

# MINUTES

**SELECT BOARD/ASSESSORS' MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022  
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, and Josh White

**Others present:** Jay Feyler (Town Manager), Greg Grotton, John Gibbons, Erik Amundsen, John Mountainland, Zach Fowler, Gail Hawes, 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**

Adam read aloud a letter addressed to Chief Kevin Soule, Union Fire Department, from Bruce Cobb. He and his wife Sherry expressed thanks for the prompt, well-organized, and reassuring response to a recent chimney fire.

Zach Fowler presented his idea to donate and have built a big chess set on the Common, like the one in Rockport. Discussion included platform vs. poured slab, maintenance, how to prevent chess pieces from disappearing, location as the Common is used for many different events, and possibly adding a big checkers set. The upshot, articulated by Adam, was that Zach will put together prices and an exact location idea, mindful that in the long term we're not creating a problem: "Keep the Common the Common, but great idea if you don't mind doing the legwork."

- 4. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, April 26, 2022:**

Motion by: Jim Justice  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
3-0-1 abstention (White)

- Approve Minutes of Tuesday, May 3, 2022:**

Motion by: Josh White  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
4-0

**Select Board Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2022**

**5. Approve Treasurer’s Warrants dated Tuesday, May 17, 2022:**

Motion by: Josh White  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
4-0

**6. Confirmation by the SB of the Town Manager Ballot Clerk Appointments:**

Motion by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Jim Justice  
4-0

**7. Confirmation of the Town Clerk’s appointment of Gregory Grotton as Warden and Elmer Savage as Deputy Warden:**

Motion by: Josh White  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Jim Justice  
4-0

**8. Discussion and vote on dates for a special town meeting to replace a SB member:**

Discussion included pros and cons of a shortened time period vs. a regular time period (filing deadline 60 days before the election vs. 14 days), upcoming work before the board including TCC, staff workload, and potential deadlock with a four-member board.

Motion to proceed with a shortened period of time for filling the Select Board seat vacated by Bill Lombardi as fast as possible by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Jim Justice  
4-0

**9. Approve and Sign the Town Warrant with recommendation on Article 36:**

Adam read aloud Article 36, pertaining to scholarships from six funds in different amounts totaling \$49,338.41.

Motion by: Jim Justice  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Josh White  
4-0

**10. Approve and Sign the School Warrant:**

Motion by: Josh White  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
4-0

## Select Board Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2022

### 11. Nomination of LPC candidate:

This regards the Legislative Policy Committee. Jay said we have two members from every district; they make recommendations on anything affecting municipal government, then MMA lobbyists back up their positions from schools to police. Jay has been doing it for several years, a two-year term.

Motion to nominate Jay Feyler for the LPC at MMA by: Martha Johnston-Nash  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Josh White  
4-0

Jay noted this also has to be approved by everybody in the district.

### 12. Town Manager's Report:

Jay said the paving is done on Clarry Hill Road up to the stop sign (shim), and Rabbit Farm Road (overlay). Clarry Hill will get chip sealed later this year. In front of Jim's house and up the road from him, they have to dig out a piece for drainage probably in the fall, then will have to wait to chip seal it another year. They will do shouldering soon.

Someone ran over another bench on the Common. If we ever collect the insurance monies, we'll be able to purchase some new benches which is probably something we should consider next year with Parks and Recreation. The old benches were rehabbed about five years ago. In answer to Adam, Jay said we don't yet have a court date for the previous mishap.

### 13. Other Business: None.

### 14. Committee Reports:

#### a. Broadband

John Gibbons said the committee met with LCI last week. LCI's view of the next grant opportunity is the broadband component of the infrastructure act funding that was approved in Washington last November – a \$1trillion program with \$42 billion for network expansion nationwide channeled through the states. These grants will be administered by the Maine Connectivity Authority; ConnectME is dissolving. MCA expects to be ready to open the grant application window in October. LCI is committed to submitting an application for Union in that window – at least the same scope as they submitted to ConnectME, aimed at bringing broadband to the 250 or so Union addresses with no broadband options at all, perhaps even broader. They are considering doing this with other towns also, and they are a small company; the principals have scheduled offsite sessions in the next week or so to decide how much they can take on.

## Select Board Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2022

LCI strongly encouraged the committee to continue the effort of morphing into an expanded role partly with LCI working with townspeople in making sure the rollout of the expanded network goes smoothly with the town. Details to come. Since they value this, it creates a bargaining chip for the town addressing certain issues expected to come up when the grant comes in and the work begins.

There has been a lot of information in broadband forums about what will happen under this infrastructure program. Bottom line is, due to the amounts of money, there will be a lot requirements, guidelines, restrictions, etc. levied on the states out of Washington. That will require a lot of effort to get on top of as well as working with a new grant administration, MCA. The committee will play a role.

Another \$14 billion will go to states to supplement monthly payments for low-income families, something that's been high on the committee's list of issues for the last year. This is being discussed with LCI, who also brought up connection equality.

The basic plan is still in place.

Adam added where before we were looking at doing just the unserved areas with a Phase 2, they're now looking to more of a whole enchilada right off the bat which is exciting and means more federal dollars coming into town. Also, they are absolutely designing their networks for gigabyte-to-the-home service which would provide a future-proof kind of infrastructure for the town going forward.

- b. Aging in Place in Union – None.
- c. Future of the Thompson Community Center

Martha said they met two weeks ago. They reviewed Gail's presentation and made notes. Gail said it has been through various versions and outlined the committee's plan for the public hearing. Jay urged people to send questions beforehand.

- d. Green Space

Josh said they met two weeks ago. Bill Bixby, Treasurer of Georges Valley Land Trust, spoke as someone who had put his land in conservancy. He said working with GVLТ was quite easy; he could set up pretty much whatever he wanted to do or not do, such as leaving out a small chunk of land where his house is so he can still build a barn, etc. He can still farm, timber harvest, plant, etc. on the protected rest of the property as long as it's within conservancy parameters.

In answer to Adam, Josh said they don't yet know if there is a ROW and are kind of at a standstill without a survey. Adam reminded the survey is a warrant item.

## Select Board Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2022

### e. TMA Report

At the last TMA meeting he got a new price on getting the fire alarm system up to code: \$9,400 from Eastern Fire, a third of what Seacoast wanted. All the exit signs and emergency lighting are up and running. The only big hurdle is the alarm system. They still have activity: basketball clinics, Little League, fair this Saturday, etc.

In answer to Jim's inquiry about fire alarm system numbers, Erik said Seacoast wanted to rewire the whole thing and bring it up to today's code. According to the Fire Marshal all we needed was to repair the existing system because we're grandfathered. If it changes ownership, then you have to go back. With Seacoast we could also get rid of the landline which costs \$40 a month.

Martha said the thrift shop is going well, \$300 to \$400 a week.

Erik said they got dropped by Liberty Insurance. They notified him. He called the broker at Allen, Karen Reed. She said she'd check it out and later said we're all set. Martha went to pay the bill, and they said we're cancelled. We have another carrier now. Karen said we were cancelled due to derogatory comments about the building on social media; they figured it's too much liability. They cannot cancel you just by cancelling you – they have to send a certified letter, which no one ever got, so we will contest it with the insurance commission. Erik noted they had previously done a virtual inspection. Jay confirmed we received no cancellation nor notice of new insurance as additionally insured. Erik will check on the latter.

### 15. Select Board Reports:

Martha noted the board has one more meeting before Josh retires. She would like to see him stay on the Green Space Committee. Josh said that's his plan. He added it's more than the Coggins Hill issue – hundreds of acres here in town could be a fabulous thing for residents and nonresidents alike. We could have an incredible park system here.

Adam has been very impressed with the school lately.

### 16. Future Agenda Requests:

Martha brought up Stephanie Turner's gazebo request. Jay said she hasn't gotten back to him on this. He found the Common area and the gazebo are in the historic registry, and his reading was that you cannot permanently change the appearance.

**Select Board Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2022**

**17. Adjourn:**

Motion by: Jim Justice

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Josh White

4-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo  
Secretary