

# MINUTES

**SELECT BOARD/ASSESSORS' MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024  
WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM  
ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE ON TOWN HALL STREAMS  
6:30 p.m.**

**Select Board present:** Jim Justice, Adam Fuller, Martha Johnston-Nash, Wayne Kirkpatrick, and Linda Mountainland

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

- 1. Call Select Board Meeting to Order:** at 6:30 p.m. by Adam Fuller
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, February 20, 2024:**

Motion by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Wayne Kirkpatrick  
5-0

- 4. Approve Treasurer's Warrants dated Wednesday, March 6, 2024:**

Motion by: Jim Justice  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Wayne Kirkpatrick  
5-0

- 5. Award of Fire Station Parking Lot Bid (tentative): TBD.**
- 6. Other Business:** None.
- 7. Public Comment:**

Erik Amundsen said the school started budget season on Monday. The meetings will be live streamed – 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Mondays for the next four weeks. They are also putting out to bid to the three different energy groups that \$12 million proposal to see where they stand. Linda urged people to watch the meetings, as there is a lot said that's not online.

Jim said he got complaints about it being very dark on the side of the parking lot by the ballfield, after voting. Jay said those are the non-intrusive lights that the board voted for. Adam said when we get to budget we can get to lights. Jay said he gets complaints about

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lights all the time. In answer to Adam, Jay said we have two small LEDs out back; Adam said they could possibly be swapped out. Jay said they are not that expensive, not hard to do. In answer to John Mountainland, Jay said these fixtures cannot be turned up. Adam and Jim concurred this may be an easy fix.

### 8. Town Manager's Report:

Jay said we have another mud season and are spending a lot of money on rock doing roads, which goes to what Adam said awhile back about dirt roads being expensive. He noted the guys are doing a great job.

He also said Matt Elwell will be leaving us in April. Matt is moving to Georgia; he will talk to the fair association tonight as he is also president of that. We are working on things and may have an internal person. He added Matt has been by far the best public works director here; he came because Jay recruited him from the sheriff's department.

### 9. Committee Reports:

#### a. Broadband

John Gibbons said the MCA grant contract was signed a couple of weeks ago. The grant money can now begin flowing to LCI under the terms of the contract. They meet with them tomorrow night to go over the details of the plan and the schedule. LCI is right on the ball and the first thing they did after signing the contract was to request our \$144,000 which Jay will be dealing with. The grant money will start flowing, too.

He noted the whole project is about \$1.5 million for Union's fiber buildout. One million of that is coming from the grant, LCI is putting \$366,000 of their own funds into it as an investment, and we are putting in the remaining \$144,000 which has been the plan for quite some time.

Re: schedule, John said they expect to start ordering supplies within a couple of weeks (fiber, central office equipment). They expect that by the end of the spring they will be running fiber on the poles and ready to make connections starting some time this fall. He said this looks like a four- or five-month slip from where the schedule was last October, due to problems stemming from an additional money source in the picture which they will get clarification on tomorrow night. Bottom line: expect things to start moving very quickly and visibly.

Jay said people have been worried all along that Tidewater would sell to a larger company. He met with Shirley two years ago, had a 10-minute conversation, and absolutely positively we'll get our money back if sold, and we're going to have that in our contract. He thinks in all fairness we will have to come up with some

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agreement as to how long that equipment is valuable, noting Shirley is very easy to work with. He also noted we will not have an intern this year.

Adam noted there's a lot going on nationally with fiber, and all that money is hitting the pike at the same time, so realistically things may move a little slower due to demand. Linda thanked John and the committee for what's coming up on three years of work.

### b. Green Space

Adam said they received a letter outlining what the committee believes to be the final solution re: the Coggins Hill property. Jay said it was from August. The board has to decide whether to just put an easement on it and not give it to a land trust, or put it out to the voters. Jay noted the committee was split three to three. He believes the town should keep control of the property and not give it to a third party. Brief discussion followed.

Linda said we need to make sure it's understood that with a third party we lose control, it will cost as she recalled \$12,000, and is permanent whereas if we keep it for ourselves we have control. Consensus was put it on the agenda for next meeting. Jay will let the committee know.

### c. Sestercentennial

Martha said plans are moving ahead. They'll have more hats in the next few weeks. She will get prices on t-shirts and have those done up. The big thing now is getting volunteers, a list including who wants to do what. She encouraged anyone interested to email [unionme250@gmail.com](mailto:unionme250@gmail.com) and leave a phone number. Opportunities include directing traffic, selling merchandise, photographing activities, assisting with the parade, helping with children's activities, parking cars, set up/tear down, and more.

Wayne said they should consider having the parade going to the front side of the fairgrounds, as they will not be able to shut down 235. He talked to the fire department, and they will not have the manpower nor will anybody from the state police help shut it down.

Jay said the original concept was to go down there and he advised against it. He also said volunteers for traffic control will need training.

In answer to Adam, Martha said she will find out if the Sestercentennial is going to need funding for anything not already earmarked, so they can get that in the budget for the April meetings. She is also getting an accounting of what's been spent already. Jay said he asked for it two weeks ago.

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Jay said there is now a \$9,500 balance. Martha said a lot will go to the parade, adding that bandstand repair is @ \$2,400 which Tidewater may sponsor.

Linda said she is doing a chicken barbecue fundraiser for the Sestercentennial in May, probably the second weekend. In answer to Martha, she said Easter breakfast is on Easter morning. Martha said the Sestercentennial Committee will be set up there, and she expects to have more hats at that point.

Erik mentioned Sestercentennial events that will be going on at the Union school.

### d. Ambulance Advisory

Jay said their budget is done. They will start meeting again and are trying to recruit new members from Appleton and Washington, as well as he thinks one from Union. Adam said re: Jesse's monthly report, calls have been up almost 20% in the last year just here, with call volume increasing annually.

### e. Thompson Working Group

Jay said we may have an answer by the end of this week or some time next week. They did an extensive walk through with a developer led by Abe who knows the building. Wayne confirmed a letter of intent; Jay said they have to sign an agreement to work with the committee in the next few weeks, and we should have numbers in another week – a general idea of if they can make money on it. Wayne confirmed they went through the whole building (including brick). Jay said they have not requested the brick building at this time.

## 10. Select Board Report:

Wayne said he had fun storytelling. It was the biggest crowd by double Martha said. Wayne encouraged people to do it if they get the opportunity. Martha said Argy does not have another one planned but has a lot of names, and there are a lot more stories out there. Adam said his father thoroughly enjoyed it. He added the only (other) time you get those stories is at funerals.

Wayne also said he will be gone April 10 through 15 re: budget meetings.

Adam said he is bummed to see Matt leave public works. Being on one of those dirt roads they have put a lot of material work in. His road is passable which has not been the case in years past.

Jim brought up Clark Field. Jay said Nathan Northrop is putting in non-pines, as pines tend not to grow with really wet feet, for DEP stuff – part is ours, part is Steel-Pro's. He and Mr. Kennedy will measure it and figure out the percentages.

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**11. Adjourn:**

Motion by: Jim Justice  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo  
Secretary