

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, August 23, 2022
6:30 p.m.
Hope Town Office

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

Board Members Present:

- Dick Crabtree, Mike Brown, Charlie Weidman, and Michael Schultz

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Bill Brewer, and Margaret Morse (*Zoom*)

Call to Order:

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

Agenda Adjustments/Approval:

- Charlie made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. It was seconded Mike.
Motion passed 3-0

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- August 9, 2022: Charlie made a motion to approve the 8/9/22 minutes. It was seconded by Mike.
Motion passed 3-0

Warrants 12, 13, 14, & 15:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Mike made a motion to approve and sign warrants 9, 10, and 11. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 3-0

New Business:

- FY 2021 Annual Audit – Bill Brewer: Bill explained that there were several items that get reviewed and examined during the annual audit. All Select Board meeting minutes and warrants are reviewed to make sure that expenditures have been authorized and that the warrants have been properly signed. In addition, all reimbursements to town employees are reviewed. Every invoice and payment made to the Road Commissioner and his company are more closely scrutinized to make sure there is no improprieties. He recommends the town keep 12% of the annual expenses in the undesignated fund balance, the towns current policy is 9%. The school is allowed by law to only have 5% of the previous year's budget in the undesignated fund balance and must have a plan to reduce the amount within three years of exceeding the allowable limit.

While reviewing the meeting minutes he noticed the discussion regarding accepting digital signatures on disbursement warrants. He is in favor of requiring original signatures and is in agreement with the town's decision.

There were no concerns with either the municipal or the school 2021 audit noting that it just took a long time to get the schools done. There was some discussion regarding obtaining monthly and quarterly financial reports from the school. This just help with having a timelier audit as well as determining what a more accurate undesignated fund balance would be for budgeting purposes prior to the end of year audit being completed.

For the past two years audits have been conducted after the next fiscal year had already elapsed and the schools fund balance calculations were off by approximately\$300,000.

Bill explained that the school uses the ADS software for maintaining their financial records and that a report should be available at anytime upon request as long as the bookkeeping is being done properly.

The 2022 audit has been scheduled for the 3rd -4th week of October.

Old Business:

- None

Other Business:

- Dick asked for updates regarding:
 - Small Community Septic Grant for 4 Shore Rd – there was nothing new to report.
 - FEMA from 10/31/21 storm – the update is provided in the Administrator's Report.
 - Winter sand -there was nothing new to report.

Board of Assessors:

- Suspend as Select Board/Convene as Board of Assessors: Charlie made a motion to suspend as the Select Board and convene as the Board of Assessors at 7:25 p.m. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

- 2022 Municipal Valuation Return (MVR): The Assessors reviewed the 2022 MVR. Charlie made a motion to approve and sign the 2022 MVR. It was seconded by Michael.

Motion passed 4-0

- Abatement Request for Janet Puddister & Jeffrey Mullaley – 19 Head of the Lake Dr. - \$22.30: Charlie made a motion to grant an abatement in the amount of \$22.30 to Janet Puddister and Jeffrey Mullaley. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

- Abatement Request for Roger & Juanita Hunt – 983 Hatchet Mountain Rd. - \$109.76: Charlie made a motion to grant an abatement in the amount of \$109.76 to Roger and Juanita Hunt. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

Dick stated to be sure that for property owners who are eligible for property tax stabilization, that the taxes are calculated for the net tax after the abatements.

- Adjourn as Board of Assessors/Reconvene as Select Board: Charlie made a motion to adjourn as the Board of Assessors and reconvene as the Select Board at 7:31 p.m. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 4-0

Town Administrator Report:

- The work on the front entrance of the town office parking lot has been started.
- Steve Walker from Inland, Fisheries, and Wildlife will be attending the September 7th Planning Board meeting and giving a presentation resource protection areas and habitats. The Select Board is invited to attend.
- There have been 50 property tax stabilization applications submitted to the town office as of 4:30 today.
- Clarence asked to give you an FYI regarding his fuel budget. With the higher cost of fuel and the closure of Camden's fuel depot, in which the gas tax had already been removed, he is concerned that he will exceed his budget. The fire department is now getting fuel from Maritime Energy, but the tax is charged on it. We have started a spreadsheet and are keep the receipts to submit for a fuel tax reimbursement every six months. This is not an issue now, but he did want you to be aware of it.
- I am still working with FEMA on the 10/31/21 storm damage. It is getting closer to being completed. One of the complicating factors is there is work that hasn't been done yet. Several FEMA agents have left Maine and gone to Kentucky.
- There were no new building permits and 1 plumbing permit issued since the last Select Board meeting.
- There are 5 RE accounts for 2021, totaling \$18,407.38. Unpaid 2021 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 3, 2023, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 20 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$40,474.53. Unpaid 2022 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 27, 2024, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 1,138 RE accounts for 2023, totaling \$3,154,178.66. The first payment is due on September 30, 2022.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the last Select Board meeting on 8/9/22.

Adjournment:

- Dick made a motion to adjourn at 7:39 p.m. It was seconded by Charlie.

Motion passed 4-0

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