

Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, October 2, 2023
Minutes

Called the meeting to Order at 5:30pm

1. **Quorum and meeting attendance** - E. Best, B. Smythe; S. Miller; S. Dooley; J. Atwell, Town Administrator; K. Herrick, Town Clerk; B. Adams, Road Commissioner; Justine Drake, Haley Ward; Jeff Milliken & Warren Berkowitz, Town Residents; Will Robinson, Weekly Packet. J. Dow, Excused Absence.
2. **Introduction of Julie Atwell, Town Administrator** – E. Best introduced J. Atwell, the new Town Administrator. This is J. Atwell’s first meeting with the town.
3. **Approve Select Board Meeting Minutes of September 25th** - B. Smythe moved to approve the Minutes for September 25th, S. Miller seconded. Vote: 4-0 Approved.
4. **Public Comment** - Resident W. Berkowitz thanked the board for all the support for the playground and stated the new playground equipment has been well received. He said he does have concern over speeding vehicles at the entrance to the playground. He suggested the town install speed bumps to slow traffic before someone gets hurt. S. Miller suggested the board leave this decision up to the Road Commissioner and B. Adams said he does not see a problem with installing them. W. Berkowitz will reach out to B. Adams, and they will discuss installing them next spring.

Business

1. **Mountain Road Bid/Haley Ward** - J. Drake from Haley Ward advised the board on how to move forward with advertising and going back out to bid for construction work on the Mountain Road. The town previously put this out to bid earlier this year and did not receive any bids. The deadline was extended in hopes a contractor would give a proposal but again, no bids were received. J. Drake suggested we advertise in the paper as a public bid so the town wouldn’t be selecting from a particular list of contractors. The bid documents would be provided to contractors between October 12th – 16th, a pre-bid meeting would be held approximately October 24th and bids would be opened November 6th. Haley Ward will instruct contractors not to perform any construction work during the Blue Hill Fair timeline. E. Best asked if the board could delay their decision until next week when all members are present. S. Miller said he would like Haley Ward to consider discounting their fees. He stated two years ago, Haley Ward advised the board the right time to put this out to bid would be in the fall as that is the time contractors are deciding on what projects they will take on for the next year, but the bid package was not made available until much later in March. J. Drake stated she would take this information back to Haley Ward and she has already discussed with coworkers a discounted rate on their bid services. S. Miller requested a response before the next board meeting. B. Adams stated he does believe there is interest from contractors this time around as he has discussed the project with a few of them. J. Atwell inquired on the funds since it was believed the project would take place this year. E. Best stated we would hold a Special Town Meeting if needed. Tabled – No action taken.
2. **Bradgon Brook crossing** – E. Best stated the board has not received any further information on the proposed project. Engineer Consultant, Andrew McCullough, sent her an email stating he can prepare updated documents for the cost of \$900.00. Allen Kratz said he has commissioned two maps from an earlier project for no cost to the town and will provide these maps to A. McCullough, who will then update the cost estimate he provided in 2022 which he has done. A. McCullough stated he will need additional information provided by B.

Adams such as traffic volume, estimated known safety concerns, etc. B. Adams said he is aware of these needs. S. Miller stated he wanted to be sure the design cost estimates will reflect and meet the recommended sea level rise road design criteria. E. Best stated what A. Kratz previously proposed was only one of four grant proposals. She will contact A. Kratz for clarification on the grant options and to verify it is a no match grant. J. Milliken reminded the board the deadline for the application is October 13th. S. Miller moved to approve the expenditure for A. McCullough to update his previous work, \$900.00 provided A. Kratz can confirm it is a no match grant and that A. McCullough can meet the deadline set by A. Kratz; B. Smythe seconded. Vote: 4-0 Approved.

Other Business

1. Holiday Celebration – The board received a request from the Farmhouse Inn regarding a holiday celebration. S. Miller suggested the town rekindle the celebration the town had in the past. He asked J. Atwell to research whether this is something that she and Town staff are interested in, and willing to take on, and report back to the board next week. S. Miller stated if there is no interest, the board should discuss supporting the Farmhouse Inn celebration.
2. TRIO – S. Miller reviewed the town’s chart of accounts and determined there is a need to update them. He will propose fewer accounts. Over the years multiple expense categories have been created for the same or very similar things. He would like to schedule a working session for the board, J. Atwell and Treasurer M. Rockwell, to discuss the changes and the level of detail they feel is needed with the expectation of making these changes effective January 1st. S. Miller will send out a draft of changes. He recommends we reach out to our auditors as they have experience with chart of accounts as well as J. Chapman, Fire Department, since they have many accounts that are unique to the Fire Department such as PPE, turnout gear, supplies, etc. and it is possible some of these can be combined.
3. Comprehensive Plan – The Comprehensive Plan Committee has been discussing fiscal capacity which has to do with property valuations, mil rate and the State Statutory Limit on Municipal Debt. They discussed looking forward ten to twenty years, what are some of the things the town would need large fiscal capacity for? Included in the discussion were the Wastewater Treatment Plant, High School replacement or repair, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in town, burying utilities within the Village, freshwater source, fire station relocation, climate resilience and highway upgrades. E. Best stated a replacement or major refurbishment of the consolidated school building should be added to the list as well. This does not mean these projects will be executed or what the timeline looks like, but something the committee thinks the town should consider while planning for the future.
4. Transfer Station – S. Dooley said they had their first Solid Waste Committee meeting, and it went well with the new Transfer Station Manager, D. Soper.
5. Marine Resources – Various members of the Marine Resources Committee agreed to reach out to float builders and servicers about building, installing/removing floats. S. Miller feels there may be some confusion on who is responsible for these inquiries. He clarified the Select Board is expecting the Marine Resources Committee and Harbormaster to develop a recommendation.
6. Abatement/Supplemental Property Tax Bills – Town Assessors’ Agents provided a list of abatement and supplemental bills. The first one is an abatement for a taxpayer who was assessed and taxed on a building that was not on their lot. The supplemental would assess and tax the correct owner. S. Miller moved to approve the abatement and supplemental bills, B. Smythe seconded. Vote: 4-0 Approved. The next property on the list is unclear on what the tax error is. S. Miller recommended this one be tabled until the next meeting when more information can be obtained.

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Upcoming Meetings/Reminders

1. Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting – Thursday, October 5 @ 4:00pm Town Hall
2. Closed in Observance of Indigenous People Day – Monday, October 9
3. Select Board Meeting – Tuesday, October 10 @ 5:00pm (Executive Session until 5:30pm)
Town Hall

Executive Session (Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. § 405(6)(A) – Personnel Matter) – S. Miller moved to enter executive session at 6:28pm, S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4-0 Approved. Exited executive session at 6:51pm. No action taken.

Adjourn - E. Best motioned to adjourn after warrant signing at 7:00pm, S. Dooley seconded. Vote 4-0.