



Select Board /Assessors Meeting Summary

Aug. 23, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Select Board members present: Wesley Daniel, Mitchell Garnett and Katherine Grinnell

Others present: Resident David Williams

Wes Daniel called the Select Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approve Summary of Aug. 16, 2023: Motion to approve summary by Kate, Mitch seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Sign Treasurer's Warrants dated Aug. 24, 2023:

P/R Warrant #67: \$5,792.60

A/P Warrant #68: \$337,544.23, which includes \$100,000 for paving, \$50,000 to pay back the town line of credit, \$175,000+ school payment and Knox County Communications.

Motion to approve warrants by Mitch, Kate seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

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

8/14: Chipped brush on Old Union Road

8/15: Started to clean the ditch on Old Union Road (P100, P200, excavator)

8/16: Ditched on Old Union Road and Calderwood Road intersection; started to put shoulder back to pre-washout condition (P100, P200, excavator, 32 yards surface gravel)

8/17: Worked on shoulder and cleaned ditches on Old Union Road (P100, P200, excavator, 32 yards surface gravel)

CEO Report: None.

Health Officer Report: None.

Town Clerk/Treasurer's Report: The town received a Homestead Reimbursement check for \$110,261 on Friday, and on Monday received a Revenue Share check for \$20,813.84. Paving has been paid for in full as of this week, and \$50,000 from the town line of credit has been repaid. Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) reached out for a signature on a collaborative agreement for the Homeowners Assistance Fund Program (HAF). There is an applicant from Washington. Waldo County Community Action Program, which works through MSHA suggested giving out its information along with General Assistance. An attorney sent along quit claim deeds for a property with old liens for Select Board members to sign. The checking account balance is \$90,368.

Broadband update: None.

Other Agenda Items: Select Board members signed the quit claim deeds for property owned by Ron Jackson following a motion by Wes and second by Mitch; all in favor, motion carries.

Wes said Travis Perez expects to begin insulating at the Public Works garage on Monday.

Bids received were opened. Only one bid was received per job and each bidder is the current contract holder.

Dana Kennedy submitted a 3-year bid for roadside mowing in the amounts of \$1,600 for 2024, \$1,650 for 2025 and \$1,700 for 2026. The previous 3-year contract was for \$1,525 per year. Mitch made a motion to accept Dana's roadside mowing bid, Kate seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Raymond Gushee submitted a 3-year bid for cemetery maintenance in the amount of \$17,149 per year. He will clean Storer Cemetery this fall for \$300, which will come out of this year's budget and Storer Cemetery maintenance is included in the new bid. The previous 3-year contract was for \$13,600 per year. Mitch made a motion to accept Ray's cemetery maintenance bid, Kate seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Raymond Gushee submitted a 3-year bid for maintenance of town grounds in the amount of \$2,999 per year. The previous contract was \$2,500 per year. Wes made a motion to accept Ray's town grounds maintenance bid, Kate seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Christopher Armstrong submitted a 3-year bid for plowing/snow removal in the amounts of \$200 per storm for Town Office/Fire Department and \$50 per storm for bus turnarounds in 2023-24, \$220 per storm for Town Office/Fire Department and \$55 per storm for bus turnarounds in 2024-25, and \$242 per storm for Town Office/Fire Department and \$66 per storm for bus turnarounds in 2025-26. The prior contract was \$125/\$35). Mitch made a motion to accept Chris's bid for plowing/snow removal, Wes seconded; all in favor, motion carries.

Other business: None.

Questions/comments: Kate gave an overview of the Knox County Commissioner's meeting regarding county dispatch. Commissioners voted to sign a 6-month contract with Waldo County dispatch that will route calls to Waldo County first, then to Knox County as needed. Former dispatchers are being hired back but more are needed to staff Knox County. The six months will allow time to train new dispatchers and give current workers some breathing room and time off. Commissioners are considering hiring a consultant to look at governance. The dispatch switchover is expected to take place later in the week after a series of tests and redundancies.

Dave asked how the change might impact response times but Kate said that wasn't discussed Monday. Mitch said Fire Chief Phil Meunier previously indicated that, with the right equipment, there's should not be much of a delay.

Mitch made a motion to adjourn, Kate seconded; meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Grinnell

Wes called the Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were all three Select Board members, Town Clerk/Treasurer Mary Anderson, and Budget Committee members Wendy Carr, Kathleen Ocean, David Williams, Kim Linscott (alternate), Joan Tognacci (alternate), Donald Grinnell and Deb Bocko.

Dave nominated Don as chair of the Budget Committee, multiple people seconded; all in favor, motion carries and Don accepted.

After recognizing new member Kim and new-to -the-process Kate, Don asked Select Board members if there are any large purchases on the horizon to keep in mind when going over the next budget. Mitch spoke about Road Crew labor costs looking lower than the actual costs because some of the labor for FEMA storms was taken from the Roads Reserve Account; he cautioned against lowering that line in the budget because of the perception.

The Roads Reserve Account will be paid back with FEMA reimbursements but it might take some time for the town to be paid.

Don said as EMA Director, he will be requesting 1 percent of the town's reimbursements for himself – many hours have been put into paperwork and photos for storms but the stipend for the EMA Director is just \$750 per year.

Kathy asked about the ambulance line, as it does not appear on the current expense report. Mary said a contract has not yet been received. (Voters approved \$150,189 for the ambulance service on the June ballot.)

Wes said Calderwood Road is in need of work and the plan is to ditch, widen and pave it. As well, Calderwood Road could be closed to through truck traffic. Dave asked if a new culvert is included in the plans and Wes said no. However, Maine Rivers is working on a stream/river crossing grant that could pay for a new culvert.

Deb and Kim praised the paving job done on McDowell Road, but noted many driveways do not have aprons for smoother access. Don said the same happened on Route 105, leaving some driveways with significant drops from the new pavement. McDowell Road is a town road and Route 105 is a state road, paving was done by different entities. Mitch said the town Road Crew has been extremely busy but he

expects more work will be done to fix those problem areas. Wes also pointed out that the paving was completed earlier than usual this year, but it's good because the asphalt will have more time to firm up.

Wes said as far as upcoming equipment purchases, he hasn't heard anything from the Fire Department (except that it is applying for a grant for a truck); but Select Board members have reserved a public works trucks for delivery in two years.

The budget already is over on road salt.

Kathy asked about firefighter stipends, as all have not been paid. Mary said all trainings must be attended through the year, then firefighters are paid the stipend in December.

Don noted the Knox County Communications budget is likely to increase, and Dave added that the ambulance assessment also will increase in coming years. Wes said wages for town employees also are expected to increase.

Mitch spoke about a recent agreement with a company that will bill insurance companies for fire department costs for certain calls, which will help recover some equipment costs. The agreement came about because of special fire suppression blankets for electric vehicles – the cost is about \$1,300 each and the blankets can only be used once.

Don made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m., Dave seconded; all in favor motion carries.