

MINUTES

SELECT BOARD MEETING TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2022 ONLINE VIA ZOOM 6:30 p.m.

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

Others present: Jay Feyler (Town Manager), Christine Simmonds (Village Soup), Abraham Knight, Erik Amundsen, John Gibbons, Greg Grotton, Gail Hawes, 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, January 18, 2022:**

Motion by: Jim Justice
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
4-0-1 abstention (White)

Approve Minutes of Tuesday, February 15, 2022:

Motion by: Josh White
2nd by: Bill Lombardi
5-0

- 5. Approve Treasurer's Warrants dated March 1, 2022:**

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

- 6. Request for release of funding from the TMA:**

TMA requested \$5,000 from the warrant article to subsidize operations, according to a letter submitted by Paul Raudonat, which would bring the total amount received from the town to \$23,500. TMA expects to request an additional \$2,500 in late March/early April.

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Discussion centered on the details of the expenditures and ensuring that they comply with the maintenance agreement.

Jay cautioned against the maintenance agreement being read too liberally. He didn't think the intent of the voters was to make improvements on the building, it was to keep it from falling apart.

Adam mentioned the board's hypervigilance, due in part to past experience with absolutely no transparency.

Erik Amundsen said the TMA is being a good steward of the town's money by trying to keep the building safe, mentioning fire alarm and insurance concerns as part of this effort.

Adam thanked everyone working on the TMA.

Bill added the TMA has to be judicious in how they spend their money, not that he thinks they are being injudicious.

TMA will provide a more detailed breakdown of income and expenditures in writing.

Motion by: Jim Justice

2nd by: Bill Lombardi

4-0-1 abstention (Johnston-Nash)

7. Town Manager's Report:

Jay said a couple of Fridays ago a concrete truck did a little bit of damage on Barrett Hill Road. He followed them, got video, and they agreed to pay \$1500 for the estimated additional work (grading, etc.) in the spring.

One of our trucks, our Sterling, is on Vinalhaven through our mutual aid program for Public Works. They had two trucks go down leaving them with zero. Jay said the policy is "if you break it, you bought it" and mentioned the help we received from Vinalhaven when our Public Works garage burned down. He added Knox is the first county in Maine to have mutual aid for Public Works; it works well.

He emailed about a March 29 Special Select Board Meeting for the CFTCC presentation. At the meeting following that, the board has to approve the wording of the warrant article so it can go off to the printers. In May will be public hearings for the votes that are going to happen in June. He will get the public hearings recorded so people can watch them right up until voting day. Unless things fall apart, we have one more meeting via zoom. The March 29 meeting will be in person and hopefully recorded also; he will try to use the Owl so people can ask questions from home.

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Jay also said we had another Public Works employee leave for a significant amount more money, a statewide problem. We may have a candidate tomorrow. Class A or Class B drivers will not work for what we offer at the beginning. We are looking at sending a Class C driver to federally-required training for almost \$3,000 with a two-year contract similar to ambulance staff. This will be in next year's training budget.

Jay said he will not be here March 15. Jim Murphy will be here with two denials of farm space in an abatement. The board will be acting as assessors. Everybody being fairly new, he urged the board to take the lead from Jim and not go outside the parameters.

Jay will be out next Monday and back March 21.

8. Other Business:

Bill asked for an update on the Clark field property. Jay said we await details on their side. Maybe in April the Pullen Committee will convene again for a negotiation with another potential buyer for the property next door. We hope to have it all closed on our end by next week.

Bill asked for an update on the Consolidated Edison solar field. Jay said he's heard nothing since they paid the code fees, approximately \$60,000; they were going to start sometime in March. In answer to Josh, Jay said we already have their performance bond and the state has theirs; they are probably just waiting for weather.

Adam asked if we heard back from Appleton regarding the shared ambulance budget. Jay said he heard today it's in the hands of the Budget Committee.

9. Committee Reports:

a. Broadband

John Gibbons said LCI is working on a ConnectME grant application to cover almost all Union addresses with access only to slow connections, almost 250. Submission deadline is March 20, awards announced mid-April.

The committee is gathering information that ConnectME is likely to request. If successful, ConnectME requires the work to be completed in two years, but there is a long history of missed deadlines. The biggest single risk for the town, if the grant application is successful, is that fiber will be on the poles quickly but connections could take a long time according to other towns. The committee has not given up on ways to get those connections faster.

The Coalition as before has other priorities right now, but we're still on their horizon.

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b. Aging in Place in Union

Bill said Thursday is the last day to sign up for the St. Paddy's Day luncheon. Next meeting is March 7 via zoom with guest speaker Martha on the TCC.

c. Future of the Thompson Community Center

CFTCC will address the board March 29. Martha said they discussed deadlines. Subgroups are moving ahead gathering information. Gail Hawes and Paul Raudonat set up google docs to feed in information; a later draft will be posted online for the public hearing. Michael Mullins will do a 3D scan of the building later this week. Greg and Gail went to see another developer's senior housing community development.

d. Green Space

Josh said they met last Wednesday and went over some quick things about deed restrictions with Roger. He wondered if we as a town could make our own nonprofit conservancy. Adam said probably not and thanked the committee for its patience and work.

e. TMA Report

Erik Amundsen echoed Martha – there's a lot going on. He toured the building remotely yesterday with the insurance people; he is waiting to hear back, as this is a big concern.

They have kept tenants so far. They have a cornhole group, line dancers, morning walkers, and will host Little League baseball tryouts over four nights at \$85 per night. They also have the thrift shop which has been cleaned up and looks great.

They cannot do the flea market, big gatherings, nor night functions without an okay from the Fire Marshal. The alarm and sprinkler systems would have to be up to par for this.

Regarding expenses, the plowing has been pretty good. The oil bill has been \$1,500 to \$1,800 or \$1,900 per week. CMP charged us a \$750 sign-up fee on top of the electric bill. He noted expenses can get pretty high, and they are all front loaded especially in the middle of winter.

He said everyone has a copy of the list of defects. They found the curtains are fireproofed which is a big deal. They have found a few other things that eliminate some of the issues, which they are trying to address one a time, while doing a lot of research on the building.

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C.O. Beck gave an estimate of \$200,000 to redo the roofing, which is on its last legs. The main fire system will be approximately \$32,000. Hookup for the sprinkler will be approximately \$2,000. We have to get a phone line for Seacoast Security which is cheap insurance at \$40 per month. Water tests will be done where it feeds in and at various points around the building. The sprinkler system has been inspected by the manufacturers, so that information has been filed with the Fire Marshal. Erik reiterated the main thing is to protect the asset that is there.

10. Select Board Reports:

Adam said the talk of his work circle was our Town Manager bird-dogging a cement truck on a muddy road.

11. Future Agenda Requests: None.

12. Adjourn:

Motion by: Bill Lombardi
2nd by: Adam Fuller
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary