

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, March 28, 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, Chelsea Summers, Bill Pearse, Wayne Luce, Wendy Pelletier, Tim Lock, and Kate Clark

Call to Order:

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

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

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

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- March 21, 2023: Charlie made a motion to approve the 3/21/23 minutes with minor edits. It was seconded by Michael.
Motion passed 5-0

Warrants 68:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrant. Dick made a motion to approve and sign warrant 68. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0

New Business:

- Roof Replacement at Hope Elementary School Discussion – Tim Lock: There were bad storms in January that caused severe ice dams which led to significant leaks in the roof throughout the school. Tim indicated that this particular year was worse than in previous years. He doesn't believe there will be sufficient time to go through the bonding process in order to have funding to repair the roof before next winter.

In an effort to find out what the potential cost could be, the School Committee asked Horch Roofing to do an assessment of the roof and to provide a recommendation as well as a cost estimation. This was not a bid. It is estimated that replacing the roof could cost as much as \$180,945 (asphalt shingles, vent boot, & round vents). Horch also recommended insulating especially on the North side of the building and conducting an energy audit. The costs for these items were not included in the assessment.

The Select Board asked how the School Committee plans to pay for the repairs if there isn't enough time to get a bond. Tim deferred back to the Select Board and Budget Committee for guidance as the School Committee doesn't have a plan other than adding it to the school's budget. The Select Board asked about the status of the audit. Tim responded that he didn't see how having the audit would help this situation. However, based off of the past three years, he can estimate how much money will be left over. Sarah voiced her concern that for at least three years in a row the audit has not been done in a timely manner and that it appears as though the finances and paperwork are not being handle appropriately at the Central Office and she would like to know what plan the School Committee has in place for better oversight.

Tim said that the School Committee is aware of the difficulties at the Central Office. The School Committee has been included on all of the emails to be fully informed in the audit process. Kate needs help. She needs help in finding competent staff. The finance staff and back-up staff have not been transparent and have not communicated well with her.

Kate said that the auditors are backed up because other audit offices have closed and the auditors are over booked. She said that the auditors made Paula go back and fix things for many prior years. Paula is working six days a week and has been doing so for two years.

Tim said that the auditors have not met their commitments. He also stated that the school Committee is considering forming a sub committee and is asking for more transparency out of the Central Office. He does think the Central Office is meeting the baseline for transparency.

Bill P. told Tim that the schools audit is important because it affects the Town. The Town may have options but we can't know which options to utilize if we don't even know how much money we have. The Budget Committee would like to have the whole picture... everything. We need to have a draft copy of the audit at the very least.

Dick wanted to make sure everyone was clear on what was going to happen next. Who is doing what and in what order? Dick asked Kate if the auditors have everything, they need to complete the audit. Kate said she believed they did. Dick responded that she believed so before and was wrong. He suggested she call the auditors and double check to find out if in fact they have everything needed to complete the audit. The School Committee needs to develop a timeline, cost estimate, and financing plan in order to move forward with the roofing project. The HES budget presentation is scheduled for April 13th.

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- None

Executive Session: Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405 6(A)(1) - Personnel Matters:

- Dick made a motion to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S. §405 6(A)(1) for personnel matters. At 7:24 p.m. it was seconded by Charlie.

Motion passed 5-0

- Michael made a motion to exit executive session at 7:35 p.m. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0
- Dick made a motion to create the position of Deputy Town Administrator. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0
- Mike made a motion to confirm the appointment of Chelsea Summers as the Deputy Town Administrator. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0

Adjournment:

- Charlie made a motion to adjourn at 7:388 p.m. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 5-0