

Select Board Meeting

March 5, 2024

1. Call to Order – 6:00pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mark Bradstreet, Vice-Chair led the Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call – Mark Bradstreet, Sandra Otis-Anderson, Linda Payson and Steve Tanguay present. Doug Norman joined the meeting by phone.
4. Announcements – The manager announced that election polls are open until 8pm at the Community Building.
5. Acceptance of Minutes- Motion: Linda Payson made a motion to accept the minutes as written for the February 20, 2024 select board meeting. Second: Steve Tanguay. Vote 5-0-0. Motion by Linda Payson seconded by Steve Tanguay to accept the minutes of the February 26, 2024 special selectboard meeting as presented. Vote 5-0-0
6. Acceptance of the agenda – Motion: Sandra Otis-Anderson made a motion to accept the agenda with one eleventh-hour item. To approve the purchase of signage for downtown. Second: Linda Payson Vote 5-0-0
7. Public Comment – None
8. Old Business
 - a. Information Center Disposition - There was no new information to present so this item was left tabled.
 - b. Insurance Cafeteria Plan for Employees – The manager explained that by statute the Town must provide a cafeteria plan for employees to purchase insurances should they choose to. The town already provides some coverage through AFLAC but we are asking for additional coverage for health, dental and vision through Maine Municipal Employee Health Trust. This coverage would be optional for employees not already covered by insurance as part of their position and would be fully paid for by the employee. Motion: Sandra Otis Anderson and seconded by Linda Payson to Re-affirm our ALFC policy. Vote 5-0-0. Linda Payson made a motion to offer a cafeteria plan with MMEHT for health, dental and vision. Second: Sandra Otis-Anderson. Vote: 5-0-0
9. New Business
 - a. Agreement with MCCOG for a Housing Grant. - The manager requested authorization to hire Mid Coast Council of Governments to assist in writing and submitting a grant to improve housing in Searsport. This grant may be used for re-habilitation of homes and old trailers or for new housing. The funding for the grant help, up to \$6500 dollars, would come from TIF funding. Motion by Mark Bradstreet seconded by Sandra Otis-Anderson to approve the request. Vote 5-0-0.
 - b. Job Description for Police Detective- The manager explained that we approved the position of Police Detective a couple of weeks ago and this is the job description that goes with the position. Motion by Steve Tanguay seconded by Linda Payson to approve the job description. Vote 5-0-0
 - c. Selectboard Policy Change for Boards and Committees – The manager explained that we have a couple of people who are currently serving on boards and committees that are not residents of the community. The Selectboard policy is that all board and committee members must be residents. The restriction does not exist in State Statute it is a local decision. The new language proposed would loosen that restriction for certain circumstances on the Selectboards decision. Motion by Steve Tanguay seconded by Linda Payson to approve the policy change. Vote 5-0-0
 - d. Wastewater Abatement Request – The manager explained that the current Wastewater ordinance does not address seasonal businesses. When a business is not in operation it does not send waste to the plant and we should not be charging a user fee. The ordinance does give the board authority to approve abatements. in this case, account 1006, it is warranted. They were closed for one whole quarter and the manager is asking for an abatement for up to \$226.40. Motion by Linda Payson seconded by Steve Tanguay to abate up to \$226.40 for account 1006. Vote 5-0-0.
10. 11th Hour – The manager requested that money from TIF funds be used to pay for downtown signs indicating that the downtown is open for business. This is a response to the downtown rebuild. Motion by Steve Tanguay seconded by Sandra Otis-Anderson to approve the request. Vote 5-0-0.
11. Correspondence
 - a. Letter from Senator Susan Collins Office outlining that our wharf request is still alive in the Federal Budget.
 - b. Letter stating that Eagle Point Energy is now the owners of PERC.
 - c. Request from Hurtigruten Cruise Lines wanting to visit Searsport in September. The board did discuss this letter and asked the manager to send a letter thanking them for thinking of us but declining to offer as we should be under construction.
 - d. Statement from Wellman Paving to Tammy Reynolds with estimate for paving Trout Brook Lane. This mater was discussed in the last meeting and this is a binding contract to get that work done. Manager provided for

information only. It is up to the Code Enforcement Officer to deal with this and inform the Planning Board. Motion by Linda Payson seconded by Sandra Otis-Anderson to refer this to the attorney. Vote 4-0-1.

e. The County Tax Bill was included.

f. The last three items were from Charter Communications outlining changes to programming.

12. Treasurer's Warrant. Motion: Sandra Otis-Anderson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's warrant pending signatures by the Select Board. Seconded: Linda Payson Vote 5-0-0

13. Town Manager's Report – The Manager outlined some of the highlights of his report.

14. Select Board Reports

a. Linda Payson thanked everyone for voting and commented that she is glad to see the construction start early this year and asked people to be patient. It will be nice when done.

b. Doug Norman had no comments to add.

c. Sandra Otis-Anderson had no comments to add.

d. Steve Tanguay wanted to mention a few points to cover for the coming year. He reported that a lot of business are off from last year as much a 30% and maybe we can access TIF funds to help in some way. We may want to look into an Economic Development person who can do grant writing. Whatever we can do creatively would be good. We need to do whatever we can to protect the town with what is coming with a Community Benefits Agreement. Many agreements have been done around the country and we need to see what we can do to protect ourselves.

e. Mark Bradstreet commented that he is very appreciative that so much work is being done downtown in March. We do need more signage. We can also work with Friends of Sears Island to make some improvements on the island with CBA. We do need to look at what other towns did for business when they were reconstructed, like Hallowell.

15. Public Comment and the Viewing Public Comments – Peter Newell commented that he spoke to the manager about traffic using Union and Reservoir Street to circumvent the detour. It is a problem because the road is not in good condition and he would like to see some better signage. Wes Norton inquired as to who was helping with the grant application. He also commented that Community Benefits Agreements.

16. Executive Session – Linda Payson motioned at 6:58pm that the select board exit regular session and enter into executive session pursuant to M.R.S.A. 1 / 405(6) (F) Confidential – (General Assistance Matters and Poverty abatement requests) and M.R.S.A. 1 / 405 (6) (A) Confidential (Personnel Matters – Public Safety Director's contract) Motion was seconded by Steve Tanguay. Vote 5-0-0. At this point, Doug Norman left the meeting as he was having a difficult time hearing.

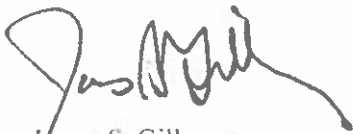
At 7:06 pm Linda Payson made a motion to exit executive session and return to the regular session. Second: Steve Tanguay. Vote 4-0-0

18. Decisions from Executive Session: Motions: a. Linda Payson motioned to approve WP-24-07 for 100lbs tank of LP gas with funds to come from the Jenny Lawrence Worth Poor Fund. Second: Sandra Otis-Anderson. Vote 4-0-0

b. Motion by Linda Payson seconded by Steve Tanguay to approve a two-year contract with Brian Lunt for the Public Safety Directors position. Vote 4-0-0

19. At 7:12 pm Sandra Otis-Anderson made a motion to adjourn. Second Linda Payson: Vote 4-0-0

Respectfully Submitted



James S. Gillway
Town Manager

Approved 3-19-2024