

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, December 12, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Hope Town Office

Board Members Present:

- Sarah Ann Smith, Mike Brown, Michael Schultz, and Wayne Luce

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, John Monroe, Clarence Keller, Beth Gindel, Joe Tassi, Chris Robinson, and Crystal Robinson

Call to Order:

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

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- Michael made a motion to approve the agenda with the adjustment of adding the Fire Station furnace to the agenda and to take it out of order. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

Public Comment:

- Crystal Robinson had two items to bring before the Select Board. The first was to ask if the agendas and minutes for the high school could be included on the Town website. The Town Administrator explained that there is a “hot link” on the website titled Schools that will provide all high school information when clicked. The same link also works for the Hope Elementary School. Crystal mentioned that some minutes for Town Committees were missing from the town website. The Town Administrator said the minutes are placed on the website as they are provided. The second item was to ask if the Town would reach out and contact candidates who are running for elected offices at the state level and offer them space at the Town Office to hold a Town Hall or Meet and Greet at no cost. The Town Administrator told Ms. Robinson that the staff would not be responsible for contacting any candidates. However, space, if available, could be provided. The Chair of the political parties could be told but not each candidate.

Minutes:

- November 14, 2023: Wayne made a motion to approve the 11/14/23 minutes with minor amendments. It was seconded by Michael.

Motion passed 4-0

- November 30, 2023: Wayne made a motion to approve the 11/30/23 minutes. It was seconded by Michael.

Motion passed 4-0

Warrants 44, 45, 46, & 47:

- Michael made a motion to approve the warrants 44, 45, 46, and 47. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

New Business:

- HCFS Furnace Replacement – Clarence Keller: Clarence said the furnace at the Hope Corner Fire Station had quit a few times over the past couple of weeks. Each time, he had Maritime Energy come out to repair/restart it. The last time they were out, they removed the outer casing and saw that the inside aluminum casing and internal parts were corroded beyond repair and said the furnace would need to be replaced. Apparently, this is more common in propane heaters. The Select Board asked Clarence to provide 3 quotes for a furnace replacement and they would hold a Special Select Board meeting to award the work.
- Cemetery By-Laws Amendment – Beth Gindel: Beth provided a draft of the amendment for the Cemetery By-Laws which would allow non-Hope residents, who could prove a direct familial lineage to someone buried in either cemetery, to serve on the Cemetery Committee. The Cemetery Committee is supposed to have five members but currently only has three. Beth said she was having a difficult time finding people who live in Hope who are willing to serve on this committee. She stated that there have been some instances in which people who live in other towns would like to serve because they have that connection to Hope but were prohibited because they weren't residents. In other cases, people willing to serve may have formerly been residents of Hope but, after loved ones had passed away, they moved but still want to serve. The Town Administrator expressed concerns about setting a precedent in permitting non-residents to serve on board and committees. Michael made a motion to approve the amendment to the Cemetery By-Laws but to also change the wording on the Boards and Committees Policy stating the only exception to residency is for the Cemetery Committee. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

- Snowplowing Contractor Update – Jake Boyington: Mr. Boyington sent an email at 5:04 p.m. stating he had to attend a meeting in Appleton due to the recent storm and would not be available for the Hope meeting.
- Road Commissioner Update – John Monroe: John said he would have liked to have met with Jake in order to communicate with him about plowing and expectations. There haven't really been many complaints, but a face-to-face conversation is important. Currently, the contractor's preferable method of communication is through texting.

There were also some issues at the sand shed with the MDOT. John met with MDOT earlier today because there was a significant wash out in front of the sand shed and the entrance for the residence behind the sand shed. The state put a makeshift entrance for a car to get in but

nothing for the plow trucks. There was much conversation about altering the entrance including two ditches in front and having a smaller opening for the trucks. John explained that the large wheelers could not get into the parking lot with that kind of opening. MDOT said the entrance was too wide and not permitted. The current location is problematic as the types and sizes of trucks and equipment have gotten larger. There are holes in the roof because the loaders are taller and damaging the metal. John said he can't get contractors to put up the sand/salt anymore because of the building height. The lot is exactly 40,000 sq. ft., which includes the right of way for the property behind the sand shed. This provides little space for maneuvering vehicles, especially with the new MDOT entrance requirements. It may be time to begin discussions regarding changing the location of the sand shed and to plan for the future of road maintenance in a systematic and methodical way in order to be proactive rather than reactive.

- Request for Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, for the following LUO & SZO Amendments: Michael made a motion to call a Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, for the purpose of voting on Land Use and Shoreland Zone Ordinance amendments and to place the following amendments as submitted by the Planning Board on the warrant:
 - LUO - Cannabis cultivation, manufacturing, and testing facilities
 - LUO - Medical cannabis dispensaries
 - LUO – Industrial Metallic Mineral Mining
 - LUO – Solar Energy Facilities
 - SZ – Industrial Metallic Mining
 - Repeal of “Ordinance Prohibiting Retail Marijuana Establishments And Retail Marijuana Social Clubs In The Town Of Hope, Maine” (if cannabis cultivation, manufacturing, and testing facilities amendment passes)

It was seconded by Wayne.

Motion passed 4-0

- Eliminate Septic Program Reserve Account - \$401.71: Michael made a motion to close the Septic Program Reserve and to move the remaining balance of \$401. 71 into the Undesignated Fund. It was seconded by Wayne.

Motion passed 4-0

- Eliminate Miscellaneous Liabilities Solar Farm Gate - \$888.76: Michael made a motion to close the Misc. Liabilities Solar Farm Account and move the remaining balance of \$888.76 into the Solar Reserve account. It was seconded by Wayne.

Motion passed 4-0

- Approval to hire Planner to assist with the Affordable Housing Ordinance Development & Creation: Michael made a motion to approve hiring a temporary Planner to assist the Planning Board with the development of the Affordable Housing Ordinance in an amount up to \$2,500 without additional Select Board approval and to seek a grant for reimbursable

expenses. It was seconded by Wayne.
Motion passed 4-0

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- SharePoint Workshop for Select Board: The Town Administrator provided a demonstration workshop on how to utilize portions of the SharePoint app.

Town Administrator’s Report:

- Met with DOT regarding sand/salt shed entrance issues. It looks as though it will be repaired by the state this week. However, the “fix” is not going to be long term as it may not allow trucks to deliver sand and sand access to the building because of the way we are being forced to configure the entrance.
- There is not going to be a Select Board meeting on Tuesday, December 26, 2023. Can we set the date for signatures warrants to be 3:00 p.m., Thursday, December 28th? In addition, I would like to close the Town Office on Tuesday the 26th as well.
- There are also a couple of larger land use violations that Matt is working on which are likely to require assistance from the Town Attorney. One is on Loon Lane and the other in on Main St. (Rt. 17).
- There were 4 new building permits and 6 plumbing permits since the 11/14/23 Select Board meeting.
 - Jeffrey Kimball 13 Kimball Way Addition
 - Dan Ford 318 Hatchet Mountain Rd. Excavation/Fill
 - Doug Kelly 63 Highfield Rd. Restoration of SZ
 - Heidi Baker 330 Buzzell Hill Rd. Accessory Structure
- There are 4 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$19,521.02 Unpaid 2022 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 27, 2024, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 16 RE accounts for 2023, totaling \$35,311.17. Unpaid 2023 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 11, 2025, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 994 RE accounts for 2024, totaling \$1,639,341.83. The second half is due on April 30, 2024.

Adjournment:

- Mike made a motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. It was seconded by Wayne.
Motion passed 4-0