

MINUTES

**SELECT BOARD/ASSESSORS' MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 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), Ellen Harrison, John Gibbons, John Mountainland, 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, September 17, 2024:**

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash

Linda had a couple of corrections: she should be listed as present; and under Public Comment, reverse the names “Linda” and “Martha” re: tax bill discussion.

Amended motion to approve with the above changes by: Wayne Kirkpatrick
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

- 4. Approve Treasurer’s Warrants Tuesday, October 1, 2024:**

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick
2nd by: Martha Johnston-Nash
5-0

- 5. Open public hearing on General Assistance:**

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick
2nd by: Steve Migliorini
5-0

Jay said every October the Department of Health and Human Services along with MMA updates the ordinance that we use, the MMA model ordinance. There were some changes

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in state law, and more importantly it's all the maximums (rental, heat, food, etc.) which are updated every year. The board is required to accept those updates.

He added there is an alternative: you can do your own research, try to sell your own numbers, and DHHS probably won't approve it. Municipalities have tried. They are not realistic numbers, but they are the numbers they give us. People say they can't live on that. He suggested talking to your representatives.

In answer to Ellen Harrison, Adam said there are maximums towards each aspect (rental, food, etc.) as well as for the total expenditure, and there are limits on what they qualify for. John Gibbons confirmed that this only limits what we can do with the state General Assistance. Re: the Union Assistance Fund, there is no state interference.

6. Close public hearing on General Assistance:

Motion by: Martha Johnston-Nash

2nd by: Steve Migliorini

5-0

7. Vote to approve updated General Assistance Ordinance:

Motion that we approve the updated General Assistance Ordinance and appendices by:

Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Steve Migliorini

5-0

8. Discussion and approval of updated personnel policy:

Adam noted the board has seen it. Martha had questions. Jay said this is done through the attorney – there are a lot of new laws, new federal laws. They still have to do the ruling on the new leave policy, so next year there will be that one quick change. He added our benefit plan is better than what the state passed.

Brief discussion included Martha reviewing her questions with answers, on such topics as employee classification, paid breaks, sick pay accumulation up to five years, and fire rescue getting more vacation time than regular employees. Jay clarified the latter concerned paramedic benefits. Martha said she appreciated the time, effort, and research. Jay noted a lot of the staff was involved in this.

Motion to approve the updated personnel policy by: Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Linda Mountainland

5-0

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9. Set Public Hearing on November Town Warrant Articles:

Jay said it's just the two articles and suggested having the public hearing at the regular meeting on the 15th. He will probably do a video this weekend. Martha noted it's the last select board meeting before the election.

Motion to approve October 15 for the public hearing on the November warrant articles
by: Martha Johnston-Nash
2nd by: Wayne Kirkpatrick
5-0

Ellen Harrison confirmed the warrant articles will be on the website. Jay said the October 15 public hearing, followed by the select board meeting, will begin at 6:30 p.m.

10. Other Business: None.

11. Town Manager Report:

Jay said he hopes to have the audit by next week. As soon as we get it the board will get it, and it will go up on the website. The 2024 audit started two weeks ago and will be finished some time after the first of the year.

He said we got insurance for the TCC -- \$19,000, about double what it was last year. We are committed to pay half of that no matter what. In answer to Adam, he said it's one payment and if we cancel it within six months he assumes we get half back. He said he wished we had an answer (from the state re: historic tax credits). He added no one wants to insure an empty building, and there's a list of issues.

Re: TCC, Jay said he sent out some information. The lady from the state was here on Friday and did a walkaround. Christine talked to her. He said at the previous time he would say we were leaning to the positive side, that we were going to get historic tax credits. He would say it's gone the other side now, not necessarily due to the interior layout but more the whole "holistic historic integrity." It's pretty much that not enough of the building is still intact. The other guy who does it is on vacation this week. It should be another week or two. The board will find out as soon as he does. Adam confirmed that Jay was talking about Chris from Essex, who Jay said is doing her part to push it.

He said he came back from the ICMA conference in Pittsburgh last week. He suggested thinking about digitizing our records at some point and putting them online. Adam confirmed there are tons of software companies for this, all subscription. Brief discussion followed.

Jay also brought up Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets. The board agreed to have him contact Tabby upstairs to help, and he will confirm with Martha at the Common Market.

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12. Public Comment:

Martha said someone keeps asking about the guardrail in East Union. Jay said he has not had a conversation with the state about it. The last he knew they were still working on erosion, etc. from last spring. He will ask about it when he meets with a guy about getting a flashing stop sign by the post office and will report back.

13. Committee Reports:

a. Broadband

John Gibbons said things are moving ahead with the fiber expansion. They are completely focused on making the connections for those who have applied, a long process. There are two types of connections, aerial and underground. The conduit connections (underground) are by far the most complicated. They are making a focused effort to clear up all the conduit connections now, to get them out of the way. The bottom line is things are moving really smoothly.

John also said they are trying to establish a means for two-way communication between the committee and the citizens. To that end they've made some extensive mods to the broadband committee page on the town website. Stacey did a great job. There is a provision in there now for people to contact the committee just by clicking, which thanks to Jay (his idea) opens up a gmail template for filling in contact information. It's been up and running for a week now. They have high hopes for it. It will be very valuable to get that process working both ways: to push information out to the citizens, and to pull questions for the committee, comments on experiences, etc.

He said they are also focusing very heavily on the remaining portion of the town that is not going to have access to fiber at the time this process is completed. Most of those will have at least cable. About 100 will have neither and be reliant on radio solutions which can be pretty good. Bottom line: we're getting there. The board thanked John.

b. Resiliency

Jay said they meet next Wednesday.

c. Thompson Working Group – Above, #11.

14. Select Board Report:

Linda reminded that the date of the Fire/Rescue fundraiser is October 12, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Christine is helping her put something in the paper.

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She also said Warren (select board) is getting together with their school board tomorrow at 6:15 p.m. if anyone wants to observe. Waldoboro is supposed to have theirs soon.

She also said thanks for the Coast Guard post on the website, adding the Coast Guard person thanked her.

Jay said re: Clarry Hill, the adjuster for their insurance company is coming tomorrow. A Maine Municipal attorney probably reached out to them, and they decided they would file a claim. We'll probably settle on it next week some time.

Jay said he has one (select board) meeting left. Adam asked if he had any requests. "Short," Jay replied.

15. Adjourn:

Motion by: Wayne Kirkpatrick

2nd by: Linda Mountainland

5-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo
Secretary