

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, October 21, 2024
Minutes**

Called the meeting to order at pm

Determine quorum and meeting attendance – S. Miller, B. Adams, J. Dow, J. Wootten, J. Atwell (virtual), S. Lavallee (Town Clerk), Z. Pulitzer (Minute Taker).

Approval of Minutes

S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of October 07, 2024, as edited and suggested tabling the minutes for September 30, 2024, until everyone has reviewed. J. Dow seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

Public Comments

Regarding the proposed traffic ordinance update, Mark E. Hurvitt is concerned about the inability for people to turn around correctly if Mill Street becomes one-way at the last quarter of the road. S. Miller stated people would hopefully, after a transition period, heed the warnings posted at the intersection with High Street.

Business

1 PFAS Study – Michelle Berger

Michelle Berger presented results from the Shaw Institute Blue Hill PFAS study. The study was funded by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund [and the Town] and tested 11 different sites at 7 local streams and 120 different wells. 43 of the wells (36%) contained PFAS and, of these, 18% were above the US EPA drinking water threshold. Mc Heard Brook, Mill Stream and Peters Brook were among three stream sites that contained PFAS. Berger indicated that the source of the PFAS is unknown, but potential causes could be from the school's cleaners like floor polish, firefighting fluorinated foam, and area fertilizers in the soil. Berger also noted that the Shaw Institute plans to deliver a more formal presentation of their findings at a public meeting. Test kits are still available for purchase; however, results from these kits will no longer be covered by the grant. She emphasized the importance of individualized testing despite this, not relying on neighbors' results, as outcomes can be highly random and unpredictable.

2 Tree Maintenance – Phil Norris

Phil Norris discussed the importance of reviving past efforts to save the elm trees in Blue Hill. There were historically over 500 elm trees, and for 25 years, the town funded their maintenance. Previous Tree Warden Ellen Anthony's efforts in 2000 led to a successful cost-sharing program that fostered community involvement. However, the pandemic disrupted these efforts, coinciding with the spread of Dutch elm disease in 2020. These events resulted in significant expenses for the town, including \$26,000 for tree work at Seaside Cemetery, \$7,000 for tree injections, \$3,700 for removing diseased trees, and \$1,500 for planting new trees. Phil Norris expressed concern about withdrawing support for the cost-sharing program, which has been vital for residents wanting to maintain a 50/50 funding split for tree care. He suggested at least an extension one year to help residents adjust.

Phil Norris additionally brought to attention that the ash tree is also under threat. Rich Boulet expressed interest in reapplying for grants, while S. Miller proposed a donation campaign to save the elms, with target amounts of \$15,000 to \$19,000. S. Miller supported extending the timeline for tree injections and the tree warden's duties have been expanded to include all street trees, not just elms. Future planning should consider these efforts within the town's budget, and S. Miller has requested that Phil present a list of trees to be addressed this year along with a budget proposal. Finally, discussions are underway about cutting down a decimated park tree and potentially planting a new large tree in its place.

3 Request to purchase ROW - Mike Curtis

Mike Curtis presented a map of a small ROW between his two parcels of land. The State no longer uses the ROW and suggested confirming with the town for its purchase. E. Best to confirm how to proceed if the board agrees.

4 Animal Control Officer

Carol Ann Cutler will resign as Animal Control Officer effective November 4. J. Dow commented that Blue Hill needs an animal control officer by state law, so S. Miller suggested hiring the Hancock County one, but the response time was a concern. J. Atwell to run ad for new ACO. The board would like a record of calls Carol Ann had during her tenure as ACO for Blue Hill.

5 Abatements

Map 032 Lot 016: Owen Gavigan and Ronna Hodgdon requested an adjustment in land valuation based on restricted views.] It was agreed to table this, the board still needs clarification from Assessor Agent regarding restricted views and view easements.

6 Memorial Bench Request

A woman is interested in purchasing a bench for her mother and provided a picture of the desired design. However, there are some reservations about the placement and specifics. The board considered creating a space where people can commemorate loved ones with bricks or similar things. S. Miller suggested that the Town adopt a standard design for benches on its property and allow donors to have a plaque placed on it. Julie will tell her that they are considering the proposal, but more details are needed. This topic will be added back to the agenda for next week to discuss potential locations and designs to present to her.

7 Liquor License – CP Blue Hill Leaseco, LLC (Parker Ridge) and Humble Bee LLC

- The application for a liquor license from CP Blue Hill Leaseco, LLC (Parker Ridge) was submitted and is complete, according to staff. S. Miller moved to set a public hearing for November 28 at 5:45 PM. B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

- S. Miller moved to have a public hearing for the liquor license for HumbleBee LLC immediately following the public hearing for CP Blue Hill on November 28th at 5:45pm. B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

8 Letter of Support – Sister's Salsa

Sister's Salsa is seeking a grant from the Department of Agriculture to purchase a refrigerated truck. They have requested a letter of support from the town to strengthen their grant application.

The Board wants more information as to why they need the letter of support and a draft letter that they can sign from Sister's Salsa if they choose to support the cause.

9 Election Day

J. Milliken brought up several suggestions to the board for election day processes; Monitors to be stationed at entrances, one person responsible for contacting 911 in case of issues, having an evacuation route with specific workers assigned to assist in exiting the building safely, clear signage to indicate exits and procedures for evacuating ballots in case of an emergency. These were directed to the Town Clerk and Town Administrator, who are responsible for and coordinating election day activities.

10 Investable Funds

The town has already paid a little over half of the total cost for the Mountain Road project with another bill to come in. Bar Harbor Bank and Trust is showing favorable rates. Discussion will take place next week for recommendations for towns' invested funds.

11 Traffic Ordinance

Before next Monday, S. Miller encouraged the Board to look at the draft he sent regarding updates to the ordinance. He stated it can be easily amended if the Board determines that improvements or corrections are necessary.

Other Business

Mountain Road is expected to be completed next week with striping to finalize the project. Construction has caused minor disruptions including the damage to vinyl siding at a resident's house. B. Adams noted this and will follow up with the contractor to ensure that it is appropriately repaired.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:55pm, seconded. All approved.
Meeting adjourned subject to signing disbursement warrants