

MINUTES

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN HALL**

**December 4, 2023
6:30 PM**

ATTENDEES:

Select board members: Leon Rideout, Shane Beattie, Kathy-Jean Lavoie
Others in Attendance: Town Manager Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Charity Baker, Michael Nadeau, Department Heads, Members of the Public, Phlume Media

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Selectman Leon Rideout

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES:

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Timmy Bilodeau reported they repaired a couple small water leaks. They cleaned out the bulk storage tanks and are getting caught up on building maintenance. Kathy-Jean asked Timmy if he would like to move forward with the policies regarding digging in the streets and requiring bonds from contractors until projects are complete. Timmy mentioned he has something drafted but not in final form to be approved at this time.

Timmy mentioned the person that tests the back flow preventers in town will no longer be doing the testing. Timmy will work on finding another company/person that is certified to test them.

Transfer Station Supervisor Rusty Scott mentioned he contacted the new bag supplier to request some samples and discuss with Tricia Frenette whether to move forward with them.

Land Use Coordinator Robin Irving reported the planning board made the decision to revoke the site plan for Benoit at their last meeting. Mr. Benoit hired a recycle company to take out a couple loads and has hired a crusher.

She has also been working on the housing amendments to the zoning ordinance and preparing for the required public hearings.

The planning board will be reviewing the application for a major site plan review form Zack Colby at 212 Main Street for a pre-order/pick-up and 8 table seating sandwich shop.

Tech Pros has removed the banner that was hung on the Welcome Center sign and he has filed a special exception application to add a new sign.

Robin is working with the company putting in the new EV charging stations at Jiffy which were started without any permits. She is considering adding a condition to the permit approval to require them to provide training to the Fire & EMS departments regarding the units.

The town was not awarded any money from the Drinking Water Trust Fund. The project at this time is half funded. Kathy-Jean asked when Underwood's work will be done on the rates analysis. Robin mentioned they have been focusing more on the mapping part and she reminded them that the application stated the focus was on rates.

Highway Foreman Tim Brown was not able to attend because the crew was out working. Ben mentioned their focus at this time is plowing.

Commercial Building Permit Rate Increase – Robin is requesting the new commercial building permit fee be brought up at the same increment as the new residential building permits increase which would make it \$350 for new construction and all other classes will be the same at \$75. Kathy-Jean mentioned the \$350 would still be at the low end compared to surrounding communities.

Motion made by Kathy-Jean and seconded by Shane to increase the permit fee for new commercial construction to \$350 and all other commercial fees to \$75. All in favor. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF MINUTES: November 20, 2023

Motion made by Shane and seconded by Kathy-Jean to accept the November 20, 2023, budget work session minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion made by Shane and seconded by Kathy-Jean to accept the November 20, 2023, meeting minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.

SIGN VARIOUS PAPERWORK: The board signed the NHdra Assessment Data Certificate and the 2nd issue property tax warrant.

Curbside Bid Opening – Ben advertised for bids in the newspaper, the Town’s website and Facebook. He also sent letters to 3 providers - Wayno’s, D4 and Whittings. One bid was received from Wayno’s Disposal Service. D4 sent a letter thanking the town for considering them in the bidding process however they would not be submitting one at this time.

Wayno’s is a 3-year proposal –

- Year 1 - \$1,000 a week for a total of \$52,000
- Year 2 - \$1,050 a week for a total of \$54,600
- Year 3 - \$1,100 a week for a total of \$57,200

Motion made by Kathy-Jean and seconded by Shane to accept the 3-year bid from Wayno’s Disposal Service. All in favor. Motion carried.

Coos County Broadband – Ben mentioned in 2021 the County created their broadband committee and Lancaster was invited to participate, at that time it was not possible due to staffing. They have asked again if Lancaster would like to take part and participate on the committee. Robin and Ben both would like to participate and will bring info back to the board. Kathy-Jean inquired about the expectations of the group and Ben replied, he is not sure at this time. The first meeting will be in the upcoming week.

Motion made by Kathy-Jean and seconded by Shane to approve Lancaster joining the Coos County Broadband committee. All in favor. Motion carried.

SELECT BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:

Shane is going to connect with Charity to figure out the next steps for the tax deeded property on Depot Street that was owned by Paul Richardson.

Ben mentioned he reached out to Phil Beaulieu at DOT regarding the Mount Orne Bridge and what can be done to prevent trucks from entering it. The meeting is set for Wednesday. The company that repaired the Mechanic Street Bridge is hoping to get the repairs done between Christmas and New Year's.

Teri Anderson asked if there is something the town can possibly create an ordinance to assess fines that will go to the town to assist with the damages. Lucy Wyman mentioned there is a bridge Conway that has a barrier that doesn't take away from the look of the bridge. There was much discussion regarding different barriers that could be used.

Shane asked the status of Kent Fountain. Ben mentioned the company was having an issue with their equipment that moves large pieces of granite. He has a call into Barry to see if that equipment has been repaired and to get a new timeline.

INFORMATION:

Planning Board meeting notice for December 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Land Use Permits –

- Daniel Copson – 93 Elm Street
- D'Amico Associates/Bob Cummings – 485 Prospect Street

Sign Permits –

- Helrick Realty/Dunkin' – 198 Main Street

Coos County 2024 Proposed Budget

Special Primary Election – Ben reminded the board that the Special Primary Election is taking place on Tuesday, December 5th and a majority of them need to be present.

Ben mentioned before he wrote the letter to Lunenburg regarding their unpaid contract invoice a Selectman reached out about another topic and Ben mentioned he was going to be drafting a letter. The Selectman is going to look into the delay.

PUBLIC INPUT: Rob Christie mentioned there was controversy a few years back regarding town employees promoting candidates during work hours when there is a town policy against it and he feels that should also apply with promoting businesses as Ben has been doing with his hat and Leon does by wearing his VFW attire to public meetings.

He also wanted to know what is being done about the Troy Merner issue. He knows it is being handled at the State level but would like to know what is being done at the County or Town level. Leon mentioned the Attorney General's office is handling it and the board will see where that ends up.

Rob also wanted to mention the budget committee meeting is not advertised on the Town's website calendar and feels it is reasonable to add those to the calendar.

Rob would like to know what the delay is getting the tax rate. Leon mentioned there was a bit of a delay getting the numbers.

Lucy Wyman asked the board if they would consider a resolution or public statement to our government and representatives asking for a cease fire and to end the brutal slaughter of civilians in Gaza. Leon stated it is not the purview of the board to issue a Cease Fire Resolution. Lucy recognized it is not the in board’s purview.

Motion made by Shane and seconded by Kathy-Jean to adjourn. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Selectmen

Date: _____

Charity M. Baker

Leon Rideout

Shane Beattie

Kathy-Jean Lavoie