

**Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Regular Selectmen's Meeting
5:30 P.M.
Tuesday, January 10, 2017
Municipal Building – Council Room**

Board of Selectmen:

Donald Skillings, Chairman
Paul York, Vice Chairman
Betty Austin
Darla Pickett
Soren Siren

Town Manager:

Christine Almand

Executive Secretary:

Cara L. Mason

Call Selectmen's Meeting to order.

Donald Skillings called the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

1. Town Manager's Report

The tax foreclosure date of January 9th has passed. I am following up to verify that our notice requirements have been met on the properties and will put together bid documents for discussion and decision at the next Selectmen's Meeting.

The revaluation fieldwork is continuing. They are currently doing commercial data collection starting with multifamily buildings with four or more units and primary residence with commercial on the same land. For more detailed information, visit our website.

The CSO Phase 3.5 Bid closes on February 2nd at 1:00 pm. The pre-bid meeting is on January 24th at 1:00 pm. For more information, visit our website or contact Brent Dickey.

The Somerset Humane Society is offering low cost spay/neuter vouchers for cats through a grant from the Belvedere Animal Welfare Fund. Qualifications include anyone over 65 years old or anyone who meets the income guidelines. For more information, contact the Animal Shelter.

2. Items by the Public

Mark Bedard and Heather Deschaine talked about the traffic on Cowette Street. They are looking to have the street changed to a one-way street and re-route the traffic. There is already a No Thru Street sign there, but nobody abides by it.

Soren Siren asked Greg Dore if he had placed the speed limit trailer on that street. Maybe the first step is to see what the traffic flow is on that street.

Donald Skillings said that we can collect some data and revisit this in about a month.

Gail Pelotte said that the one way street behind the movie theatre is a bad spot. People go the wrong way all the time. People do not read the signs.

Greg Dore said that the No Thru Street signs are meant for trucks, not for regular vehicles.

Chief Bolduc said that there is a tremendous amount of traffic on Gem Street as well.

Recording Time: 08:34

Joanne Woodard thanked Christine Almand. She is the first one in 36 years to take care of the problem she has been having on Prescelly Drive. Walter has done a wonderful job this year plowing and removing the snow.

Betty Austin spoke as State Representative. She has been assigned to the Transportation Committee. She received the book that has the work they intend to do over the next three years. She invited anyone to see her to look at it if they would like to.

3. Selectmen's Items

Darla Pickett said kudos to Amber Lambke for the most recent grant that she received for studying using farms in Aroostook County to grow grains.

Soren Siren said he had heard that flyers were handed out to the downtown businesses about the cleaning of the sidewalks. What is their responsibility, what is our responsibility? How and when does the \$100.00 fine come into play?

Greg Dore said that the Police Department had delivered the information to the downtown businesses. The downtown sidewalks are the only sidewalks in town that are addressed by ordinance. From Pleasant Street to High Street the downtown businesses are responsible for maintaining their sidewalks during the winter. Snow and ice has to be removed within so many hours of the storm.

Chief Bolduc said that what they do is remind the businesses that it is their responsibility to do it. It is the goal not to write a summons.

Doug Harlow asked about the old Carpenters Insurance building and the pocket park. Nobody seems to be doing anything about the snow on those sidewalks.

Greg Dore said that whomever own the property is responsible for the snow removal. A lot of the businesses become complacent because when we have bigger storms, the Highway

Department is down there removing snow. They don't always realize that it is their responsibility until they are notified.

Recording Time: 19:20

Greg Dore said that the sidewalk plow still has not been fixed. We cannot put the sidewalk plow downtown during business hours anyway.

It has only become a problem the last few years. There are some people that own buildings downtown that are not open on certain days, and so it isn't getting done.

Greg Dore said he does not believe we have ever written anybody a ticket.

Soren Siren said that some of the bigger stores downtown have more to take care of and it can become quite a burden with all of the salt.

Donald Skillings said that all businesses pay to have their places salted and sanded. Are they suggesting that the Town should take care of this?

Soren Siren said they just wanted to know what constitutes a \$100.00 fine.

Donald Skillings asked if a sidewalk is under the care custody and control of the Town. We built them and we maintain them...whose responsibility is it?

Greg Dore said that the Town is protected.

Donald Skillings said that is not going to stop a suit.

Greg Dore said that if somebody slips and falls on a sidewalk that the Town owns, they cannot sue us. We are protected.

Donald Skillings said that if the businesses are being asked to maintain something that we are in the care custody and control of, we are opening up this game. We should not be putting them in that position. There are questions that need to be answered.

Christine Almand said that this is all covered in our Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance. It also references the State Statute that gives us the authority to establish a rule for removal of snow and ice. This has been delivered to all of the downtown businesses.

Paul York said that he personally went to the highway garage to thank them for the work that they have been doing. They have done an amazing job and have put in an abundance of hours. They don't get enough credit for what they do. They make it possible for everybody to get around. They are continuing to pick up snow. There is a lot of it, so be patient. If you see something that you think is an issue, please call the Highway Department.

Donald Skillings said that he was on Facebook recently. Somebody was just slaughtering Public Works after the last 20 inches of snow. He said it irked him. He was up at Sugarloaf and they had to have a groomer come to plow them out. It was a lot of snow. These guys are busting their butts trying to get things done. Those comments are out of taste.

Donald Skillings said that he has noticed that the Lucas Tree crew has been meeting in the Municipal Parking Lot recently, and leaving vehicles there all day. He asked if maybe we could inform them where the park and ride parking lot is.

4. Department & Committee Reports

Jeff Hewett said he did not get it in on time, but there is a Run of River grant request that he would like the Selectmen to approve. It is due on January 17th. He asked for permission to apply for it. There is no match required.

A motion was made by Soren Siren and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Jeff Hewett to apply for the Sewall grant in the amount of \$255,281.00 for permitting and final design for the Run of River.

Vote: 5/0

Greg Dore said that the rear end for the tractor came in today. We will start getting the sidewalks opened up.

Donald Skillings asked about a truck on a hook being taken out of town.

Greg Dore said there were two. The 2012 Volvo had a computer issue and was taken to Augusta. The 2014 International had a computer issue and was taken to Bangor, it ended up being a knock sensor. The International was covered by warranty.

Gail Pelotte said that if the dates for Town Meeting and Elections are approved tonight...nomination papers will be available March 20th and due back on May 1st. We have one Selectman, one Assessor, one Overseer of the Poor, one Park Commissioner and four School Board members.

The Town Clerks have been notified by the division of elections that there will be at least one special referendum question in June.

We have started calling residents to remind them to license their dogs by January 31st to avoid the \$25.00 late fee per dog.

In December the Clerk's Office was extremely busy. Usually the check to Inland Fisheries is under \$5,000.00. If it is between \$5,000.00 and \$10,000.00 it was a busy month. The check in December was \$19,378.57. We don't keep any of that money. It goes to the State. We get an agent fee on each registration.

Trisha Austin said she has been busy getting ready for Audit, preparing W-2s and preparing for budget.

Consent Agenda:

1. Discussion and decision to approve the Minutes for the following:

Regular Selectmen's Meeting December 13, 2016

Regular Selectmen's Meeting December 27, 2016

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to approve the Consent Agenda as written.

Vote: 5/0

Recording Time: 36:22

Regular Agenda:

- 1 Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$1,895.00 from the Highway Department Reserve Account, Building Designation to replace the south side entry door at the highway garage.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Paul York to expend an amount not to exceed \$1,895.00 from the Highway Department Reserve Account, Building Designation to replace the south side entry door at the highway garage.

Darla Pickett asked how the door was broken.

Greg Dore said that we caught it with the bucket loader when we were clearing snow. The cost to fix it would be \$745.00. The crash bar and the mechanism would have to be replaced. This was scheduled for replacement for next year. This year there was only enough money to replace three doors, which we did replace.

Christine Almand thanked Greg Dore for putting both options in the memo.

Vote: 5/0

2. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to hold a Public Hearing on January 24, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the Island Parking Lot Park and Ride Project.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to allow Greg Dore to hold a Public Hearing on January 24, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the Island Parking Lot Park and Ride Project.

Vote: 5/0

3. Discussion and decision to award the Firefighter Turnout Gear Bid to Bergeron Protective Clothing with a total bid price of \$1,887.73 per set and to expend an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 from the Fire Department Reserve Account, Protective Clothing Designation to purchase five sets.

A motion was made by Soren Siren and seconded by Betty Austin to award the Firefighter Turnout Gear Bid to Bergeron Protective Clothing with a total bid price of \$1,887.73 per set and to expend an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 from the Fire Department Reserve Account, Protective Clothing Designation to purchase five sets.

Vote: 5/0

4. Discussion and decision to allow Christine Almand to accept tax payments in full, prior to the award of bids, in order to sell any foreclosed property back to the previous owner.

A motion was made by Darla Pickett and seconded by Soren Siren to allow Christine Almand to accept tax payments in full, prior to the award of bids, in order to sell any foreclosed property back to the previous owner.

Vote: 5/0

5. Discussion and decision to move forward with the Ordinance Prohibiting Marijuana Retail Establishments and Retail Marijuana Social Clubs.

A motion was made by Soren Siren and seconded by Darla Pickett to move forward with the Ordinance Prohibiting Marijuana Retail Establishments and Retail Marijuana Social Clubs.

Christine Almand said that the Planning Board put this together. She asked if the Selectmen wanted to change who the Ordinance would be enforced by. It currently says the Selectmen or their designee. She asked if they wanted to change it to the Code Enforcement Officer, since most of our Ordinances spell out who it is.

Donald Skillings asked if the Police Department should enforce this given the nature of the business.

This came from a sample ordinance from MMA, and our Planner expanded on the definitions.

Christine Almand said he discussed this with Randy Gray. She believes that the reason it is under Code Enforcement is because it is a business. Code Enforcement would also be leaning on the State for assistance with the enforcement. If the Code Enforcement Officer feels that he needs police assistance, we all work together.

Betty Austin said that she has put a bill in to allow towns to use safe zones.

The Selectmen agreed to leave the enforcement section the way it is.

Vote: 5/0

This will be moved forward to Town Meeting. There will be Public Hearings and all of the stuff that goes along with that.

Christine Almand said that a date for a Public Hearing will be determined in the future as we get closer to Town Meeting.

Gene Rouse Asked if a copy of this was available to the public.

Donald Skillings said that a copy will be available in the Town Manager's Office.

Donald Skillings said that we will decide after the Public Hearing whether this will be voted at Town Meeting or by secret ballot. He said he does not a strong feeling either way on this issue. The Town of Skowhegan's voters voted against this.

Soren Siren said he agreed with the way the Town voted. If they had voted differently, we would be looking at this differently.

Betty Austin said that these issues are typically voted upstairs at Town Meeting rather than by secret ballot at elections.

Christine Almand said that she would also bring forward language for a Moratorium in case the ban doesn't get approved.

6. Discussion and decision to set the dates for the Annual Town Meeting and Elections for 2017 as June 12th and June 13th respectively.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Paul York to set the dates for the Annual Town Meeting and Elections for 2017 as June 12th and June 13th respectively.

Vote: 5/0

7. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

| | | |
|--------------|-----------|--|
| #54 | \$ | 40,872.76 (Payroll #52) |
| #55 | \$ | 41,142.42 (Payroll #1) |
| #56 | \$ | 4,495.25 (State Payables) |
| #57 | \$ | 2,272,884.94 (FY 2017 Accounts Payables) |
| Total | \$ | 2,359,395.37 |

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Paul York to approve the Treasurer's Warrants as written.

Vote: 5/0

8. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

9. Unfinished Business

- Review Policies and Ordinances
- Job Classes/Pay Scale
- Run of River/Economic Development
- Utilizing Outside Services
- Town Charter

No discussion.

Donald Skillings said that budget meeting are about to start. He encouraged anyone who would like to get involved to do so. We have openings on the Budget & Finance Committee.

10. Sign Documents

The Selectmen signed documents.

Adjourn Selectmen's Meeting.

Approved and signed on January 24, 2017.

A True Copy Attest: _____
Cara L. Mason, Executive Secretary