

SELECTMEN'S MEETING NOTES

JULY 24, 2019

Called to Order 6:00 pm

Present: Selectmen: Melissa Spinney, Doug Baston, Greg Shute; Members of the Public: Maranda Nemeth, Holly Nelson, Ralph Hilton, Chris Cooper, Mike Trask, David Seigars, Tom McKenzie, Lester Sheaffer, Charlene Donahue, Ed Pentaleri, Howard Nickerson, Terry Ross, Megan Taft, Paul Lazarus, Donna Wallace, Deb Brown, Jeff Verney; Press: Jessica Clifford, Susan Johns; Clerk: Liz Brown

Public Comment:

Terry Ross would like to encourage the town to use the old town office for a post office. He also had a concern about an overly-friendly fox he saw about a month ago.

Howard Nickerson had three items:

1. Head Tide Hill Road issues. The ditch depth at one point is better than 2 feet. This is a DOT state road and he has talked to the state with no response. Selectman Shute said he called DOT about it as well and was given the response of, "We'll put you on the list."
2. He said there has never been a clean up along the road from the Halloween storm two years ago. Brush and slash is in the right-of-way.
3. During the winter, the plows never make it up past the Jewett home until afternoon. Selectman Spinney said that would be something to bring up with Hagar when he comes in.

New Business:

Alewives—Town of Whitefield Selectmen

Lester Sheaffer and Charlene Donahue from the town of Whitefield Board of Selectmen, came to the meeting to find out how Alna deals with the alewives, and citizen harvesting of the same. They were told by the Alna selectmen that David Sutter has the exclusive rights in Alna to the alewives, but he lets individuals harvest. They requested that next year the town send a letter to their board informing them of who our permit holder is for 2020, and our selectmen agreed.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay Abatement

The Friends of Merrymeeting Bay were taxed in error for 2018 as they are a non-profit. The selectmen voted to give them an abatement of \$302.64, which was the amount of the tax.

KBS—Shingles & Siding Missing

The siding is coming off in a few places and there are a few more minor issues. Selectman Baston will contact KBS.

Midcoast Conservancy In Lieu of Taxes

The town received a payment from the Midcoast Conservancy for payment in lieu of taxes. They had agreed to make a payment in 2018, but they missed that payment. They want this check to be applied to the 2019 tax year. Selectman Shute will follow-up on this to make sure we recoup the agreed-to 2018 payment.

Bicentennial

Our meetinghouse was one of the places where the vote to separate Maine from Massachusetts took place in 1819 that is still in existence. Selectman Baston said he had been told that Alna voted to stay a part of Massachusetts, while the state as a whole went overwhelmingly the other way. Dick Picard is trying to organize something to involve Alna and is looking for volunteers to help. Anyone with idea for events should contact the selectmen.

Road Complaints

David Seigars had a complaint about a deep hole in the side of the Cross Road next to his driveway. He said he had called Jeff Verney a month ago and that this had been caused by rain erosion. Jeff Verney said that he would take care of it.

Deb Brown was in to talk about the Sand Building Road as the water creates a problem on that road. The selectmen reiterated that this is a private road, not a town road. Six parties, including the town, have easements over Chris Kenoyer's land. The town built up an old tote road for the purpose of accessing site where we built the salt and sand shed. It is not the town's responsibility to maintain it beyond our 1/6th share. The town will help with 1/6th of the costs but only 1/6th. We already maintain the road for the purposes of truck usage.

Maranda Nemeth said she will check into federal funding and the Watershed Protection Plan to see if any help could be available there.

Deb Brown said that Calvin Cooper had given her a quote of \$2,500 for a culvert.

10 Year Plan—Roads

Selectman Spinney had a copy of the last one that had been drawn up by Mike Trask and Michael Abbott. They are going to check into seeing if Michael Abbott will revise the current one again. Mike Trask said he thought they should be able to get federal grants. There is a lot of ditching that needs to be done.

Deputy Treasurer Resignation

Deputy Treasurer Honora Perkins sent a letter of resignation as she is moving. Treasurer Amy Stockford would like to have Amy Preston as her deputy. The selectmen agree, and she will come in to be sworn in.

Old Business:

Transfer Station Update

Selectmen Spinney and Baston called around to other transfer stations. There was a possibility with Dresden, but Selectman Shute met with them and they were supportive but cannot handle more waste. The selectmen did sign the contract with Wiscasset for this year. Paul Lazarus wants the selectmen to continue to negotiate with Wiscasset. There was discussion about the possibility of Alna having its own transfer station and the selectmen agreed that every option needs to be explored. Selectman Shute knows of the Lily Bay transfer station in the Unorganized Territories. He will look into what they have and what the costs are.

Community Garden

Selectman Spinney said that she has 3 volunteers who have helped a lot with the community garden so far: Linda Abbott, Anne Simpson and Jen Barton. Juniper Hill School also made a community garden sign. Produce has already been harvested and given to the food pantry.

Garden Club

Holly Nelson and Chris Cooper have about 12 volunteers who have joined the garden club and they are looking for more help.

The day lilies were transplanted from the old town office. Lilacs have been planted and they should be flowering at different times. Joyce Wanger had signs made about the part that has been planted in honor of Diana Ayers. The Garden Club wants to get a plaque to honor people who have passed and flower/plant/tree donations listed.

So far the only costs to the town have been the mulch and the hoses. The rest has been by donation and volunteer work. Carrie Kipfer, Chris Cooper and others have donated.

The Garden Club would like \$2,500 and will match that \$2,500.

Old Town Office Update

All repairs were done and the walls painted. Chris Cooper put a window in the old vault. There was an offer today of \$125,000. Selectman Spinney made a motion to accept the offer, Selectman Baston seconded the motion and all were in favor. They signed the papers accepting the offer.

Head Tide Dam Update

Maranda Nemeth gave an update. Trees have been cleared and the site prepped. On Monday the coffer dams were set in the river by crane. The state biologists checked for no salmon. Demolition started at 11:00 am Wednesday. Anyone wishing to visit or if they have complaints need to contact Maranda Nemeth or Greg Shute. It is an active construction site at this point and visits have to be approved and hard hats and safety vests worn.

Maranda said the dam is identified as a historic resource, so they are required to photo document everything.

Tiny House Update

Selectman Baston said that state building code officials have recently developed a model tiny house ordinance, but no town has yet adopted it. The problem is that Alna can only change its current building code by adopting the state's Model Building and Energy Code ("MBEC") in its entirety. No more "home-grown" building codes are allowed in Maine. That may not be a bad idea for us to do, but we don't want to back into that kind of decision based on one non-compliant tiny house. It appears that the structure that came before the planning board would not comply with the state's ordinance in any event. The state says it must be permanently fixed and have two means of egress.

2019 Tax Commitment

The mil rate for the 2019 tax year is 18.2. The selectmen all signed the tax commitment. Bill will go out early, giving folks more time to pay. And more time for collections should reduce our tax anticipation borrowing next year.

Public Comment:

Ralph Hilton mentioned looking into a grant for a Park & Ride site at the town office and will give Selectman Baston the information.

Jeff Verney said the Rabbit Path Road near Pinkham Pond has sometimes been impassable due to all the cars parked there. It's a dangerous situation. He thought the town should look at maybe making a little lot for parking.

Tom McKenzie said the hydrant at Cross Road needs to be looked at.

Donna Wallace asked about the camper in her yard and the ordinance. Her son is living in it right now. She was told the limit was 120 days so he has until the end of September.

Selectman Baston suggested that a tree be planted on the town office grounds in memory of Richard Verney.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:56 p.m.