

MINUTES

SELECT BOARD MEETING TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2022 WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM & ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE AT TOWN HALL STREAMS 6:30 p.m.

Select Board present: Jim Justice, Adam Fuller, Martha Johnston-Nash, and Bill Lombardi

Others present: Jay Feyler (Town Manager), John Mountainland, Erik Amundsen, Abraham Knight, John Gibbons, and others

- 1. Call Select Board Meeting to Order:** at 6:30 p.m. by Adam Fuller.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Public Comment:** None.
- 4. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, March 15, 2022 and Tuesday, March 29, 2022:**

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice

Martha said on page 3 of the March 15, 2022 minutes (9e, TMA Report) rather than “they will have more fire extinguishers hooked up,” it should read “they will have the sprinkler system hooked up to the alarm.”

Amended motion with the above change by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice
4-0

- 5. Approve Treasurer’s Warrants dated Tuesday, April 5, 2022:**

Motion by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
4-0

- 6. Discussion and Approval on sale of surplus equipment at the TCC:**

Motion to approve sale of TCC shelving on an after-the-fact basis by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice
3-0-1 abstention (Johnston-Nash)

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

7. Confirmation of Election Clerks:

Motion to approve as presented by: Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Bill Lombardi
4-0

8. Set dates of Budget Committee/Select Board meetings:

Budget Committee/Select Board April 26 and 27, and Public Hearing May 23.

Motion to approve as above by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
4-0

9. Approve Referendum Warrant Articles:

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will accept a donation from the William Pullen Trustees of a parcel of land located on Heald Highway, known as Clark Field, for any use determined to be in the best interests of the Town by the Select Board.

ARTICLE 4. Shall the Town of Union, starting with the June 2023 Annual Town Meeting, submit all warrant articles, to be considered at any Annual Town Meeting, to the voters of the Town in the format of secret ballot referendum questions and keep the polls open as required by law when said Article or Articles are voted upon. Special Town Meetings will be at the discretion of the Select Board or as may be required by Citizen Petition.

Motion to accept and approve Articles 3 and 4 as presented by: Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Bill Lombardi
4-0

ARTICLE 5. To see what option of the five listed below the Town would like to pursue with the Thompson Community Center.

To authorize the Select Board to implement and negotiate the chosen option in the best interest of the Town, to raise and appropriate up to the maximum amount listed on the chosen option, and to conduct any other necessary business required to implement said option.

VOTE FOR ONE ONLY:

Option 1:

To see if the Town will retain ownership of the Thompson Community Center and accept all responsibility for renovations and repairs, operations, and operating expenses.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

Immediate needs: \$285,500 to \$465,500

Future needs \$3,000,000 (not appropriated under this Article)

Possible offsetting income after renovations of \$100,000-\$165,000 from rental income and/or available grant funding.

This could be run by the Town with Town employees or contracted with a third party or some combination thereof, at the discretion of the Select Board.

Option 2:

To see if the Town will sell or lease the building to a third party for senior housing with retained community center.

Cost to the Town: \$0-\$10,000 Offsetting income: Payment in lieu of taxes

The Town would sell or lease to a third party with all financial responsibilities with the exception of the Town's liability insurance to the Lessee if under a lease arrangement.

Option 3:

To see if the Town will sell the property to a rehab specialist/renovation group to create community and mixed-use space.

Cost to the Town: \$0-\$10,000 One-time revenue: \$150,000 to \$695,000

The Town could request conditions of the sale such as keeping the gym and thrift store, but will not retain any guarantees or any financial obligations.

Option 4:

To see if the Town will demolish the building and remove all debris.

Cost to the Town: \$201,040 to \$498,000

Option 5:

To see if the Town will list the property with a real estate agent and sell to the highest qualified bidder with the right to reject any and all bids.

Cost to the Town: \$0 One-time income: \$150,000 to \$695,000

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

This would remove the property from town ownership and would allow the purchaser to manage the property as allowed under the Town Land Use Ordinances.

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice

Amended motion to put the original “\$0 to \$10,000” (rather than typo “\$0”) in Option 5
by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Jim Justice
4-0

10. Town Manager’s Report:

Jay said the office closed at 4:00 p.m. not 6:00 p.m. today, as two people were sick, one person can’t be in alone, and he had a meeting he couldn’t miss. He expects to hear about it tomorrow.

At the next meeting he will talk more about the Ambulance Advisory Board.

Budget books are being finalized and will be out soon.

Adam praised Public Works progress on dirt roads. Jay said he’s asked them to keep track of what they are putting on individual roads. Matt is doing computer reports that will in a few years let us see some patterns with actual numbers.

11. Other Business:

Bill brought up a letter in their packets from Assessors’ Agent Jim Murphy; to no one’s surprise, prices are increased. Bill hopes to communicate to the public that increased valuation does not necessarily mean an increase in taxes.

Jay reminded the board members that they are the assessors. Jim has invited people to ask questions. So far, we’ve had 25 or 30 people, but later Jim will be inundated. Jay added we do have increases in budgets (county, school), but that’s everywhere across the state; many are fixed – school, put back in paving what we took out last year, increase in wages to keep people and we are still not at the average, etc.

Jay said the Knox County Emergency Management Director is retiring in June. This is not good for Knox County, as he is probably the best Knox County Emergency Management Director ever. This will be his second retirement.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

12. Committee Reports:

a. Broadband

John Gibbons said they are making progress. The LCI grant application was sent in a couple weeks ago. If successful this will create a substantial increase in network connectivity in parts of town that have the worst service including Clarry Hill, and the committee should perhaps change its role to an ombudsman committee. At this point they have done all they can do and await ConnectME's decision.

He added there are a few other issues including the need to consider expansion so it covers entire town. Time to discuss will be end of year. He reminded that cable is good, fiber is better.

He did not have a lot to report on the Coalition. If LCI happens, our options with the Coalition will pretty well close down and put a municipal network out of reach. With LCI we have a course of action and at least a glimpse of a schedule; we are not that far along with the Coalition.

Adam brought up the metamorphosis of this committee, pointing out that the other members are gung-ho.

b. Aging in Place in Union

Bill said they had a meeting yesterday. They do not have a chair. Holly and Deborah will run Community Circles in the spring. They talked about hot buttons: transportation, senior U Maine program, small repairs etc. They had a very positive response from the community on the St. Paddy's Day luncheon.

Next luncheon will be in June, hopefully in person, a hamburger and hot dog event with a speaker perhaps from the Senior Companion program.

They meet the first Monday of the month and will probably take a break in July and August. They are looking for new members.

c. Future of the Thompson Community Center

Martha said they have been working on getting word out about the public hearing. The committee realizes it is an integral part of this. Mentioned were Power Point with voice added, Town Report insert, hard copies of the report at the town office and library, report on the town website.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

d. Green Space

In Josh's absence, Jay said they got an answer from Roger which he forwarded. They're going to ask for some funding for a survey. At some point they will ask to morph into a conservation commission, for which state monies are available. Jay's concern is we need to broader members geography-wise in town to make that a viable committee.

e. TMA Report

Erik Amundsen said they had a cleanup last Saturday including cleaning stairwells as the Fire Marshal requested. Everything was moved into where the old thrift store was, as they didn't want to sell or throw anything away.

The thrift store is going gangbusters, last week earning approximately \$500 and increasing. They have a small income stream with current limitations including cornhole, basketball clinic, line dancing, and completed Little League tryouts.

They are working on emergency lighting and setting up a schedule to monitor all the fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, and check them all (visual inspection) once a month. Deadbolts on the doors were removed. There is money in the bank with another insurance bill of \$3,000 coming up. The security firm finishing sprinkler and alarm systems will be done by the 14th and whatever else we're going to need for emergency lighting. There was a \$2,000 bill from Thayer to replace a valve actuator on one of the steam pipes that controls the heat going to the second floor.

Discussion followed including Fire Marshal report, furnace should be shut off soon, and financial reports. Erik mentioned plans for an outdoor art show on April 17 with tents, hopefully cornhole and a band and food trucks.

Jay said we are seeking housing for a summer intern through the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center. Interns do not make enough to pay rent. Ours would be working a lot in Rockland at the emergency management office.

13. Select Board Reports:

The Public Works crew has been doing a great job on the town roads. Adam's daily bus driver report highlighted appreciation for the work on Union's dirt roads in particular.

14. Future Agenda Requests: None.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2022

15. Adjourn:

Motion by: Bill Lombardi

2nd by: Jim Justice

4-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary