

Select Board Meeting Minutes

Date: January 10, 2023

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: Multi-Purpose Room/Zoom

Next Meeting: January 24, 2023

Minutes:

Present: Brian Haynes, Richard Doughty, Steve & Carol Conant, Laurie Pratt, Steve & Lolita Lambert, Lisa Miller, Stan Wilcox, Becky Durant

ON ZOOM – Dina Walker, Robert's ipad, Bob Dickson, Evan McIntire, Gary Herrick, Rick iPhone 13, Ted Theriault, Wendy, Barbie Castonguay, Mike, Joe, Rich Davol, Judy, Ted

Department Heads:

AGENDA ITEMS

NEW BUSINESS:

Public Works Staffing

- Quick summary of the current situation:

Richard gave a quick summary of our current situation with our Road Commissioner's departure.

- Short-term staffing:

Those who have stepped up to help were Dan Demers, Stan Wilcox, Brian Haynes and Eric Dunn. There were others who said that they would help if needed.

- Interim Road Commissioner:

In order for Public Works to move forward an Interim Road Commissioner is needed to be appointed.

Richard moved to officially appoint Dan Demers as the Interim Road Commissioner, all agreed.

- Posting for permanent Road Commissioner:

An edited version of the last Road Commissioner Job Opening was provided. Items that were added were the competitive wage, health insurance package and a timeline of having the applications in by January 26th.

Steve Conant suggested that a probationary clause or one to hold semi-annual reviews within the job description of the Road Commissioner be added. The job description should be detailed.

Dina said that would be added to the job description that is on file and have them sign it.

Carol was asked to post the job opening as soon as possible in the daily bulldog, the Towns website, MMA website, Mt Blue Garage, Skoolhouse Variety and list serve.

Stan asked if there was a way that the information that a candidate put on their job application could be verified. Brian said that the Town does do a background check on them, talk to their past employers or others who know them but you don't know if what they are telling you is true or not.

Richard said that he wanted to involve additional people in the interview process. He has had feedback from people in town asking of the qualifications of those hired in the past and would like to bring others into the hiring process who might better know the job and duties that may have a better background than the 3 of them. Brian has served us very well and works for DOT and knows what is involved with the job. Brian is not seeking re-election but said that he would be more than happy to help out. Lisa Miller is on the ballot running for Select Board to replace Brian and has indicated that she would be interested in being involved in the interview process. If elected Lisa would be working with the Road Commissioner.

Will discuss it more at a future Board Meeting.

Dina did remind us that the Town just recently gave the Board the authority to appoint the Road Commissioner and while it is good to have others involved, we should not make the process a habit or necessary for someone to sit in on an interview and giving 1 person more authority than others in Town but on a consultation basis, and not if that person does not show up they can't conduct interviews or anything like that. If it is to give the Board more insight then it is a good idea.

Richard said that he agreed and that he thought that it was up to the Select Board to appoint the Road Commissioner, it is their ultimate decision, others giving input to the Board is good.

2023 Budget Committee Recommendations

- Review of proposed 2023 Budget
Discussion of areas to change, (Northstar, Social Services, PW maintenance, PW Training)

Richard sent out a copy of the budget worksheets earlier in the week and both Dina and Brian have had a chance to go over them.

Richard said that the Budget Committee has proposed a budget that is over last years and is primarily is because of the increase made during the Special Town Meeting In

August increasing the Public Works hourly pay and health insurance package for all Town Employees that work at least 30 hours per week.

Richard said that there is not enough money in the Vehicle Equipment Maintenance & Repair account.

It was agreed by the Select board to increase the Vehicle Equipment Maintenance & Repair account from \$16,000 to \$20,000.

Training for Public Works: There is \$250 in Training. In a meeting with Dan Demers, the fact was that he needed to take the course for a CDL license and the cost being \$6,500. The Select board told Dan that when he became a Town Employee and passed his CDL test that as a Board they would cover ½ of the expense. They felt that it would be reasonable and legitimate to reimburse this out of training. There was not enough in the 2022 training to cover the cost so that upon completion of the course and a copy of his invoice he would be reimbursed out of the 2023 training budget.

The board increased the training budget to \$3,500

North Star Ambulance annual fee for 2023 has gone up. Richard has communicated with our local EMTS and asked about other Ambulances in our area. There is Med Care in Mexico, who Richard has spoken with and asked for a quote for coverage from them for the Town of Weld. Presently they are 12 Towns that Own and operate it. They are considering allowing other Towns to purchase coverage. Presently it cost \$15,000 for those Towns that own Med Care and would possibly cost \$19,000 if the Town of Weld was allowed to go under their present Ambulance Service Agreement, which is what we are paying presently. Med Care members will be meeting in March and will be able to give us an answer if Weld is allowed to get coverage from them and the cost. We will need to let North Star know of our decision by April 1.

2023 Warrant Articles

-Holiday Pay:

Select Board will make a policy to address State Holidays.

-Future pay increase linked to COLA:

The Budget Committee came up with the following articles for employee rate increases.

Article #?

To see if the town will vote to:

Annually implement a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for town employee compensation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The COLA will not increase if the annual CPI increase is less than ____%(1%?) and the COLA will be capped at no more than ____%(3%?).

Select Board and Budget Committee Recommendation:

CPI of 1% or less ____ (0%?) increase. CPI of ____ (3%?) or greater, capped at ____ (3%?).

Article#?

To see if the town will vote to:

Authorize the Select-board and Budget Committee to determine the pay range for each pay grade of personnel services positions in the municipality. The pay ranges will be based on a variety of factors, such as, experience, longevity, work ethic, etc. Pay Ranges will denote a starting compensation, a middle compensation and a maximum compensation for each Pay Grade or Position.

The Select-board and Budget Committee will prepare these pay ranges and present them to be voted on at the next annual town meeting To see if the Town will implement a Cost of Living Adjustment, COLA, for Town Employee compensation based on the consumer base index beginning in 2024.

- Future wage ranges by position:

It was felt that the Select Board should discuss pay wages and make recommendations to the Budget Committee

Richard explained that the raises were increased 3% except Public Works because they got a big bump in August.

After discussion on the Articles both Laurie and Becky, Budget Committee members felt that neither article should be put into the Town Warrant.

- Matrix Broadband Proposal - Final vote

Proposed Matrix Article:

Article XXX:

To see if the town will vote to decline the proposal from Matrix Design Group to enter into a private/public partnership to make "Fiber to the Home" broadband telecommunications services available to all 911 addresses in the town.

Recommended by the Select Board: Decline the proposal from the Matrix Design Group.

After discussing this article a vote was taken as to whether or not the Article should go into the Town Report.

Richard moved to include the Article in the Town Report so that the Townspeople may vote whether or not to agree to enter into a proposal from Matrix Design Group for "Fiber to the Home" broadband telecommunications services.

Brian 2nd the article: Brian and Richard vote to include the article in the report and Dina vote against including it.

1 FIRSTNET - Public Safety/Public Works:

Change from US Cellular to 1 FIRSTNET –

The cost with US Cellular is \$119.41 per month and before we can terminate the phones with US Cellular we need to buy out the Public Works phone at a cost of \$216.

FIRSTNET would provide a new Samsung X cover phone for a cost of \$.99, unlimited coverage is \$37.99 with a hotspot is \$39.99

Corey would like to change over to FIRSTNET with the hot spot.

There was a unanimous vote to change from US Cellular to FIRSTNET with the cost of \$39.99 with a hotspot.

FEMA - Report expenses from Dec 23rd storm:

Tim Hardy of Franklin County Emergency Management Agency is asking for storm related cost estimates on the December 23rd storm as well as damages that are still being worked on. They are seeming if there is enough damage that would qualify for re-imbursement. The estimates will need to be sent to Maine Emergency Management Association within the next couple of weeks. Richard has gotten amounts from Colleen from Public Work time sheets and will make contact with Corey to see what Public Safety has to turn in.

FEMA - Hazard Mitigation Planning workshop:

The Hazard Mitigation Plan Kickoff Meeting will be held at the Franklin County Superior Courtroom January 20th, 2023 @ 9:30AM., it is highly encouraged to attend in person. Richard plans to attend.

Fuel Oil Consumption Issues:

There seemed to be more fuel consumption at the Town Hall and Town Garage, however after Richard check in past records it seems that the fuel was used and measures are being taken to reduce the fuel consumption.

Respectfully submitted,



Carol J. Cochran
Town Clerk