

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, July 26, 2022
6:30 p.m.
Hope Town Office

*View the meeting in its entirety at
https://townhallstreams.com/towns/hope_me*

Board Members Present:

- Sarah Ann Smith, Dick Crabtree, Mike Brown, Michael Schultz, and Charlie Weidman (*Zoom*)

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank

Call to Order:

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

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- Samantha asked to have the DEP Small Community Grant Program Service Contract item tabled until the next Select Board meeting. Dick made a motion to accept the agenda with the requested agenda item tabled. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- July 12, 2022: Mike made a motion to approve the 7/12/22 minutes. It was seconded by Michael.
Motion passed 4-0-1 (Sarah)

Warrants 99, 100, 5, 6, 7, 8:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Dick made a motion to approve and sign warrants 99, 100, 5, 6, 7, and 8. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

Assessors:

- Suspend as Select Board/Convene as Assessors: Dick made a motion to suspend as the Select Board and to convene as the Board of Assessors at 6:35 p.m. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

- FY 2023 Tax Commitment: Vern explained the municipal tax rate calculation worksheet. This year's tax commitment reflects a school budget that is 80.7% of the overall tax bill. The amount the Town pays to Knox County makes up 8.7% of the tax bill. While the actual municipal spending makes up 10.6% of the tax bill. There was approximately a \$3 million increase in valuation this year. Vern provided the Assessors with three options to set the annual mil rate: 17.10, 17.15, and 17.20. Each would change the overlay amount on hand to meet any required obligations or abatements that could arise during the year. Dick made a motion to set the FY 2023 tax mil rate at 17.15 with an

overlay of \$12,331.59 and to approve signing all of the necessary documents related to committing the taxes. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

- Adjourn as Assessors/Reconvene as Select Board: Mike made a motion to adjourn as the Board of Assessors and to reconvene as the Select Board at 8:05 p.m. It was seconded by Charlie.

Motion passed 5-0

New Business:

- Resignation Interim Bookkeeper: Dick made a motion to accept the resignation of Hillary Hancox as the Interim Bookkeeper. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

- DEP Small Community Grant Program Service Contract – 4 Pond Rd: Tabled
- Discussion – Rules and Guidelines for True Park: Dick wanted to start a conversation regarding whether or not there should be rules and/or guidelines for True Park. This stems from seeing a post on the Facebook page Hope Happenings announcing there were going to be fireworks at True Park after 9 p.m. Nobody reached out to the town office or got permission to hold such an event.

The Select Board discussed various items including:

- Should there be rules and who would enforce them?
- Should individuals or groups be able to reserve areas of the park?
- Should there be a reservation process and who would be responsible for it?
- Is TULIP insurance available to individuals and should it be required?
- What are the liabilities to the town?
- Does the town's insurance cover unsanctioned activities at the park?
- What about the people who just want to use the park, but it's already been reserved by someone else?

The Select Board would like the Town Administrator to find out from the insurance carrier what are the town's obligations, responsibilities, and or liabilities. Also to check with Rick and find out how the summer leagues (i.e. Dutch Soccer and Five Town Little League, etc;) reserve the fields and if there are written agreements in place or insurances provided by each club.

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- None

Town Administrator Report:

- The Road Commissioner reported that the contractor who has delivered and put-up the sand for the past several years will not be doing it this year. He is semi-retired and isn't running his trucks anymore. He is still willing to sell it to the Town for \$10/yd. However, we would have to supply the trucks and pick it up from the pit and deliver it to the sand shed and mix the salt in and put it up.

This was unexpected and the additional expense was not budgeted. John is going to call around and find out who other towns are using and what the current rate for the work is. He just wanted you to be aware that this could be a potential problem.

- The FEMA inspectors will be in Hope on Thursday to review the work that has yet to be

completed from the 10/31/21 storm.

- The reports from the DEP and Gartley & Dorsky regarding the canopy survey for the property on Highfield Rd. have not been received yet. Bill Kelly has reached out to Kristin Collins, the attorney for Doug Kelly asking for their reports. I have sent an email to the DEP asking for ours. The Appeals Board is not able to meet until the end of August because of the blueberry harvest.
- There will not be a special town meeting for the school bond on August 4th. The Superintendent, Principal, and School Committee Chair are scheduled to be at the next Select Board meeting to discuss electronic signatures. Tim Lock has asked to discuss the steps and procedures for obtaining the bond at the same meeting. Members of the budget committee will also be in attendance.
- Tax bills will be folded and prepared for mailing on Thursday. Three people from the library have volunteered to help with this process. Any additional help would be very much appreciated.
- The Broadband Committee has changed the meeting time for the next 2 months due to travel plans of the members. The next meeting is tomorrow morning at 10:30 a.m.
- There was 1 building permits and 3 plumbing permits issued since the last Select Board meeting.
 - Geoffrey Bosser -25 Rocky Cove Lane – Addition
- Payments for 2022 property taxes were due by 4:30 p.m. today in order to avoid having a lien filed.
- There are 7 RE accounts for 2021, totaling \$21,859.28. Unpaid 2021 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 3, 2023, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 34 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$65,924.14
- There have been pre-payments on 45 accounts for 2023 RE taxes totaling \$27,055.41.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the last Select Board meeting on 7/12/22.

Adjournment:

- Mike made a motion to adjourn at 8:39 p.m. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 5-0

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