

SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOTES

MAY 8, 2019

Called to Order 6:00 pm

Present: Selectmen: Melissa Spinney, Doug Baston, Greg Shute Members of the Public: Chris Cooper, Ralph Hilton, Steve Adler, David Abbott, Paul Crandall, Michael Trask Press: Jessica Clifford, Susan Johns Deputy Clerk: Linda Verney

Public Comment: None

Old Business: The Food Pantry is opening next week. We will list hours in the paper, donations are welcome. Note that we will deliver if there are mobility or confidentiality concerns. Call Liz or one of the deputies.

Listing Town Office: we are pulling together deeds, surveys, and titles. Selectman Shute is going to check with David Soule for title information. The selectmen are trying For Sale By Owner, and set the asking price at \$130,000. We need to get the last items out of the building and clean it up. The selectmen have carted many truckloads to the transfer station. Apparently, this town has never thrown anything out. If we were a person, we would be a hoarder.

Barn Yard Animal Complaint: Steve Adler from the West Alna Road asked the Selectmen if the town could do anything about the loud guinea hens near his property line on the neighbor's property. The Selectmen explained that there is nothing the town can do; it is a civil matter. It was suggested that he call the animal welfare office at the Department of Agriculture regarding crowded pen conditions he had observed.

Town Office Update: Final groundwork, storage shelves in basement, trim on the back side are all that remains. The 1st Selectman will call Jeff Verney to get a schedule. We also need to relocate the flagpole and roadside sign and investigate a paving bid.

David Abbott: Plowing Committee Update. David reported that the committee met twice. Since a contract is in place, any changes would need to be mutually agreed to. The consensus of the committee was that the price we pay per mile for plowing is in line with other area towns. Towns that are lower usually use a local resident contractor who has the equipment; Alna has no resident so equipped. Hagar is very responsive to issues when alerted. We are using too much salt, but that was at the direction of a prior board of selectmen. Since the town buys the sand and salt and provides it to the contractor, we can set the limits here. There was general agreement that we need to get our RFP out early next year if we expect to have competition. Our current contract document is very similar to that used by other towns. (We looked at samples from Westport, Nobleboro, and Newcastle.) David suggested the road commissioner, or the selectmen should ride the roads and inspect during storms.

Two Tax Bills: Paul Crandall, a former selectman and town administrator in Lubec, suggested we move to issuing two tax bills a year. It would ease the payments for residents and would help the town's cashflow, reducing the need for Tax Anticipation Notes. The selectmen also discussed setting up a voluntary monthly payment program for folks who want to budget that way. It would be like a Christmas Club. Lubec did this when he was a selectman, and everyone likes it. Several area towns do this as well. Suzette Francis, the long-time town clerk in Lubec, would gladly answer questions about how it works. We need to contact Fred Brewer, because he did not like the idea; we just can't remember why. (Two of us are old; the other one has no excuse.)

Set Special Town Meeting: There will be a special town meeting on Wednesday, June 12th at the Meetinghouse. The principal purpose is to ask the town if we can commit taxes earlier this year, and every year hereafter, thereby giving citizens more time to pay and reducing our Tax Anticipation Note requirements.

Head Tide Dam: The Planning Board approved the work and it will start in July. Stockpiling of materials begins on July 8th. As the selectmen requested, the prime contractor gave preference to local subcontractors, and several locals will have work on this job. This work will impact swimming while the project is underway.

Other Business: Selectman Baston reported that he has started work with Tidewater on our next ConnectME grant attempt, due June 12th. ConnectME has made the grant requirements more difficult, and we will need a high percentage of the people along the proposed routes to commit to service if the grant is awarded. He will have more details next week and will alert the town via email. He also reported on two other grant applications:

- *Meeting House Grant:* He worked with Doreen Conboy to submit a grant proposal to the Davis Family Foundation \$16,100.00 for plaster repair work that needs to be finished up on the walls and in the portico. It was due on May 10th; we should hear in June.
- *Puddle Dock School Grant:* He is also working with Doreen and Chris Cooper on a grant to repair the exterior and foundation of the school. This one is to the Belvedere Historic Preservation Grant Program at the Maine Community Foundation. It is due June 1st.

Misc. We need to get American flags and a State of Maine flag for the meeting room.