

**Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Regular Selectmen's Meeting
5:30 P.M.
Tuesday, August 23, 2016
Municipal Building – Council Room**

Board of Selectmen:

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

Town Manager:

Christine Almand - Absent

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. Items by the Public

There were no Items by the Public.

2. Selectmen's Items

Betty Austin said that it has been nice this summer seeing lots of tourists around and lots of things going on.

There was a magazine that featured two business-women from Skowhegan.

Darla Pickett thanked Greg Dore for getting the parking lot sign up downtown. She said she had also been out to look at Glenview Drive. She asked if that was the same thing that we did on Beech Hill?

Greg Dore said that it is reclaim material. It is old hot top and gravel. What we are doing is trying to build the base back, so that we can eventually pave it. If it holds through the winter then we would know next spring that it is ok to pave it.

Darla Pickett asked about a street light being out on the island.

Greg Dore said that Christine Almand told him about it. He sent the form to CMP.

Darla Pickett asked about wires hanging on East Maple Street.

Greg Dore said that he called the Communications Center to report it. He believes that they are telephone lines.

Donald Skillings said that the Selectmen had discussed that maybe somebody could be scheduled a couple times per month to do a nighttime check of the lights...or maybe the police department. There are frequently lights out in the parking lot.

Greg Dore said that we can do that in the parking lot. The street lights are actually maintained by CMP, so they have somebody that is checking them. We pay them monthly service fees for that.

Soren Siren said that the attendance at the fair went well. He saw his first lumberjack competition. That was pretty impressive.

3. Department & Committee Reports

Randy Gray said that the inside of the Municipal Building is looking good. He downstairs walls are being painted. The doors will be next. Newell Graf is doing it. There isn't anybody better than him at matching paint.

This year, or possibly next year, he plans to have the entryways done and replace the plexi-glass out there.

Chief Howard said that the fire station renovation is coming along nicely.

The new aerial fire truck is complete. It is out for third party testing and should be here in four to six weeks.

Greg Dore said that the highway department has been doing some culvert work and some reclaim.

The new truck will be delivered n Thursday. This is the first time since Greg Dore has been here that we got the truck in 90 days. After we verify that it meets specs, it will go to H.P. Fairfield to have the equipment installed.

Steven McDaniel said that the fall program brochures are now out. Fall Fest will be coming up at Lake George and the Haunted House in October.

Chief Bolduc said that the fair went well, except for the accident on Saturday. The next big event will be the Brew Fest on September 3rd.

Jacob Boudreau is in week two of the academy.

Darla Pickett asked how many officers would be covering the Brew Fest.

Chief Bolduc said that he would be volunteering his time at the event. There will be the day shift officers, Sargent Cummings and two additional officers. We are anticipating a big crowd and we have more than enough people to cover that.

Donald Skillings said that it is great that this is getting to be a big event. They are doing a good job of promoting this.

Gail Pelotte said that tax bills will be going out in two or three days.

Betty Austin said that someone had asked her when they could pick up absentee ballots.

Gail Pelotte said that they can get them 45 days ahead of time. People can go to the Secretary of State's website now to request an absentee ballot, or they can call us. That way when we get them we will mail it to them.

Public Hearing:

1. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Special Amusement Permit for:

Barticus, Inc. d/b/a Southside Tavern
1 Waterville Road

Donald Skillings opened the Public Hearing.

Donald Skillings closed the Public Hearing.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Paul York to approve the Application for Special Amusement Permit for Barticus, Inc. d/b/a Southside Tavern.

Vote: 5/0

Consent Agenda:

1. Approve and sign Minutes for the following:

Regular Selectmen's Meeting August 9, 2016

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

Vote: 5/0

Regular Agenda:

1. Discussion and decision to approve the Personnel Policy rehire language.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Darla Pickett to approve the Personnel Policy retirement rehire language as proposed.

Paul York said that he thinks there are a few things that need to be cleaned up a bit. The 95% should be 93% because that is what we have done in a round-about way.

Donald Skillings said that this does not have an effect on the individual that was discussed in executive session. That person also gave up a 2% step. In order for it to be equal in the future it needs to be 7%, because that is what that person actually gave up.

Betty Austin said that it really says that now. It is 95% of what they make now, without the next raise.

Donald Skillings said that if the Chief had waited another day to retire, he would have had his 2% step. If somebody waits a day in order to get that raise, then it defeats what we are trying to do, because then they only took a 3% cut instead of 5%.

Darla Pickett asked if there was a way to fix the language about the step increase, instead of changing the 95%.

Chief Bolduc said that he doesn't feel that they will deal with this scenario again. For retirement, their year starts September 1st. It is ironic that he was promoted as Chief on September 2nd of last year. He didn't get an adjustment until July 1st. His retirement date is August 31st. He is eligible for retirement today. If he waits one more month, then his benefit doesn't start until a month later. If he retires August 31st, his benefit starts October 1st. If he waited until September 1st, then his benefit wouldn't start until November 1st.

Trisha Austin said that she feels that 95% is 95% for everyone. If they choose to wait until after they get to that step, then they have earned that step. Chances are that most people that are retiring will be at the top of the scale anyway.

Betty Austin said that she thinks we are making things way too complicated, and we need to stick with what we have.

Darla Pickett said that after hearing the Chief, she agrees.

Donald Skillings said he didn't realize the September 1st component of Maine State Retirement.

Donald Bolduc said that they look at his three highest years, but their years run September 1st through August 31st. If he worked until December, that three months would go toward the next year as far as retirement.

Donald Skillings asked to table this. He said there is another issue. He wants to know if this was a firefighter, for example, does this person lose their seniority. If there was a layoff in the near future after somebody was rehired from retirement... would that person be laid off or would the newest new hire be laid off. He wouldn't want to see the new firefighter lose his job while the retiree is collecting retirement and is still employed.

Chief Howard said that currently that would be the case, and most of those are dictated by union contract. If somebody is rehired within a certain timeframe they will retain all of their seniority rights.

Donald Skillings said he did not see that in the union contract.

Chief Howard said that it is either in the contract or in the Town's Policy. In past practice, people who have done this have not lost their seniority.

Donald Skillings said that if it is in the union contract, then we are done...but if it is in the Town's Policy, the Selectmen set that.

Chief Howard said that we are making a decision to keep somebody who has seniority. They are exercising their right to collect the retirement that they have paid for. If we say that we will not rehire after retirement...more than likely what we see is they just leave and go to a different fire department. They are still getting their retirement, they are still working and getting paid...now we have lost that employee. He feels that the Town wins by having a policy where we allow people to collect the retirement that they have earned and paid for. We retain them at a discounted cost to the Town, because the Town is no longer paying toward the retirement. As far as seniority, they could make the choice to not retire...then they don't lose their seniority. He does not feel that there should be a penalty or punishment for taking their retirement.

Soren Siren said that is a risk.

Donald Skillings said that in the teachers union, they get rehired at 100% but lose all seniority.

Greg Dore said that he thinks that something like this, we would want decided by the union. See if they think that is unfair.

Donald Skillings said that he does not believe it is in the union contracts. It would not be a contract change. If it is not in the contract, it is just a personnel matter.

Donald Bolduc asked if this would affect him.

Donald Skillings said that it would not affect him, he is done.

Doanld Bolduc asked if teachers come back at 100%.

Donald Skillings said that they do, and lose all seniority. Administrators come back at 75%. The policy needs to be set so that it is equitable and known.

Chief Howard said that in comparing us to the teachers union...you may want to look at the fact that we still pay Social Security where they do not.

Donald Skillings said that they can also collect both.

Chief Howard said that you can, but you are penalized because of the retirement. We still pay in at the full amount.

Donald Skillings said that Darla Pickett had said before the meeting that she felt we should have a workshop.

Darla Pickett said that she doesn't like making policy decision and scrambling to make changes at the meeting.

Betty Austin said that she thinks that what is written is fine. If people want more time, she will go along with that.

Soren Siren said he would like a little more time. He thinks to be fair, we need to make sure it is clear.

Donald Skillings read the language to be added to the Personnel Policy.

Soren Siren said if we are set with that language...can we put this in place and then go back and look at the other things that we want to change.

Betty Austin said that she is fine with voting on this tonight and looking at the Personnel Policy in the near future.

Donald Skillings said he was worried that we would be setting a precedent. He asked Trisha Austin if there are currently any other scenarios that would be impacted by this.

Trisha Austin said she didn't believe so.

Donald Skillings said he didn't want somebody thinking this is the policy and then we change it again tomorrow. He wants it to be equitable, and he wants them to know what they are getting into.

Trisha Austin said you can't tell people that they have to retire before or after their next raise. She thinks that the 95% is clear.

Darla Pickett said that on the third line where it say "their" it should say his/her.

Betty Austin and Soren Siren said that they thought that "their" would be correct.

Donald Skillings said he thought it should be left the way it was.

Vote: 4/1 (Donald Skillings opposed)

Recording Time: 35:53

2. Discussion and decision to accept the resignation of Chief Bolduc effective August 31, 2016.

A motion was made by Darla Pickett and seconded by Betty Austin to accept the resignation of Donald Bolduc as Chief of Police effective August 31, 2016.

Chief Bolduc said he just wanted to make sure that nothing has changed since the Executive Session two weeks ago.

The Selectmen said that nothing had changed.

Vote: 5/0

3. Discussion and decision to appoint Donald Bolduc as Chief of Police effective September 1, 2016.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Darla Pickett to appoint Donald Bolduc as Chief of Police effective September 1, 2016.

Vote: 5/0

4. Discussion and decision to appoint one Selectman to participate in the General Government union negotiations.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to appoint Darla Pickett to participate in the General Government union negotiations.

Vote: 4/0/1 (Darla Pickett abstained)

5. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Malt, Spirituous, Vinous License for:

Richard B. Hughes
Barticus, Inc. d/b/a Southside Tavern
1 Waterville Road

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Betty Austin to approve the Application for Malt, Spirituous, Vinous License for Barticus, Inc. d/b/a Southside Tavern.

Vote: 5/0

6. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow Richard Hughes to hold a fundraiser walk for the Food Cupboard on September 10, 2016 at 11:00a.m., and to waive the insurance requirement.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow Richard Hughes to hold a fundraiser walk for the Food Cupboard on September 10, 2016 at 11:00a.m., and to waive the insurance requirement.

Paul York said he wasn't sure about waiving the insurance requirement if we are making other people have it.

Donald Skillings said that he thought they had said that they would waive it for non-profits.

Cara Mason said that, by ordinance, the Selectmen have the authority to waive the insurance requirement. They are required to ask for a waiver. He did do this, and there is an attachment. This was waived for him last year.

Vote: 5/0

7. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 from the Highway Department Reserve Account, Streets and Sidewalks Designation to complete work on the Willow Street and Elm Street sidewalks.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to expend an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 from the Highway Department Reserve Account, Streets and Sidewalks Designation to complete work on the Willow Street and Elm Street sidewalks.

Paul York said that he does not feel that we can do this work cheaper than hiring someone to do it. If there is an issue, and it was hired out, they would come back and fix it. He would like to see the highway department get out of doing construction work.

Donald Skillings asked what was being done on Willow Street.

Greg Dore said that it would be a cosmetic fix between Main Street and Green Street. This was not on the ten year plan. He moved it up because of the other work that has been done on that street as part of the CSO project. This will make it match. We didn't get a chance to do this last fall, as planned.

Paul York asked what other sidewalks had been done this year as part of the ten year plan.

Greg Dore said that sidewalks have not been started yet this year. This money is in a reserve account. None of this work can be done, until that money is available.

Paul York said that we have sidewalks in worse shape. If we are just doing cosmetic fixes, maybe some of these others should be done first.

Greg Dore said that Elm Street is not a cosmetic fix. Elm Street is part of the plan. We keep working towards the sidewalks on the plan. Willow Street is not part of the plan for this year, but Greg Dore said he feels that we should finish that.

Donald Skillings asked what part of Elm Street is being done.

Greg Dore said that this would include the section from the boardwalk to the History House. The hot top will be taken out, and his intention is to raise a portion of that sidewalk. It drops down from the edge of the road.

Donald Skillings said that he likes the clean look of the sidewalks that were done as part of the parking lot project that ties the parking lot, Cumberland Farms and Hights together.

Greg Dore said that the highway department did Fairview Avenue a few years ago. That is curbed, and he thinks that it came out really well. We do about 800 to 1000 feet per year. Greg Dore said that his guys are very good at it.

Donald Skillings said that he talked to people that do this. They can do this in a few hours instead of a few days.

Greg Dore said he doesn't think that it takes the highway department any longer than it takes them. We cannot compete with granite curbing. There is more to it than the fact that we can do it for less money. The guys do a lot of mundane maintenance work. Every summer we do a week's worth of construction and sidewalk work. It's good for morale. It gives them a sense of accomplishment. Greg Dore said that we have been doing sidewalks ever since he took over as Road Commissioner. We can see that it is working...there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Donald Skillings said that the \$10,000.00 isn't going to go towards wages, trucks, fuel, etc. A construction company that does these things, does them more efficiently. If there is a puddle in the middle of the sidewalk, we can go back to them and have them fix it.

Greg Dore said that when he figured cost per foot, that included labor and materials.

Donald Skillings said that he is concerned that we would be using five or six guys and their salary when they could be doing something else. We could hire someone in to do the sidewalks while our guys do the maintenance components of their jobs.

Greg Dore said that we can do the sidewalks at \$16.00 per foot. That includes wages and materials. We paid \$19.00 per foot to Jordan...that didn't include engineering or inspections.

Darla Pickett asked if we could save money by contracting this work out.

Greg Dore said that contracting it out would cost more money. It is hard for a contractor to compete with us. Our guys aren't paid as well as the guys that work for these contractors. That's why we keep losing guys to these contractors. We also don't pay taxes on equipment, no fuel taxes.

Darla Pickett said she is tired of going out to bid for small jobs like this. We've got a good crew, and they know what they are doing.

Donald Skillings said that he appreciates that, but it is the Selectmen's job to do a cost analysis. Five or six guys with their payroll and their benefits, two dump trucks at \$125.00 an hour.

Greg Dore said he doesn't know who pays \$125.00 per hour for a dump truck. That must be federal rates.

Donald Skillings said that was the rate we were given last year for a sweeper with a driver.

Greg Dore said that is a different piece of equipment, and the driver of our dump truck already is figured into the figure for payroll. Greg Dore said that he does not figure equipment costs into this because the truck has already been paid for and we pay no taxes on it.

Donald Skillings asked what else they could be doing if we used that money to hire somebody to build the sidewalks. We shouldn't be doing that stuff.

Greg Dore said that there is a break even. We learned this when we were doing sewers for ten years. We did all of the storm water separation. At first we were doing maybe 1000 feet, then 1500 feet, then 2000 feet. Then it got to the point where we realized that we couldn't do this, and we were better off to farm that out.

We are talking about a sidewalk. It is a week's worth of work. We can save money and build morale with the crew.

Soren Siren said that when the sidewalks get too big and are too much, Greg Dore will need to come to the Selectmen and find another way to get them done.

Greg Dore said that he already does this and will continue to. Madison Avenue sidewalk was way over our heads. We hired somebody else to do that.

Vote: 3/2 (Donald Skillings and Paul York Opposed)

Recording Time: 56:12

8. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for three entry doors at the highway garage.

A motion was made by Soren Siren and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for three entry doors at the highway garage.

Vote: 5/0

9. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for winter sand.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Darla Pickett to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for winter sand.

Paul York asked why we were bidding out 2000 yards. He thought we just bought 1500 yards at the end of the season. Usually if we have extra sand piles, it is 400 to 600 yards.

Greg Dore said that typically we have 1000 to 1500 yards on Pine Street, and then there may be room for another 600 yards in the sand shed. We need the pile on Pine Street to be big enough that we can get into it if we need to. If we have another winter like last year, then we won't have to do this next year.

Vote: 5/0

10. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid to pave the Municipal Building Parking Lot.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Soren Siren to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid to pave the Municipal Building Parking Lot.

Paul York said the Selectmen were asked to approve a patch job for the parking lot. The Selectmen wanted it to go out to bid. Now it is being brought back to pave the whole thing.

Greg Dore said that he had a conversation with a contractor. The contractor said that he would do this project at a reduced rate. The money is almost the same to do the patch job or to do an inch and a quarter overlay to the whole parking lot.

Paul York asked why it wasn't brought to the Selectmen for the whole parking lot from the beginning.

Greg Dore said that he didn't have any idea that we would be paying less than \$120.00 per ton. This contractor said that he would do it for substantially less.

Donald Skillings said that he is missing where the integrity of the bid process is in this. You have had a discussion with a contractor. He has cut you a price. Now because he had cut you a good price, you want to go out to bid for an entire project.

Greg Dore said that nobody knows what he had given for a price. Any contractor can still bid.

Donald Skillings asked if anyone else had a bad feeling about this...like a shady king of feeling.

Darla Pickett said that the bidders can bid any amount that they want. We don't know how much he's going to bid.

Paul York said that we shouldn't be talking to a contractor trying to come up with a deal if we are putting something out to bid.

Donald Skillings said that is a stacked deck. How did this go from a shim to overlaying the whole parking lot, and to get a potential price form that person?

Greg Dore said that he had talked to the contractor prior to the last meeting about doing the work. When it didn't get approved at the meeting, he called the contractor to let him know that we would be putting it out to bid. The contractor said that he appreciated the work that we had given him in the past, and that he would do this job for just about what his costs would be. Greg Dore told him that it still would have to go out to bid.

Sore Siren said that if her were a contractor he wouldn't even bother to put a bid in, because it sounds like the deal is done.

Greg Dore said that the bid is not slighted towards anybody. It is an overlay of the parking lot.

Donald Skillings said that he wants to make sure that we maintain the sanctity of the bid process.

Randy Gray said that he does this same thing all the time. He always bring a contractor in to walk through a project. We can't be experts on everything. You ask us to do too many things. He makes it very clear to them that it has to be bid out and that they will not get any preference.

Darla Pickett asked if we were apt to get more low bidders since it is the end of the season.

Greg Dore said that his fear is that we would not. This is the busy season for these contractors.

Chief Howard said that the fire department has the same issues when they go out to bid for fire trucks. They have to talk to vendors in order to come up with the correct bid specs. for what we want. The information is offered freely.

Chief Bolduc said that the bid process is a good thing, but there a situations where things can be purchased for less by negotiating one on one.

Darla Pickett said she has had people comment to her that there is no point going out to bid for police cars because Hights always gets it all.

Donald Skillings said that he does not want to upset the relationship with this particular contractor. They have done a great job for us.

Chief Howard said that once you buy from somebody and they have a great product at a great price...sometimes it is an excuse for the other vendors. They say we wrote the specs so that one company could get it. Or they don't bid because they say we won't buy from them anyway. This is not perfect, but we do the best that we can. We make it as fair as we can.

Donald Skillings agreed that this is a fair bid process. He appreciates this discussion.

Betty Austin said that we used to get complaints that we never bought police cars in Skowhegan.

Vote: 5/0

11. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

#114	\$	2,444.29 (FY 2016 Accounts Payables)
#14	\$	35,051.41 (Payroll #32)
#15	\$	39,470.92 (Payroll #33)
#16	\$	10,487.16 (FY 2017 State Payables)
#17	\$	157,591.67 (FY 2017 Accounts Payables)
Total	\$	245,045.45

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

Vote: 5/0

12. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

13. Unfinished Business

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

No discussion.

14. Sign Documents

The Selectmen signed documents.

Adjourn Selectmen's Meeting.

Approved and signed on September 13, 2016.

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