

**Town of Blue Hill  
Select Board Meeting  
Monday, May 6, 2024  
Minutes**

**Called Meeting to Order at 5:30pm**

1. **Quorum and Meeting Attendance** – E. Best (Chair), S. Miller, J. Dow, J. Wootten, B. Adams, J. Atwell (TA), M. Rockwell (Treasurer)
2. **Approve Select Board Meeting Minutes of April 29, 2024** – S. Miller moved to accept the minutes of the Select Board Meeting from April 29 incorporating comments made today; J. Wootten seconded. Vote: 5/0 Approved.
3. **Public Comment** - Jeanette Gray raised concerns about water in her backyard on Union Street. She stated that since the new homes have gone in, her backyard is drenched with water. She believes the ditching and culvert work on the Beech Hill Road (which is a town road) has been covered over and/or bypassed and is causing water issues on Union Street (a state road). B. Adams has looked at the properties and stated that he can do some ditching on Beech Hill Road but he doesn't believe that will stop or fix the problem. J. Gray would like to walk with Ben and Julie (Road Commissioner) when they come to look into the issue.

**Business**

1. **Banking/Investments** – S. Miller discussed with the Board the benefits of moving money to the First, into the NOW account. There are no withdrawal fees or penalties. They use collateralization to insure the account funds. The rate is better by 70 basis points than the Bar Harbor Bank & Trust sweep account. Currently, the Town has approximately \$3 million in cash at Bar Harbor Bank & Trust. S. Miller moved to authorize the Treasurer to move \$1.5 million from Bar Harbor Bank & Trust to the NOW account at The First; B. Adams seconded. Vote: 5/0 Approved.
2. **Tree Warden Update** – Phil Norris addressed the Board concerning the injection of elm trees. He stated that he's had 100% participation from property owners he has approached. Most have paid the entire cost versus the 50% agreed on by the Board. Bartlett Tree Service is injecting the George Stevens Academy trees and Hawks Tree Service is doing the private owner trees. They should be completed with the work by the end of next week. Phil spoke about a master tree plan for downtown, an elm ally of sorts. He would like to plant disease resistant elms and has already begun planting.
3. **Public Hearing**
  - a. **Seaside Cemetery Rules (topics include prohibiting dogs and planting rules) (5:45pm)** – Many residents turned out for the public hearing. Marilyn Whittlesey addressed the Board concerned that the Cemetery Association was not notified or consulted about the possible rule changes. She was advised that the association is responsible for perpetual care. Jan Wilson spoke against dogs being in the cemetery stating it was disrespectful. Jeff Milliken asked if there were current rules in place. He was advised that there were. He asked if there had been any infractions. He was advised that there were many. It is difficult to enforce them, but there are many legitimate complaints and many pet owners are not responsible. Fabiola spoke in favor of allowing dogs in the cemetery. She picks up

after her own and if she sees other pet waste will pick that up as well. She has attempted to enforce the leash law rules with other owners as well. Tina Allen spoke of being sad to lose the area for dogs as she often walks hers there. Nick Sichterman addressed the Board stating that it was very disrespectful to allow dogs into the cemetery. The topic of plantings and placing of pinwheels and plastic flowers was then addressed. Currently, the rule is no plantings, but cut (natural) flowers are fine. S. Miller explained the situation concerning the cost of upkeep and care required in maintaining the grounds with all the various plantings. J. Dow reviewed the current rules. Sichterman agreed with banning woody plants, but wondered why we would want to prohibit plastic flowers and other objects. J. Wootten cited the Plastic Ordinance that the Town has. Jeff Milliken asked if there is any way for the Town to enforce the rules. S. Miller spoke concerning possible enforcement policies. You could impose fines, put people on notice and signage would be needed. Anne Piazza stated that if there was notification put out via the Packet, she would be happy to do clean-up and suggested having a “clean-up day”. The question was asked if the rule changes were a Board decision or a town wide vote. The Board advised it was in their purview. The public hearing was closed at 6:27pm.

4. **Clerk/Registrar of Voters Appointment** – S. Miller moved to select Sarah Lavallee as the new Town Clerk and Registrar of Voters with a pay increase to \$27.25/hour; B. Adams seconded. Vote: 5/0 Approved.
5. **Policy Update – Elections** – J. Atwell would like the Select Board to amend the elections bonus policy to distribute the \$4,000 (the budgeted amount) as she sees fit. The employees should be allowed to split the bonus amongst themselves as they all contribute. J. Dow moved to authorize the Town Administrator to distribute up to the annual budgeted amount; J. Wootten seconded. J. Dow withdrew his motion as the Board decided they should write a new draft of the policy.
6. **DOT – Falls Bridge – Thank You** – S. Miller moved to have the Town Administrator express thanks to the Maine Department of Transportation for accommodating our emergency vehicles during bridge construction. The Board agreed that a vote wasn’t needed, but a thank you ”would be proper and appropriate.

### **Other Business**

1. **Lines for Town Wharfs** – The cost of the painted lines for the wharf parking areas total \$1425 (\$825 South Blue Hill Wharf & \$600 Town Wharf).
2. **Road Clean-Up** – B. Adams advised that most of the Town roads have been cleaned up of winter debris and sand.
3. **South Blue Hill Wharf** – Nick Niehoff (Harbormaster) thought the South Blue Hill wharfs were put in last week and the Town Wharf will be in by the end of May.
4. **Minute Taker** – J. Atwell presented the Board with a possible candidate to take and publish minutes for the Board. J. Dow spoke about making sure they get the proper training. When asked about the rate of pay, it was suggested that it might be a community service project.

### **Executive Session**

S. Miller moved to enter executive session at 6:50pm per 1 M.R.S. §405 (6)(A) – Personnel Matter; J. Dow seconded. Vote: 5/0 Approved.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:15pm. S. Miller moved to appoint Ellen Best as the attorney to represent the Town in the transfer of land ownership from Blue Hill Heritage Trust to the Town; seconded by B. Adams. Vote: 4/0/1 (E. Best abstained).

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:19pm. All approved.