

## **MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**Hope Select Board  
Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
6:30 p.m.  
Hope Town Office**

### **Board Members Present:**

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

### **Others Present:**

- Samantha Mank, Matthew Weaver, David Hall, Wayne Luce, Brian Powers Jr., David Gould, Kristin Gould, Ryan Twisla, Andy Obst, Adam Obst, and May Liao

### **Call to Order:**

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

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

- Sarah requested the agenda be taken out of order to accommodate those who were in attendance. The official motion was made by Dick. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 4-0**

### **Public Comment:**

- None

### **Minutes:**

- March 2, 2023: Dick made a motion to approve the 3/2/23 minutes. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 4-0**

### **Warrants 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, & 67:**

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Mike made a motion to approve and sign warrants 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, and 67. It was seconded by Dick.

**Motion passed 4-0**

### **New Business:**

- 2022 Review of Wealth Management Investments – Matt Weaver: Matt offered a look back at 2022. Ultimately, 2022 was not a very good year in terms of returns. However, it was helpful in getting interest rates better regulated. For many years the interest rate was so low that some large banks over invested in bonds. When the interest rates began to rise, it made the bonds worth less than the purchase price causing the demise of a couple of large banks. Fortunately, Matt does not think the Town will be adversely impacted by the failure of those banks. The Town has invested quite conservatively. As a result, although there were some unrealized losses in 2022, he is now able to purchase some short-term cd's which may yield as much as 5% now that interest rates have risen. Matt also assured the Select Board that

none of the principal investment money has been lost.

- Discussion – Mining Ordinance for Hope: Several residents attended in order to find out what the Town was going to do about mining in response to the meetings that have been held in Warren and Union. The Planning Board is going to discuss a mining moratorium during the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. The purpose for the moratorium is to provide adequate time to develop a mining ordinance for the residence to vote on at a town meeting. Residents were encouraged to voice any concerns to the Planning Board and to attend the PB meetings in order to have the most up to date information on the status of any proposed ordinance.

The Town Administrator explained the timeline process including the requirement for public hearing. Furthermore, she encouraged everyone to sign up for e-alerts on the town website in order to receive an emailed copy of the agendas and minutes of the meetings.

It was also explained that there is not a need to have several citizen initiative petitions generated as there is a potential for them to cancel each other out or they may contain provisions that might not be legal. Since the Town is already moving forward to address the mining issue, the Town Administrator asked that everyone be patient but to remain involved throughout the process.

- 2023-2025 Mowing Bids: Dick made a motion to reject the one bid that was received and to put the mowing out to bid for a second time. In addition, offer the option to split the bids into sections: (1) True Park, (2) the cemeteries, and (3) the municipal buildings and to have the option to make a single year or multi- year bid. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 5-0**

- Town Office Roofing Quotes: Tabled

#### **Old Business:**

- None

#### **Other Business:**

- Michael asked if there was anything the Select Board could do in assisting the Broadband Committee in getting additional residents to sign up for the fiber optic installation. The Select Board asked Michael to get information regarding the actual number of available slots for applications as the number previously reported, (*990 available slots*), seemed inaccurate.

#### **Board of Assessors:**

- Suspend as Select Board/Convene as Board of Assessors: Charlie made a motion to suspend as the Select Board and to convene as the Board of Assessors at 8:47 p.m. It was seconded by Michael.

**Motion passed 5-0**

- Abatement Request for Todd & Coragene Riggs – 841 Hatchet Mountain Rd. - \$245.25: Dick made a motion to grant an abatement in the amount of \$245.25 to Todd and Coragene Riggs for the property located at 841 Hatchet Mountain Rd. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 5-0**

- Adjourn as Board of Assessors/Reconvene as Select Board: Dick made a motion to adjourn as the Board of Assessors and to reconvene as the Select Board at 8:50 p.m. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 5-0**

**Town Administrator Report:**

- The Town has received the FEMA reimbursement for \$135,757.41.
- I have submitted the request for payment to the DEP for the septic installation on Shore Rd. I have gotten confirmation that the request was received, but there was no additional information. Matthew will be able to conduct the “final” inspection once the grass begins to grow over the site.
- I called and left a message for Bill Brewer asking about the status of the audit. He has not returned my call yet.
- I am in the process of obtaining quotes for the interior work at the Town Office. The original estimate of damage from the insurance adjustor is \$4,063.74. The Town does have a \$1,000 deductible.
- Quotes are also being obtained for the sand/salt shed roof and the ventilation. The work can be done any time prior to the next snow/ice season.
- There aren’t any updates on the Highfield Rd. violations as some onsite work has to be done and there has been too much snow. Matthew is watching the pace of the snow melting and will make arrangements to be present when the work is being done.
- There was a notice of violation issued regarding the installation of the Loon Lane Bridge. Fortunately, neither the applicant nor the contractor wished to appeal the violation. Corrections to the project are scheduled to begin later this week.
- There were 4 new building permits and 6 plumbing permits issued since the 2/14/23 Select Board meeting:
 

○ Lawrence Mase	21 Maple Dr.	Home Occupancy
○ Dean Martz	258 Hope St.	Mobile Home
○ Benjamin Laukka	609 Buzzell Hill Rd.	Accessory Structure
○ Peter Jarvis	13 Pushaw Rd.	Sole Proprietorship
- There are 9 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$24,598.61. Unpaid 2022 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 27, 2024, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 940 RE accounts for 2023, totaling \$1,457,262.75. The second half is due on May 2, 2023.
- There have pre-payments totaling \$1,009.08 for the 2024 RE taxes.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the Select Board meeting on 2/14/23.

**Adjournment:**

- Dick made a motion to adjourn at 8:58 p.m. It was seconded by Charlie.

**Motion passed 5-0**