



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 10:00 am Belmont Mill, Tioga Meeting Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Claude "Sonny" Patten, Jr., Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Police Chief Mark Lewandoski, Police Captain Stephen Akerstrom, Fire Chief Deb Black, Assistant Fire Chief Donald Pickowicz, Town Planner Karen Santoro, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, and General Assistance Director Donna Cilley.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review & Approve Minutes – 01/17/2024 & 01/26/2024:

Selectman Sonny Patten moved the minutes of the meeting held on January 17, 2024 as written; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the public meeting held on January 26, 2024 as written; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Selectman O'Hara moved the minutes of the non-public meeting held on January 26, 2024 as written; seconded by Selectman Sharon Ciampi. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

New Business:

2024 Deliberative Session Update:

TA Alicia Jipson reported the session went well and there were no changes to the warrants and no amendments made, and there was good attendance. Selectman Pike thanked department heads for being present to speak to warrant articles rather than relying on the Board of Selectmen. The Voter's Guide is posted on the Town website and hard copies are available at Town Hall.

Office of Highway Safety Grant:

TA Jipson stated the Board already accepted this annual grant for \$15,387.47 but it was amended with a new amount, \$27,126.94.

Selectman Pike moved to accept the grant amendment to the 2024 Highway Safety Grant from the Office of Highway Safety for the new amount of \$27,126.94; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Police Chief Mark Lewandoski explained that these funds are for enforcement such as speed, seat belts, DWI and distracted driving.

CPR Class for Employees:

Around 2020 there were a lot of employees interested in first aid and CPR classes, which would also include AED instruction. Those classes were never offered due to COVID. There is still a lot of interest. The Fire Department will host, and one of their call firefighters will teach the course. The cost is \$7 for each certificate. The Board discussed holding training during the workday vs. evenings or weekends. It was the consensus of the Board that employees attend in their off-work hours, but the Town will cover the certificate costs. TA Jipson will work out a schedule with the instructor.

DPW Director Craig Clairmont noted that there used to be an AED at the Highway Garage but it disappeared a few years ago. He would like to see if there are any grants to get a new one. Fire Chief Deb Black said it would also be good to update the AEDs that we have.

Province Road Grange:

Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman drafted a letter of acknowledgement for the Board to sign with regards to the Charitable Exemption for the property at 229 Province Road. The Grange group who owns the property is defunct and there are no funds. Alcoholics Anonymous continues to use the building, holds the keys, pays the utilities and maintains the property. There are no contacts for the group due to their anonymity. The Board acknowledges that the property continues to be of significant charitable use in the community and that they will continue to grant the charitable exemption for the property. A copy of the acknowledgement letter will go in the files for state audit purposes, and to help inform future staff of the situation with the property. The Town does not own the property or accept any liability for the property. Chief Lewandoski noted that back in 1977 there was a committee, but all of the members have passed away. The location has always been used for AA meetings, and sees heavy use. It is heated by wood and has an outhouse. The police department has never had any issues at that property.

Other New Business:

2024 Road Plan:

DPW Director Craig Clairmont updated the Board on their plans for Middle Route. They have already met with contractors and are working on a plan. There are stations marked on the road to define areas for underdrain and tree removal. They are starting to work on quantities and estimates for pricing to help determine if the project will need to be phased or not. They want to get any prep work they can do now in the off-season. They will contact Eversource to coordinate on any tree work. This will be a project like Hurricane Road. They will save 20-25% and it will not go out to bid.

Assistant Fire Chief:

Fire Chief Deb Black formally introduced the Board to our new Assistant Fire Chief Don Pickowicz.

Old Business:

Town of Belmont vs G. Walker:

TA Jipson provided the Board with copies of the award from the court. All fees and penalties were awarded to the Town. Town Planner Karen Santoro estimates the amount to be in excess of \$121,000. Mr. Walker will probably set up a monthly payment plan. If Mr. Walker does not clean up the property by May 1st the Town can complete the cleanup and Mr. Walker will owe for the cleanup costs. This may involve a lien on the property. The Town will get fines and penalties, reimbursement of legal costs, and the costs of the cleanup if Mr. Walker does not complete it himself.

Town of Belmont vs S. Fereshetian:

There is a joint proposed order for the property and the Town stood firm on fees and penalties. Mr. Fereshetian countered and we talked with our lawyer about reducing the amount to close this violation out and move on. The Town's former Code Enforcement Officer reported that the property had come into compliance. The Board would need to make a motion to approve the settlement to go back to the court. Chairman Mooney asked if they are still in compliance. TA Jipson said we are not sure because there is some confusion on this. Town Planner Kare Santoro said she recently took photos of the property at our attorney's request. The advantage of this proposed order is that it clearly spells out what indicates compliance and there are no questions. That is the benefit of this document. If the property owner does not meet the standards in the order, he will be out of compliance. If the property comes out of compliance the owner will have 10 days to make corrections. This is the way that we can enforce compliance. We are agreeing to \$7,500 plus attorney's fees. The owners are looking to sell the property; however they won't be able to sell it to a relative or affiliate and continue to occupy the property. It would need to be a fair market sale. Selectman Pike asked about the people living in the garage. This violation was for the junkyard, not for people living in the garage. That would be a separate issue.

Selectman Patten moved to approve the settlement agreement drafted by Town legal counsel on January 17, 2024, between the Town of Belmont and Mr. Fereshetian; seconded by Selectman Pike. Motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Other Old Business:

Mill Renovations:

The Board was provided with a proposal from Bonnette, Page & Stone (BPS) for the HVAC system. They propose replacing the HVAC in all of the closets on the three floors, for the exchanges. No new duct work would be completed until renovations begin in each of the rooms. This will make things easier if the system needs to be phased in. The proposal also includes replacement of the gas boiler. The Board will review and discuss this at the next meeting.

Public Comment: None

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 10:00 am.

Non-Public:

Selectman Pike moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a, c & d) at 10:42 am, seconded by Selectman O'Hara. Roll Call 1: J. Pike – aye, S. Patten – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Those present and voting were Chairman Ruth Mooney and Selectmen Jon Pike, Claude Patten, Jr., Travis O'Hara, and Sharon Ciampi. Also present were TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Fire Chief Deb Black, and Assistant Fire Chief Donald Pickowicz.

The Board discussed ambulance billing.

Chief Black and Assistant Chief Pickowicz left the meeting at 10:48 am and Town Planner Karen Santoro joined the meeting.

TA Jipson and Town Planner Santoro proposed some changes to the Building and Land Use Departments to help streamline processes and maintain consistency. It was the consensus of the Board to accept the changes as proposed.

Town Planner Santoro left the meeting at 11:11am.

The Board had deliberations regarding employment issues.

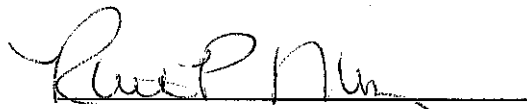
The Board chose who will receive the Annual Report Dedication.

Selectman Ciampi moved to exit non-public session at 12:03 pm seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call 2: S. Ciampi – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, S. Patten – aye, J. Pike – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

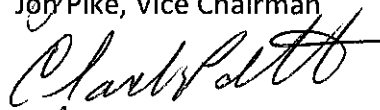
Selectman Travis O'Hara moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session because it could adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of the Board and it could render a proposed action ineffective; seconded by Selectman Ciampi. Roll Call 3: S. Patten – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, J. Pike – aye, T. O'Hara – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Adjournment:

Selectman Pike moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:04 pm seconded by Selectman Patten. Roll Call 4: T. O'Hara – aye, J. Pike – aye, S. Ciampi – aye, S. Patten – aye, R. Mooney – aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).


Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

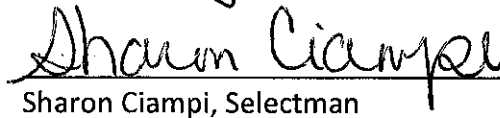

Jon Pike, Vice Chairman



Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman



Travis O'Hara, Selectman



Sharon Ciampi, Selectman