

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024
Minutes**

Called the meeting to order at 5:31pm

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

Approval of Minutes

E. Best moved to approve the minutes as edited of the September 30, 2024, and October 21, 2024, meetings; J. Dow seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

Public Comments

Allen Kratz will be facilitating a partnership between the nine Blue Hill Peninsula towns for a significant grant opportunity through the Climate Resilience Partnership. \$175,000 (maximum) could be awarded to towns that jointly apply. The focus of the partnership would be efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, implement recommendations from the Climate Resilience Committee, and start a leadership program. A part-time leadership program could be created to coordinate resident activities and facilitate communication while providing early-career individuals with a chance to turn ideas into action. The grant application is due December 17, 2024. A budget is currently being developed and endorsement from other towns is being sought. S. Miller commented what advantages there may be applying to this as a group or if the town's Climate Resilience committee should apply separately. A separate grant could be up to \$75,000. A. Kratz stated there would be a competitive advantage to being awarded the grant as a group. The Select Board endorsed continued development of an application, but also to focus on projects that provide tangible benefits to the town.

Business

1 SeaLoft Update

Tabled until next week's meeting, E. Best to research more into the matter.

2 Public Hearings

a. CP Blue Hill Leaseco, LLC (Parker Ridge)

CP Blue Hill Leaseco, LLC (Parker Ridge) requested renewal of a wine-only restaurant license. E. Best moved to approve the renewal; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

b. Humblebee, LLC (Humblebee Café) - Immediately Following Parker Ridge

Humblebee, LLC (Humblebee Café) requested renewal of a liquor, beer and wine restaurant license. E. Best moved to approve the renewal; J. Dow seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

3 Liquor License

B. Adams moved to set a hearing for the renewal of the liquor license for Marlintini's on Monday, November 4, at 5:45 PM. S. Miller seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

4 Animal Control Officer

J. Atwell spoke with Hancock County regarding animal control services. For this year only, a two-month agreement is needed with a tentative rate between \$25 and \$27 per hour. J. Atwell expressed this would give the town time to evaluate options for 2025. S. Miller moved to authorize execution of an agreement and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for animal control services for the remainder of 2024; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

5 Sewer Hook-Ups

The Sewer Ordinance requires all properties within 200 feet of the sewer line to connect (unless they have a suitable septic system and receive approval from a committee described in the ordinance), which made sense when certain parts of town had inadequate sewage systems. Residents with functioning septic systems must nonetheless pay a fee (the "Opportunity Cost") due to the availability of the sewer. A resident with a working septic system and whose property is 200 feet from the sewer line, is asking for written permission to be exempt from hooking up, as permitted by ordinance. E. Best proposed setting up an online meeting with at least three board members and B. Emerson (as Local Health Officer and Licensed Plumbing Inspector) to discuss granting permission. E. Best suggested a review of the Sewer Ordinance and a review of the cost structure and fees, suggesting the Opportunity Cost might need a downward adjustment. A meeting to review the specific request was set for October 29 at 10:00am.

6 Supporting carbons fees - David Deitrich

David Deitrich identified vulnerabilities related to climate change and emphasized the need for solutions, referencing local projects such as the Seaside Cemetery and roads. He highlighted his work with the Citizens Climate Lobby and advocated for putting a price on carbon to combat global warming. While he has lobbied in Washington and elsewhere, he acknowledged that his individual voice does not have the same impact as that of a Board. He requested the town to adopt a resolution in favor of a national carbon pricing mechanism.

S. Miller raised concerns about the select board's role in endorsing it without further specificity, particularly regarding how tax revenue would be allocated. He expressed uncertainty about supporting the initiative without understanding the distribution of funds and the impacts on residents. The request was tabled, to be discussed at the next Select Board meeting.

7 Request to purchase ROW - Mike Curtis

Mike Curtis is requesting to purchase a ROW that lies across two of his parcels. He was informed that this ROW was known to belong to the State but was informed by DOT to inquire with the town. E. Best will research and see if there are any legal matters and associated costs before considering. The board agreed to consider placing this matter on the Town Warrant if a sale was to be had and explore the valuation of the property. E. Best will look for relevant emails regarding Sperry Pond to provide additional context for discussion.

8 Abatements

-Map 001 Lot 045 Neal and Patricia Pettigrew: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in land value with a calculation for a \$154.88 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 030 Lot 025-A Dorothy Curtis: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in land value with a calculation for a \$861.00 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 031 Lot 038 Dorothy Curtis Grindle Living Trust: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in building value with a calculation for a \$174.12 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 032 Lot 016 Owen and Susan Gavigan: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in land value with a calculation for a \$910.00 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; J. Wootten seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 031 Lot 032-A Christine Richards: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in land value with a calculation for a \$26.25 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 002 Lot 040 Priscilla Dupont: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in building value with a calculation for a \$238.88 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 023 Lot 012 Marechal Brown/Robert Beswick: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in building value with a calculation for a \$23.63 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 031 Lot 011 Suzanne and Patricia Zelif: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in land value with a calculation for a \$154.88 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 013 Lot 004 Jonathan Walden: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in building value with a calculation for a \$1645.00 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-Map 031 Lot 031 Robert and Fiona Beswick: The Assessor's Agent proposed a reduction in building value with a calculation for a \$87.752 abatement. S. Miller made a motion to grant the abatement; J. Wootten seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

9 Memorial Bench Request

S. Miller suggested the town should accept benches that fit together in style and for placement in certain locations. The goal is to settle on an appropriate bench design and allow individuals to sponsor a bench and place a plaque. E. Best volunteered to spend time researching potential designs.

10 Investable Funds

The current cash balance stands at \$9.2 million. Out of this, \$1 million is allocated for road expenses, leaving the remaining funds divided between two banks: \$3.6 million at First Bank and

\$5.6 million at Bar Harbor Bank. Additionally, the plan is to invest \$2 million in a three-month CD at First Bank and another \$2 million in a six-month CD at Bar Harbor Bank, which offers a better rate of 4.6%. After these transactions, there will be \$2.6 million left in the now account, resulting in \$5.6 million in readily available cash. It is anticipated that \$1 million will need to be moved back to First Bank from Bar Harbor Bank in January, as the town will require these funds during the summer months, with the six-month CD maturing around April. S. Miller moved to authorize the treasurer to transfer \$1 million from Bar Harbor Bank to The First, to invest \$2 million in a three-month CDARS at the First, and to invest \$2 million in a six-month CDARS at Bar Harbor Bank & Trust; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0

11 Traffic Ordinance

B. Adams suggested inserting specific parking-related, compact car information into the draft. S. Miller requested the Board to review again so the draft can be enacted by next week.

Other Business

On behalf of the Board, J. Wootten has committed to going to a meeting about the AIM Dams, including the dam at Toddy Pond, scheduled for November 14, 2024, at 5 PM at Maine Maritime Academy. A letter has come to the Board about participating in legal representation (along with other towns), for those towns who own property on Toddy Pond. S. Miller expressed that before moving forward, there needs to be more clarity on how it may differ from the representation of the property owners (private and town) on both cost and the nature of engagement. Miller agreed to contact the Orland Select Board member organizing the process and to report back.

Executive Session

S. Miller moved to enter executive session per 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(F) Abatement at 7:15 pm; J. Wootten seconded. Vote: 5/0 Approved.

Executive session ended at 7:31pm

Back in Public Session:

-S. Miller made a motion to abate 2024 property taxes in the amount of \$306.25, a certain lot discussed for Poverty Abatement in Executive Session; J. Wooten seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

-S. Miller made a motion to abate 2024 property taxes in full, a certain lot discussed in Poverty Abatement in Executive Session; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

S. Miller made a motion to utilize \$7,000 of the Unanticipated and Emergency Expenditure Fund to fund unanticipated 2024 property tax abatements; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 5/0.

Adjournment

The Board adjourned after signing warrants at 7:37 pm.