

MINUTES

**SELECT BOARD/ASSESSORS' MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2024
WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM
ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE ON TOWN HALL STREAMS
6:30 p.m.**

Select Board present: Wayne Kirkpatrick, Adam Fuller, Martha Johnston-Nash, Steve Migliorini, and Linda Mountainland

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

1. Call Select Board Meeting to Order: at 6:37 p.m. by Adam Fuller

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Open Public Hearing on November 5th Warrant Articles:

Motion by: Martha Johnston-Nash

2nd by: Steve Migliorini

5-0

4. Close Public Hearing on November 5th Warrant Articles:

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash

5-0

5. Approve Minutes of Tuesday, October 1, 2024:

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Linda Mountainland

5-0

6. Approve Treasurer's Warrants Tuesday, October 15, 2024:

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Linda Mountainland

5-0

Select Board Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2024

7. Confirm Town Clerk's Election Workers:

Motion to confirm the town clerk's appointment of the wardens and ballot clerks by:
Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Linda Mountainland
5-0

8. Other Business:

Jay said political signs must have a name on them, a contact phone number, and date they were put up. Commercial signs are not allowed in any ROWs. About 20 signs are sitting at the town garage right now if anyone is missing one. He reminded we (the town) are agents of the state so can remove the signs. Erik Amundsen mentioned defaced political signs. Adam said he appreciates people taking their signs down the day after the election. Jay said he appreciates people following the rules.

9. Town Manager Report: None.

10. Public Comment:

Abraham Knight brought up a former meeting about a cell tower.

11. Committee Reports:

a. Broadband

John Gibbons said things continue to move smoothly with the expansion. They are completing those scheduled for installation right now and will have almost two-thirds of them completed within a few weeks. Tidewater is beginning to focus on the take rate now. They have approximately 30% of those eligible. The grant money has to be spent by a certain date.

John also mentioned a community event that South Bristol (one of the three towns covered by this grant: Union, South Bristol, Newcastle) had a few weeks ago with Tidewater reps. Tidewater has asked us to do the same. John said he doubted we would have such a big turnout, as we are way ahead of South Bristol in the actual implementation of the network. People know what's going on. But we are looking into it and will probably help put together an event like that.

Adam noted this has been a long multi-year process, and Tidewater has been an amazing partner. He would like the whole board to attend if we have such an event. Martha said it was a great idea, and Washington did one. Adam mentioned informing older residents about the difference between fiber and DSL. Martha said it can be hard to know sometimes what questions to ask. Consensus was go ahead with the community event.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2024

b. Resiliency

Steve said there will be a public forum on November 13. Adam said this is essentially about going after grants, trying to harden the community against climate change, natural disasters, etc. and trying to be more efficient which we have already begun (heat pumps, efficient Public Works building, solar, LED streetlights, etc.). A big part will be our roads. Jay pointed out a list of 72 items that they went through over two meetings.

Jay said the purpose of the forum is that under the grant you have to get information from the public. Then the committee will make a decision based on that and present it to the select board to vote on to accept. He (Dan from MCOG) will then send in the grant application by approximately December 15. Adam clarified the forum is part of the requirement of the application.

In answer to Ellen Harrison about the town manager's role, Jay said there were some issues that only he could answer – what we've done in the past, what we've worked on – and that is all done. It just comes down to the decisions from the citizens and the committee. In answer to Adam, Steve said Tracy Weed is chair and John Shepard is vice chair.

c. Thompson Working Group

Jay said he sent a message out Monday. She (Chris from Essex Preservation) is still waiting on the state. He thinks it is taking so long because there are some disagreements going on. She is doing her part, following up regularly with them.

12. Select Board Report:

Linda said they raised \$700 for Fire/Rescue. The wind was awful. It was Pumpkinfest. Those who came had a good time, and the DJ was great. She is planning a chicken barbecue at the end of May/first of June. Steve did a great job with the hot dogs and hamburgers. She thanked Becky, Debbie, and Joyce Grotton for serving as well as Becky, Tim Wood, and Nicole – and last but not least, John Mountainland. Round of applause. Martha said she appreciated Linda doing the fundraiser.

Adam thanked Jay for everything he's done. He noted Union is on a huge upswing, growing faster than we've ever grown, with more businesses coming to town, and trending younger for the first time in any of our lifetimes – a product of what Jay has done in the last decade and a half. He said Jay did it for all the right reasons and leaves extremely hard shoes to fill. He will keep an eye out for a dedication target in the future. He reminded that Jay has been involved in much more in town than being town manager.

Wayne thanked Jay as well, noting he is a phone call away which is awesome. He echoed Adam: big holes to fill when he leaves. He is glad Jay is not moving anywhere.

Select Board Meeting Minutes – October 15, 2024

Jay gave remarks ahead of his retirement, including:

Over the years he has received two awards from our Maine Association, the Leadership Award in 2016 and the Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year Award last August. He mentioned the teamwork of committee members and staff members. He talked about his preference for right-down-the-middle facts without anything skewed, and his faith in the public's intelligence and their right to decide, which has led to getting things done and respect from people.

He also said people expect more from a town office now than ever before. He urged fighting against political divide which has reached local government. He said home rule is important, adding that the State of Maine is doing things to local municipalities that violates home rule. He warned if nobody talks to their representatives about local control, you are going to lose it. It us up to the citizens, he said, to keep your government running and keep it running as a democracy; if you don't participate, it's not going to happen.

He thanked his current board and all the former select boards who have supported and encouraged him along the way. He mentioned Lyle Cramer. Jay said his future plans include serving as the Senior ambassador for the state of Maine for Maine Town City Managers, and the Senior Advisor for ICMA (International City Managers). He has had many job offers and will see about something remote a couple days a week. He said he wants to get back to the normal Jay before government. Applause and standing ovation.

John Gibbons said he doubts Jay will be any better at retirement than he is.

Adam noted Abe brought cake and the whole setup. They have nothing yet to announce about Jay's replacement but expect a press release coming pretty soon, to be shared with staff then out to Christine for the paper. He asked for patience as it's in the works.

13. With gratitude and cheers to Mr. Feyler:

Motion to adjourn by: Jay Feyler
2nd by: Linda Mountainland
5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary