

MINUTES OF SELECT BOARD MEETING

Hope Select Board
Tuesday, September 27, 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, Charlie Weidman, and Michael Schultz

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, and Beth Gindel

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 presented. It was seconded Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0

Public Comment:

- None

Minutes:

- September 13, 2022: Dick made a motion to approve the 9/13/22 minutes with minor edits. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 4-0-1 (Michael)

Warrants 20, 21, & 22:

- The Select Board reviewed the warrants. Mike made a motion to approve and sign warrants 20, 21, and 22. It was seconded by Charlie.
Motion passed 5-0

New Business:

- Discontinue/Eliminate Tax Maps/GIS Reserve Account - \$5,645.87: Charlie made a motion to eliminate the Tax Maps/GIS Reserve Account and to return the balance of \$5,645.87 to the Undesignated fund. It was seconded by Dick.
Motion passed 5-0
- Carry Forwards Administration/General Admin:
 - Postage - \$1,596.40: Charlie made a motion to carry \$1,596.40 from the Postage/General Admin/Administration line from FY22 to FY23. It was seconded by Michael.
Motion passed 5-0

- Town Office Equipment - \$618.23: Charlie made a motion to carry \$618.23 from the Town Office Equipment/General Admin/Administration line from FY22 to FY23. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

- Road Commissioner Update Report – John Monroe:
 - Alford Lake Rd. Paving – All States completed the paving on Alford Lake Rd. They did a fantastic job. The edging still needs to be done. All States has done the paving in Hope for the past 3 years. Last year wasn't very smooth administratively. However, this year everything went very well, and the work performed was excellent.
 - Plowing – John did a check-in with Jake Boyington to make sure he is going to be ready for winter. Jake has added the other half of Searsmont to his workload. He told John that he will not be over extended and that he will be able to fulfil his contract obligations with Hope.
 - FEMA: He is finishing the work from the 10/31/21 storm damage over the next couple of weeks. He is replacing 2 culverts on Ludwig Rd. tomorrow. He has already talked with Clarence because the road will be closed for a period of time.
 - Sand/Salt: The cost has of the salt has doubled from \$42/ton to \$84/ton. Even with the price increase, we are still within budget right now. Whether we stay within the budget will depend on how bad the winter is and what the roads need for each storm. In addition, he had to put the sand up himself this year. It took around 95 hours to get it all mixed and stored in the shed.
 - Ventilation & Roof Repair in Sand/Salt Shed: No repairs in the sand/salt shed have been done yet. It doesn't look like anything will be able to be done this year at all. It is very difficult to find people who can or are available to do it.

Old Business:

- Paving Bids for Parking Lot at True Park: John said he didn't know much about either company that bid on the True Park parking lot paving. However, recently someone he knew used the low bidder and the work they did was really bad. John had a photo of the poorly done driveway. They had also paved a parking lot in Union last week and did a great job. It all depends on who the crew is. John said he would watch and supervise to make sure that the work was being done correctly regardless of was awarded the bid. Dick made a motion to award the contract to pave the True Park parking lot to Discount Asphalt Paving in the amount of \$136/ton for approx. 128 tons, with the caveat they provide weigh slips and John oversees the work is done satisfactorily. It was seconded by Charlie.

Motion passed 5-0

Other Business:

- Purchased Plot in Morey Hill Cemetery: A resident submitted a letter to the Select Board requesting assistance because she and her husband had purchased two plots in 2016, so they could place a headstone in remembrance of their late son and to have one for themselves as well. She's been told she can't place the headstones or use the plots because it is unknown if

it was already occupied space or not. Unfortunately, there hasn't been much progress in determining the exact location of her plots as the records weren't as accurate as they should be. The resident is not looking for a burial spot but rather just a location for the headstones. This is becoming more urgent for the couple as they are getting older and nearing the end of their lives. They would like a resolution and to be able to at least be able to place their son's headstone.

Beth Gindel, the Sexton, explained that she and members of the Cemetery Committee have been working on trying to identify where the actual graves are. They have found old headstones that have been dislocated from their original locations. In addition, many of the graves in Morey Hill are quite old and very difficult to ascertain locations and ownership. Beth said she doesn't want to give the resident a location of her two plots only to discover it's already occupied.

Dick wanted to know why we couldn't use ground penetrating radar to help with locating occupied and vacant spaces. This resident purchased two plots over five years ago and the Town owes her those cemetery spaces. He told Beth to do some research in the cost of using the ground radar equipment and report back to the Select Board with her findings. At the very least, we need to look in the area that we think her plots are supposed to be. If it's vacant space, then give it to her. If it's occupied, keep searching until there is a spot for her son's headstone. Beth will start with the Maine Old Cemeteries Association for assistance.

Town Administrator Report:

- There was an article in the Village Soup about Town Offices needing a secure and fireproof vault or safe for specific town records. Hope has a fireproof vault that holds important town documents. All information on computers has off site storage and back-ups. Most things that are not in the vault, can be reproduced if needed. There are of course some exceptions but all of the items as required by law are appropriately secure.
- There have already been 55 requests for absentee ballots. The Clerk isn't expecting to absentee ballots available until 30 days before the November 8th election. Once the state has delivered the ballots, all of the election information will be posted on the Town website.
- Please review the material from Efficiency Maine regarding the grant opportunity to have at least one electric vehicle charging station in Hope. I will put this on the October 11th agenda as the deadline for applying by November 17th.
- FEMA storm damage has been divided into two projects, that which was completed prior to the presidential declaration and already paid for by the Town. The other was the work that had not yet been completed and would be deferred into this budget cycle. The first project documentation and reporting has been completed. A significant amount of the documentation and reporting for the second project has been submitted. As the damage is being repaired, I am submitting so that FEMA has had the opportunity to review as it comes in which will help prevent delays and time lags for approval completion.

- The deadline for accepting bids to install the septic system at 4 Shore Rd. is next Tuesday, October 4th.
- Matthew and I met with the town attorney and two representatives from the DEP today. Things are still progressing but much slower than Bill Kelly would like. Although the content of the conversation was deemed confidential by the town attorney, the outline of the discussion included the process going forward and the specific steps and requirements the Town may have. I will schedule an executive session once more information has been obtained.
- The Planning Board is conducting a workshop tomorrow evening to review some ordinances and draft amendment proposals.
- There have been 96 property tax stabilization applications submitted to the town office as of 4:30 today.
- There were 2 new building permits and 0 plumbing permits issued since the last Select Board meeting:
 - Fred Paine 16 Derek's Way Tree Cutting in SZ
 - Ezra Howell 77 Barrett Hill Rd. Deck
- There are 5 RE accounts for 2021, totaling \$19,905.06. Unpaid 2021 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 3, 2023, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 15 RE accounts for 2022, totaling \$34,275.42. Unpaid 2022 real estate taxes will automatically foreclose on February 27, 2024, if the accounts are not paid in full.
- There are 1,034 RE accounts for 2023, totaling \$2,035,468.49. The first payment is due on September 30, 2022.
- The cash has not been out of balance since the last Select Board meeting on 9/13/22.

Adjournment:

- Charlie made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. It was seconded by Mike.

Motion passed 5-0

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