

MINUTES

SELECTMEN'S/ASSESSORS' MEETING

Tuesday January 5, 2021

ONLINE INTERACTIVE

6:30 p.m.

Selectmen present: John Shepard (Chair), Adam Fuller, Josh White, Martha Johnston-Nash, and Bill Lombardi

Others present: Jay Feyler, Christine Simmonds, Greg Grotton, John Gibbons, Catherine Meyer, Stephanie Jenkins, Jesse Thompson, Gail Hawes, and Abraham Knight

1. Call Selectmen's Meeting to order: 6:33 p.m.

2. Public Comment:

John stated that within Zoom that there is a chat room. He stated that he does not respond to the comments during the meetings and would like to adhere to the same protocols as if the group was meeting in person. If an attendee would like to make a comment, to please raise a hand and speak to the group.

3. Approve minutes of Tuesday, December 15, 2020:

Motion by Selectman Fuller seconded by Selectman Shepard to approve the minutes with amendments. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: White, Shepard, Johnston-Nash, and Fuller. All in favor. Selectman Lombardi abstained.

4. Approve Treasurer's Warrant dated Tuesday, January 5, 2021:

Motion by Selectman Lombardi seconded by Selectman White to approve the warrant. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: Shepard, Fuller, White, Lombardi, and Johnston-Nash. All in favor.

5. Approve the tapping of maple trees on Town property:

Motion by Selectman Johnston-Nash seconded by Selectman Fuller to approve tapping of maple trees. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: Lombardi, Fuller, White, Johnston-Nash, and Shepard. All in favor.

6. Discussion and vote on donation to Maine Ombudsman of 1K from the IC Thurston Fund:

Motion by Selectman Johnston-Nash seconded by Selectman Fuller to approve the donation. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: Lombardi, Fuller, White, Johnston-Nash, and Shepard. All in favor.

7. Approve the Personnel Policy Updates to include Earned Paid Leave:

Motion by Selectman Johnston- Nash seconded by Selectman Fuller to approve the updates on the Personnel Policy. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: Fuller, Shepard, Lombardi, Johnston-Nash, and White. All in favor.

8. Approve the sale of the 02 Volvo:

Motion by Selectman Lombardi seconded by Selectman White to approve the sale of the 02 Volvo. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: Fuller, Shepard, Lombardi, Johnston-Nash, and White. All in favor.

9. COVID-19 updates:

Emergency management personnel are currently receiving vaccines. Jay is hoping his staff will be vaccinated soon.

10. Other Business:

John stated that the Board tentatively scheduled a road workshop for January 12th. He is questioning whether it is necessary to meet at this time. Adam suggested having the engineering results from North Union Road and Coggins Hill before moving forward. It was decided unanimously to postpone the workshop.

11. Town Manager's Report:

The final air hook-up was completed at Public Works garage. The completed work will need to be audited by Jay and MMA before the final documents are signed.

The new PW truck has arrived.

Audit 2020 has been a slow process because of some internal issues. Should be finalized in approximately 2-3 weeks. Bond money should be available in April.

Jay stated that Sherry has left the office to pursue other opportunities. She remains on payroll and will fill-in when necessary. Her position was filled by Jaycie Brown. Motion by Selectman Fuller seconded by Selectman Lombardi to confirm Jaycie Brown for the positions of Deputy Clerk, Deputy Tax Collector, and Deputy Treasurer. Vote by

roll call. Selectmen in favor: Fuller, White, Lombardi, Shepard, and Johnston-Nash. All approved.

12. Selectmen's Report:

John stated that Tri-County Waste Management will be meeting January 7th via Zoom for the budget workshop.

Josh suggested that Broadband, Aging in Place, and Food Ordinance Committees have their own heading in the minutes and kept separate from the Selectmen's Report.

a. Broadband Committee:

The Committee has obtained from Tidewater the map of fiber optic that currently runs through Union. This includes the planned runs that have not yet been implemented. Jay has also provided a spreadsheet of road miles in Union. With that said, they can probably come up with a rough sizing estimate of what it would take to build out the rest of the fiber optic network. This would stretch beyond what Tidewater is willing to do on its own dime for business profit or loss purposes.

Redzone is working with Union to obtain and build a map of portions of the town that can and cannot receive its highspeed access signals. The committee is particularly interested in the portions of the town that cannot receive that signal. If a decision is made to apply for a grant, the so-called dark pockets (areas in town that cannot get fast access right now) will be the number one priority of all the granting agencies. They will need to know where the dark pockets are, and how big they are.

The committee has prepared a survey to be distributed to the citizens of Union. They will be asking about their current uses of the internet, how much it costs, how satisfied residents are with the service that they are currently getting, how interested they would be in a fiber optic option, and if that can be obtained at a reasonable cost. That survey is important for a couple of reasons; one, is that all granted agencies require it. Two, to build support if they are going to suggest spending public funds to build out the network. In the context of discussing the survey at the last meeting, it became obvious that they need a different survey for the business community. Chris Norris is taking a lead in putting that together. Holly Savage is going to be the point person in the business community (through her Chamber position) in circulating and drawing comments. The reason for the second business survey, is to differentiate business needs with the homeowner needs such as Ecommerce and video conferencing.

They are also in the process of setting up a meeting with one of Tidewaters representatives Alan Hinsey, Director of Marketing. Alan will be attending a committee meeting in February. They plan to ask him about the experiences that he

has had in building up fiber networks as a joint exercise in other towns and what that structure may look like. Adam added that they hope to utilize the Survey Monkey town account to send out the surveys. He also emphasized that a well-represented committee is an important part of the grant process. They are currently looking for educators to join the committee. The committee is planning to sit in on a meeting with another broad band committee; Rockport/Camden. This committee is currently pursuing a municipality owned network in those two towns and becoming a hub for other towns to join in.

b. Aging in Place Committee:

The date for the St Patrick's Day To-Go Luncheon is March 18th. The menu will consist of corned beef & cabbage, carrots, potatoes, a dinner roll, and assorted cookies. They are in the process of making January wellness calls for those 75 and older and residents who asked for communication. The resource guide is out on the website and can be downloaded. There are copies available at the town office. The committee is short staffed and looking for volunteers.

c. Food Ordinance Committee:

Josh stated that the first meeting was held on December 16th. The committee elected Elizabeth Dickerson as Chairman and Gail Hawes as Secretary. They currently have a good variety of committee members. Agenda items being addressed; What are the current regulations and laws? Who wants the laws to change? The next meeting is January 13th via Zoom.

13. Future Agenda Items:

Form a TCC Committee

14. Adjourn:

Motion by Selectman Lombardi seconded by Selectman White to adjourn. Vote by roll call. Selectmen in favor: White, Shepard, Fuller, Lombardi, and Johnston-Nash. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Patrick
Secretary