

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 22, 2024**

Called the meeting to Order at 5:27pm

1. **Quorum and meeting attendance** – E. Best (Chair), S. Miller, J. Dow, S. Dooley, J. Atwell (Town Administrator), M. Rockwell (Treasurer), Phil Norris (Tree Warden) and members of the public.
2. **Approve Select Board Meeting Minutes of January 17, 2024** – S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of January 17th; S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.
3. **Public Comment** – No public comment

Business

1. **Trees – Phil Norris** – “Seaside Cemetery and the cost to clean it up is frightening,” according to Mr. Norris. The work includes the removal of 7 maples and 4 oaks; pruning 4 maples; and going around the perimeter and pruning dead limbs hanging over the edges. Meadowsweet’s rates are \$1,030 for a half day and \$2,060 for a full day. They’ve provided the Town with an estimate of \$36,000 to do the recommended work. Norris recommends a counter proposal of 8 days (totaling \$16,480) and the crane work at \$6,000; making the total \$22,480. It is preferable for the work to be done in the winter when the ground is frozen, to minimize any damage. The Board discussed the issue of spending limits prior to the Town Meeting in April. S. Miller mentioned Marcia McKeague (a forester) is interested and willing to assist the town with a second opinion on the need for tree removal. Phil would prefer not to get more involvement on Seaside at this time. J. Dow moved to authorize Phil Norris to spend the needed funds to clean up Seaside Cemetery; S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.

Moving to the “Street Trees” budget, Mr. Norris requested a budget of \$25,000 for 2024: \$5,000 for replanting and \$20,000 for controlling the Dutch Elm Disease (similar to last year’s spending). He would like to plant various species and create an ‘elm alley’ downtown with disease resistant elm species.

2. **YMCA** – Members of the Downeast YMCA were present (Matt Montgomery, Zach Ames and Bob Huff) to discuss the proposed summer camp for the area children. They stated that they would prefer to have a contract with the town versus a handout (or donation). They discussed that there was a licensing application for 30 – 45 campers in Blue Hill already. This came as a bit of a surprise, and they wondered if there was still a need. The Board unanimously affirmed that there was a definite need. The discussion turned to facilities. The Y would like to utilize the Consolidated School like last year. The current applicant has already requested this facility for their program. They will have discussions with Blue Hill Consolidated and George Stevens to see if there is a possibility of utilizing one of these buildings for a home base. The AA Field may also work but would not be ideal. A bus would be needed at all times, if the AA Field was used, in case of inclement weather. The Board asked what the Y needed from them to take over the program. The Y stated assistance with getting a facility and a bus and the possibility of subsidizing the program. S. Dooley will inquire about the bus and driver.
3. **Assessors – Abatements/Supplementals** – Tabled.

4. **Firearms Policy** – Tabled.
5. **Grants (Infrastructure and SHIP) – J. Dow** – The infrastructure grant deadline is February 2nd to file electronically and J. Dow has requested \$50,000. The grant would require annual progress updates and the Town to contribute a 5% match (or \$2500). J. Dow would like to apply for a SHIP grant in 2025 for the town's floats. We have 6 finger floats at a cost of about \$9,000 each (totaling \$54,000) and 2 big floats at a cost of \$15,000 (totaling \$30,000). The grant requires a 50% match from the Town. He proposes to request \$100,000 (to build in for inflation).
6. **Docuphase** – Docuphase fixed an issue and then gave the Town one day to download our files. E. Best asked for the emails between Docuphase and the Town and she will fight the battle with them.
7. **Asbestos Removal – Updated Quote** – Chris Kowalski (Public Works Director) looked under the carpet in the conference room and determined it was wood underneath. It doesn't look like there are any asbestos tiles underneath. S. Miller moved to authorize the remediation of the asbestos tiles in the Clerk's Office. S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.

Other Business

1. **Sidewalk Issues** – Ben Adams stated that there are a few areas that the sidewalk machine won't fit and the Board discussed the need for local owner's, in the downtown area, to be responsible for clearing snow and ice from the sidewalks in front of their businesses. They discussed the need to send letters to owners of these properties.
2. **Photos for Town Report** – Jessica Smith has provided the Town with photos for the 2024 Annual Report.
3. **Hancock Community Preparedness** – S. Dooley will review the mitigation report.
4. **Seasonal Closing of Seaside Cemetery** – E. Best moved to authorize the purchase of materials to close off the cemetery roads during the off season, to protect and mitigate damage caused to the roads. S. Miller seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.

Meeting Updates and Reminders

1. **January 23rd Transfer Station Committee Meeting at 4pm**
2. **January 24th Select Board Working Session (Budget) at 9am**
3. **January 29th Select Board Meeting at 5:30pm**

Adjourn

E. Best motioned to adjourn at 7:20, S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.