



## Select Board /Assessors Meeting Summary

Oct. 5, 2022

7 p.m.

**Select Board members Present:** Wes Daniel, Tom Johnston and Mitch Garnett

**Others Present:** Town Clerk Mary Anderson, EMS Advisory Committee member Jesse Casas, Union Ambulance director Jesse Thompson

Wes Daniel called the Select Board meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**Approve Summaries of Sept. 21 and 28, 2022:** Motion to approve both summaries by Tom Johnston, Mitch Garnett seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

**Sign Treasurer's Warrants dated Oct. 6, 2022:**

P/R Warrant #83: \$5,777.51

A/P Warrants #84: \$172,940.18 (includes a school payment of more than \$151,000)

Motion to approve warrants by Tom Johnston, Mitch Garnett seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

**Road Foreman Report:** Written by Frank Jones Jr. and read by Wes Daniel

9/26: Worked on P600 lights, it had a mouse next to the fuse box; patched P500 sander floor

9/27: Graded Skidmore and Dorman roads; Steven and David hauled gravel; grader had nine hours

9/28: Graded Dorman Road and fixed some washouts and potholes on Old County Road; put away cold patch after Steven picked it up; grader had five hours

9/29: Worked on winter sand, it's all done (57 loads put up)

**CEO Report:** None

**Health Officer Report:** None

**Town Clerk/Treasurer's Report:** Jake from The First notified Mary the interest rate has increased to .75 percent. The checking account balance is \$1,409,341.92. Absentee ballots were received today; 40 already have been requested and will be mailed tomorrow. Dog registration reminder postcards will be mailed by mid-October.

**Other Agenda Items:** Select Board members discussed closing Old Union Road for the annual Trunk-or-Treat event that is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 29, from 3 to 6 p.m. Tom said he is concerned about drivers not slowing down and the ability of the fire trucks to navigate the area in case of emergency. Wes outlined his ideas in a drawing and noted the grange and fire department are involved with the

event. Tom said he feels the school is a better location. Mary suggested asking representatives from the Parent-Teacher Group as well as the fire chief to come to the next meeting to talk about potential benefits and drawbacks for both locations. Mitch said he would defer to the fire chief if it's a safety issue and asked if the PTG and chief could work it out. Wes said they have been butting heads about it for the past week already. Tom said it would be safer to block the road on either end with fire apparatus. Mitch made a motion to close Old Union Road for Trunk-or-Treat, Wes seconded; Mitch and Wes in favor, Tom opposed, motion carries.

Select Board members signed the LRAP certification.

**Other business:** Wes said he spoke with Corey at NorthEast Paving and the company indicated it could begin paving next week; however, Wes said the decision already had been made by the Select Board to cancel the bid for this year. Corey told Wes the company is willing to hold the price for next year. Mitch asked why it is too late to begin paving this year and it's cold related. Tom confirmed there are temperature restrictions for asphalt and the road won't be done properly.

The town received a letter from Maine Department of Transportation about work over Jackson Stream, requesting information about town infrastructure in the area – there is none. Wes noted the broadband project work will take place overhead and will not interfere. He will sign the request.

Wes outlined an email from attorney Peter Drum regarding the Welzel property and said the Welzel's attorney has not yet reviewed the agreement with the couple.

David Bixby has resigned from Public Works. Mary will advertise the open position.

Jesse Casas, an alternate on the Ambulance Advisory Committee, said there have been five or six meetings so far and he has learned a lot about how Union Ambulance and EMS operates in general. He said Washington is the first to see the ambulance budget because of the timing of town meeting. Union carries more overhead costs than he realized, such as utilities and Human Resources, Jesse C. said. Union Ambulance director Jesse Thompson said a grant-funded study is currently under way that will determine the level of service desired in Washington, Union and Appleton, as well as what residents are willing to pay for the service. Everything from bookkeeping and training to staffing and community feedback is being looked at as part of the study. Select Board members and community members will be contacted as well. Jesse T. said there will probably be a public hearing to gather information in each town as well. The study should conclude by November and will offer three options for the communities to choose from and work toward. At the same time, Jesse T. is working to provide requested information to keep or increase the 80 percent reimbursement for Medicare patients, which requires proof of all costs to operate the ambulance service: hours of all staffing levels, fuel, medications, electricity, heat for the building, Human Resources and treasurer time. If the information is not submitted, Jesse T. said the service could lose another 10 percent of its reimbursement. He said a lot of information has been thrown at committee members.

Tom asked what will happen if the study reveals drastically different levels of service is desired in each community. Jesse T. said the grant has run into that problem in the past and will help the communities – through the Advisory Board – come to a consensus. Then, Advisory Board members will present the compromise to Select Board members.

Wes asked how staffing levels are at this point and Jesse T. said much better, he's even been able to take a day off here and there.

Tom asked if the ambulance budget could be treated like the school budget and be voted on in June to allow for more time. Mitch said he thought that might be too scary because the cost of everything continues to increase. Tom clarified he does not advocate changing to a fiscal year from the current calendar year but only posed the question to determine if that would help with budget planning.

Jesse C. said he and/or other committee members are happy to report to the Select Board on a regular basis if the Board wishes. Wes and Tom said unless there are problems to discuss, email updates are fine.

Jesse T. asked if any residents have come to Select Board members to talk about the higher budget this year; no one has.

Mitch reminded everyone there are funds set aside for anyone interested in EMS training and Tom asked Jesse T. to keep that in mind for any Washington residents who might reach out to him. Jesse T. said Advisory Committee member Jeff Grinnell mentioned numbers of first responders are increasing. As well, Jesse T. said Appleton also created a fund for EMS training for its residents.

On Oct. 7 at 1 p.m. a state blue Ribbon Commission will meet for the third time of six to create statewide recommendations for EMS, which could include regionalization.

**Questions/comments:** None.

Mitch made a motion to adjourn, Wes seconded; all in favor, motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Grinnell