

## MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

### Hope Select Board

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

6:30 PM

### Hope Town Office

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#### **Board Members Present:**

- Sarah Ann Smith, Dick Crabtree, Wendy Pelletier, Mike Brown, and Bruce Haffner

#### **Others Present:**

- Samantha Mank, Bill Brewer, Vern Ziegler, Mathew Deane, Heather Deane, and Paul Smith

#### **Call to Order:**

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

#### **Public Hearing:**

- The Select Board awaited hearing any comments or concerns regarding the 2021-22 General Assistance maximums. The Public Hearing was concluded after there were no questions or comments from the public.

#### **Agenda Adjustments/Approval:**

- Dick made a motion to approve the agenda as written. It was seconded by Wendy.  
**Motion passed 5-0**

#### **Public Comment:**

- None

#### **Minutes:**

- November 23, 2021: Wendy made a motion to approve the 11/23/21 minutes with minor edits. It was seconded by Mike.  
**Motion passed 4-0-1 (Bruce)**

#### **Warrants 42, 43, 44, 45, & 46:**

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Mike made a motion to approve, and sign warrants 42, 43, 44, 45, and 46. It was seconded by Dick.  
**Motion passed 5-0**

#### **New Business:**

- Confirmation Code Enforcement Officer/Local Plumbing Inspector- Matthew Deane: Town Administrator gave brief introduction to Matt Deane as the Town's new CEO and LPI. Dick made a motion to confirm Matt as the Code Enforcement Officer & Local Plumbing Inspector. It was seconded by Wendy.  
**Motion passed 5-0**
- Annual Audit – Bill Brewer: Bill presented the Select Board with an overview from the FY20 audit which was completed in June of this year. There were no issues found. The Town ended the

year with a 12% of the annual budget in the undesignated fund balance. The Town's policy is to maintain a minimum of 9%.

He also gave an update on the status of the FY21 audit. The town side has been completed. He didn't see any issues. The school has expended more than \$750,000 in federal Covid funds. This has automatically triggered a "single audit" which means an enhanced audit that is federally mandated. Because of this, the audit may not be completed until January 2022.

Bill indicated that the Central Office is understaffed, and he would recommend hiring a part-time person to assist in the finance area. The workload has increased because of Covid but the staffing has not.

- Adoption of 2022 General Assistance Appendices: Dick made a motion to adopt the 2021-22 general assistance maximums as recommended by the state. It was seconded by Mike.

**Motion passed 5-0**

- Update Town Office Fee Schedule: The Town Administrator presented the Select Board with an updated fee schedule for the Town Office. The fee schedule was last updated in 2008 and did not reflect the accurate cost of producing copies. Dick made a motion to update the fee schedule effective January 1, 2022. It was seconded by Bruce.

**Motion passed 5-0**

- Donation to Hope Chest – Camden Real Estate: Mike made a motion to accept the donation of \$250 from Camden Real Estate for the Hope Chest. It was seconded by Wendy.

**Motion passed 5-0**

#### **Old Business:**

- Discussion RJD 1/3 Town Review – Vern Ziegler: Vern was able to explain that the 84% of the changes listed on the report from RJD included changes that were made to each property card and not necessarily changes that would require a building permit or would affect taxes. For instance, if cedar shingles had been replaced with vinyl siding, a note was placed on the property card. He also noted that although a million dollars in added valuation seems like a lot it really equals about 1.5 % over 17 years, which is not very much at all. In short, the Town's tax records are pretty accurate with minor changes when considering the changes span approximately 17 years since the last revaluation.

#### **Other Business:**

- Bruce said that the Town should consider reallocating funds from the investment accounts in light of the current economy and growing inflation. The Select Board would like to speak with Matt Weaver from Wealth Management. The Town Administrator will find out his availability and put it on the agenda.

#### **Town Administrator Report:**

- Jake Miller from The First notified us today that interest rates on all of the Towns deposit accounts have dropped from 4.5% to 3%.
- Received an email from Kristin Collins, the attorney for Doug Kelly, stating she has not been able to actively work on this case yet as her firm has a conflict that needs to be cleared (any day now). She just wanted the Town to know that her delay is not willful.
- On Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, Knox County will hold a Public Hearing and the final vote on the 2022 budget. I have sent the notice and agenda to the Budget Committee. There is a copy for you as well.
- No building permits were issued. 2 plumbing permits were issued.

- The Road Commissioner and I met with a resident who thought the Town was responsible for repairing his driveway after the October 31<sup>st</sup> storm. Once everything was explained to him, he understands that the Town has specific legal limitations to repairing and providing services for private driveways. It went well.
- Roads Update – A majority of the storm damage has been repaired. There is still a culvert on Ludwig Rd. and some riprap needs to be put down on Robbins Rd. and Morrey Hill Rd. John isn't sure when he will be able to get to those items. If the FEMA declaration happens, then there may be funding for Robbins Rd. but not Morey Hill since there was no riprap there prior to the storm. If there is declaration made, we will likely need to have a Special Town Meeting to approve additional funds for the remaining work. In addition, the cold patch that has been put down is only a temporary measure and when the weather warms back up, it will have to get hot-topped. John said it will have to be hired out because it's not something his company does well.
- There are 10 RE accounts for 2020, totaling \$29,655.84. Unpaid 2020 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 10, 2022, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 21 RE accounts for 2021, totaling \$40,883.03. Unpaid 2021 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 3, 2023, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 979 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$1,540,904.29. The second half of taxes is due on Tuesday, May 3, 2021.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the last Select Board meeting on November 23, 2021.

#### **Executive Session:**

- Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(C): Discussion regarding Real Estate & Legal Matters and Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(F): Hardship Hope Chest Request: Mike made a motion to enter executive session pursuant to the above citations at 8:07 p.m. It was seconded by Dick.  
**Motion passed 5-0**
- Dick made a motion to exit executive session at 8:44 p.m. It was seconded by Wendy.  
**Motion passed 5-0**
- Dick made a motion for the Select Board to support granting an easement to Wayne Breda and Sarah McBrian for the solar trench under Blueberry Hill Rd. if they are willing to agree to some requirements. The Town Administrator will send the requirements to the Town Attorney. Once the Town Attorney gives his feedback, she will contact the property owners and invite them to the following Select Board meeting. It was seconded by Mike.  
**Motion passed 5-0**
- The matter of the Hope Chest request was tabled until more information could be obtained.

#### **Adjournment:**

- Mike made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. It was seconded by Bruce.  
**Motion passed 5-0**

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