:

- Charlie made a motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. It was seconded by Joe.
Motion Passed 5-0