



Town of South Thomaston, Maine
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Selectboard:
John Spear
Jeff Northgraves
Sue Snow

Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Date: January 10, 2023, 6:00 PM at the Municipal Building
Items Are Often Taken Out of Order to Accommodate Schedules

Rev 0

Note: A listing as present does not denote attendance for the entire meeting.

Selectboard Present: John Spear, Jeff Northgraves, Sue Snow

Others Present: Terri-Lynn Baines, Interim Fire Chief David Elwell, Bryan Calderwood, Ed Colson, Brandon Colson, Pennie Alley, Cliff Dacso, Sondra Wallace, Via zoom Betty Thomas, Walter Reitz, Steve Betts, Jake Miller, John Koffel

I. Call to Order

Spear called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. Adjustments to Agenda

Discussion on the Hopkins Scholarships awarded.
Consideration of two new hires – Fire Department.
Tennis and Basketball Court update.
Community Resilience Partnership

III. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

There was no public comment.

IV. Review and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (December 13th and 21st 2022)

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the minutes of December 13th and 21st.

Motion passed 3-0.

V. Old Business

a. Consideration of a New Hire- Ambulance Director

Deputy Ambulance Director David Elwell introduced Dakota Elwell. Dakota Elwell lives in Rockland with his wife and daughter. He lobsters out of Spruce Head. Elwell would like to be hired as a driver for the South Thomaston Ambulance Service. He has passed the basic EMT class through Amy Drinkwater and is waiting to take the written exam.

Snow moved and Northgraves second a motion to approve the hiring of Dakota Elwell as an ambulance driver.

Motion passed 3-0.

b. Discussion Re: Second Tranche of ARPA Funds

There was no discussion at this time.

c. Discussion Re: DOT Denial of Reduced Speed Zone Request on Rt 73 @ Southern Entrance to Waterman Beach Road

Spear gave a brief update on his discussion with David Allen. MDOT doesn't allow both chevrons and a reduced speed zone. If the Selectboard chooses to have the speed limit reduced in this area, the chevrons wouldn't be taken down, but if they come down the State would not put them back up. The Selectboard discussed having a reduced speed limit or the chevrons.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to ask for a reduced speed limit.

Motion passed 3-0.

d. Update on Tennis and Basketball Courts

Spear submitted the revised proposal. Doug Beck felt it looked good, and the proposal should be approved. Beck recommended putting a bid form together to be ready to send the project out to bid. Spear will work on this.

VI. New Business

a. Consideration of Two New Hires- Fire Department

Ed Colson would like to rejoin the Fire department. Colson works in Camden and is eager to help however he can. He was previously on the department four or five years ago. He took Fire Fighter and Fire Fighter 2 training but is not certified.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the hiring of Ed Colson.

Motion passed 3-0.

Brandon was on the Fire Department for four or five years. He does not have Fire Fighter 1 or Fire Fighter 2 credentials, but would like to work towards them.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to approve the hiring of Brandon Colson.

Motion passed 3-0.

b. Discussion Re: Storage of Solid Waste and Junk Notice of Enforcement Letter

The Board discussed the draft letter. Baines has a list of 19 proposed properties.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorize the Interim CEO to send the initial contact letter to the 19 "junk yards" identified.

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard discussed that this Ordinance was overwhelmingly approved at the Town meeting.

c. Consider Mowing Bids

The Selectboard reviewed the 2 bids received. One bid was from Wilson Construction for \$14,000 for one year only. Wilson Construction is the Town's current mower. The second bid is from Bryan Calderwood for \$24,000 each year for three years.

The Selectboard discussed the two bids and damage to stones in the cemeteries this year caused by mowers. Calderwood discussed his bid with the Selectboard.

The Selectboard also discussed the mowing contract with the Cemetery Overseer.

The Selectboard would like more information from both bidders.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to table until the next meeting.

Motion passed 3-0.

d. Discussion Re: Proposal by Local Health Officer to Use Stipend to Fund Water Testing for Residents

There was a brief discussion on needing to pay the Local Health Officer for insurance purposes.

The Selectboard and Dacso discussed how a fund would be administered if a fund was set up to pay for the water testing, how would it be decided who receives the funding? First come first serve, or income test? This would be a difficult fund for the Town to administer. There was a suggestion that the money could be donated to the Knox County Clinic and the Clinic could administer the fund.

Dacso and the Selectboard discussed potential issues with well water. Radon and arsenic are both found in well water. Radon is a lung cancer risk. A basic arsenic test for well water is about \$40 as is a basic radon test. This cost is out of the reach of some people. Dacso plans to donate his stipend back to the town for the use of well water testing. Dacso is paid \$500 a quarter.

Dacso will talk with the Knox County Clinic to see if the Clinic would be interested in administering the program. There was a brief discussion on setting up a fund for the local health officer to have for public health events, for example flu vaccines. Also discussed was different water tests and where water tests are conducted.

Are there grants for water systems like the overboard discharge system.

Health Officer needs to be on the payroll. The Health Officer will be paid \$50 a quarter and the balance will be donated to a water test fund.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to table this until the January 24th meeting.

Motion passed 3-0.

e. Discussion Re: Possible Joint Selectboard Meeting with Owls Head

Spear talked with Owls Head Selectboard member Gordon Page regarding the boards sitting down and having a wide ranging chat.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to meet with the Owls Head Selectboard in a workshop.

Motion passed 3-0.

f. Discussion Regarding Tax Acquired Properties

The Town tax acquired two parcels, due to non-payment of the 2020 tax lien. 6 Field street (M 15 L 29-003) and 7.5 acres on the St. George Road (M16 L 009-001).

The Selectboard discussed insuring the tax acquired property on Field Street.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorize Baines to put insurance on 6 Field street.

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard discussion following the past practice of offering the tax acquired property back to the former owners. A letter to be sent to the former owners was reviewed. The Selectboard discussed different options for selling back the property to the former owners. There could be a contract and payments could be over a time period, all three delinquent years (taxes, interest and cost) could be required to be paid, or the former owners could pay the 2020 tax lien amount (taxes, interest and costs), but the town would not release the 2021 and 2022, liens.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorize Baines to send the draft letter to the former owners, offering to sell the property back to them for the principal, interest and costs of the year 2020 by January 30th.

Motion passed 3-0.

There was a discussion on the delivery process. The letter will be sent through regular mail, certified mail and hand delivered.

g. Discussion Re: Relocating the Warming Shelter to the Gilford Butler Center

A small generator would not run the pump at Gilford Butler, therefore water and toilets would not be able to be used.

The Selectboard discussed having a warming shelter at the Town Office temporarily until the new generator can be hooked up at the Gilford Butler Center. The EMA director and the Interim Fire Chief both agree this is a good solution.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to move the warming shelter from the Little Red School House to the Municipal Building.

Motion passed 3-0.

h. Review Expenses and Revenues 1st and 2nd Quarter

The Selectboard discussed the 1st and 2nd quarter revenues and expenses. Briefly discussed was the homestead exemption reimbursement and budgeting it in the upcoming year.

i. Possible Appointment to Library and Community Center Facility Committee

The Selectboard did not receive a recommendation from the Committee.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to table.

Motion passed 3-0.

j. Consider Accepting a Donation to the Ambulance Service

Richard Waldron donated \$100 to the Ambulance Service.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to accept a \$100 donation from Richard Waldron to the Ambulance Service.

Motion passed 3-0.

k. Discussion on Hopkins Scholarships Awarded

Baines explained she received a copy of the award letter, 1st semester grades and second semester class schedule from both Scholarship recipients. The award letter states the recipient must have a GPA of 2.5 for the first semester of college in order to receive the scholarship. Both recipients have a GPA slightly below 2.5.

There is not a requirement in Mr. Hopkins will that the recipient must have a GPA 2.5 or above. Baines checked with Snow who handles the scholarships at Oceanside. Snow stated this was not a requirement for other scholarships at Oceanside. It was decided the scholarship awards could be paid out for both recipients. The checks will be sent directly to the colleges.

l. Community Resilience Committee

Alley asked Baines to pass a request from the Community Resilience Partnership on to the Selectboard.

The Committee is looking for data compiled of information on energy used for municipal operations. Baines will be the contact.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to authorized Baines to authorize the study.

Motion passed 3-0.

m. Discussion Re: CEO/LPI Resumes (Possible Executive Session)

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to enter into Executive Session Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) a Personnel Matter.

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:16.

The Selectboard exited executive session at 8:35.

The Selectboard took no action on applicants received.

Baines will continue as Interim CEO.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to increase her salary \$5000 annually effective January 1, 2023 and that the extra money come from the wages of the CEO.

Motion passed 3-0

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion that in recognition of Phil Verrill's increased duties as site manager for the demo debris facility he receive starting January 1, 2023 a weekly stipend of \$25 to come from the facility managers line.

Motion passed 3-0

n. Discussion Re: Fire Chief Appointment (Possible Executive Session)

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to enter into Executive Session Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) a Personnel Matter.

Motion passed 3-0.

The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:42 pm.

The Selectboard exited executive session at 8:15.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to promote and appoint David Elwell as Fire Chief until the first selectboard meeting following the Town meeting in June 2023 and he will receive the Fire Chief stipend.

Motion passed 3-0.

VII. Correspondence

a. Letter from The First Re: Banking Services

The Selectboard reviewed the letter from the First.

The Selectboard agrees if the Town changes banks it should go out to bid.

Jake Miller spoke of the interest increases the First has put into place.

He proposed putting our reserve/trust funds into cd's.

There was a brief discussion on not having a TAN allowing more investment opportunities.

The Selectboard discussed putting the reserve/ trusts funds out for an RFP to all area banks.

Baines would look into what is out there for cd rates for the reserves with all local banks.

b. Letter from Machias Savings Bank Re: Banking Services

The Selectboard reviewed the Machias Savings Bank letter.

c. Letter from WCAP Re: Funding Request

The Selectboard reviewed the funding request.

d. Letter from Knox Clinic Re: Funding Request

Dacso said this is a general solicitation going to many Towns.

It has been the town's practice not to donate to non-profits , but it can be put on the town meeting warrant by petition.

Cliff Dacso discussed the letter with the Selectboard.

e. Letter from Knox County Sheriff's Office Re: Letter of Support Request

The Selectboard reviewed the request.

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to send a letter in support of Sheriff Polky's request.

Motion passed 3-0.

f. Spirit of America

The Selectboard reviewed the letter, but took no action.

VIII. Warrants Review and Approval

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the warrants.

IX. Schedule Future Meetings

January 24

February 14 and February 28

Workshop with the Owls Head Selectboard, date to be determined.

XI. Adjourn

Northgraves moved and Snow seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:38.

Motion passed 3-0.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89414118865?pwd=WENyQW5acjVUUHdHZFN2MGUvbmIFQT09>

Meeting ID: 894 1411 8865

Passcode: 930365

Selectboard approved 1/24/2023