

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, November 12, 2024
Minutes**

Called the meeting to order at 4:03pm

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

Approval of Minutes

S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of November 4, 2024, as edited; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

Public Comments

- Chuck Bleakney addressed the Board with concerns about the new curbing that was placed in front of his house during the Mountain Rd project, creating issues with parking and water buildup. B. Adams stated the space in question is not a legal driveway with the area being too close to the road. It was also mentioned that the road right of way is often more extensive than thought and might extend well beyond the edge of the road and the curbing. Justine Drake from Haley Ward is currently producing a report regarding the design of his property and addressing the concerns about water management and driveway access.

C. Bleakney would like the Board to grant him permission to park in the questioned area until he has time to make his existing driveway more accessible to the house. He has parked at that spot since owning the house and wife faces mobility challenges. S. Miller asked if other Board members knew of any existing State grants that could help him, but it was noted that most known grants are targeted toward community development projects rather than individual property enhancements.

It was reiterated that the space in question is not a legal parking space. E. Best mentioned the Town will make the pending report from Haley Ward available to Mr. Bleakney once it's available.

- Judy Briel asked the Board for clarification of the concerns with the dam at Toddy Pond. S. Miller gave a recap of its history stating the Toddy Pond Dam was originally associated with the paper mill in Bucksport. It is subject to a petition by Bucksport Mill LLC asking the DEP for permission to abandon it. Their other two dams (on Alamoosook Lake and Silver Lake) are also proposed to be abandoned. The Town has ~34 private properties on Toddy Pond. He stated the outcome could be either a new owner who is prepared to maintain the dam(s) going forward is found, or the Maine DEP's action would be to order release the water held by the dam. S. Miller also stated if she wanted more info, she could email the Toddy Pond Association at toddymail@toddypond.org.

Business

1 Sealoft Update

Item was tabled until next week.

2 Christmas Tree Lighting - Update

Heather Oliver, Anne Rioux, and Barb Haskell from the Blue Hill Peninsula Chamber of Commerce's' Event Planning subcommittee asked the Board if the originally planned Christmas Tree Lighting event scheduled for December 13, 2024, could be changed to November 29, 2024. They stated that this date would be beneficial to local businesses who wanted to participate and would coincide with "Black Friday" and "Small Business Saturday.". For the event, L. Sitzabee would play carols in collaboration with the New Surry Theater and GSA would provide musical entertainment in front of Town Hall. They believe volunteers would be needed to help families safely cross the road, especially at dusk. They will reach out to Nina Milliken and Sarah Pebworth to help with this. They asked if a firepit or heating source could be placed in front of the Town Hall. E. Best stated any open flames would be a hazard.

Businesses who have already been confirmed to participate include – *THE Salon*, *Out on a Whimsey* (toy store), *SeaLoft*, and *Blue Hill Peninsula Realty*. While the library is no longer a Chamber member, they are still welcome to participate. The Toy Store will host a toy drive and Angel Tree, and the local bank will provide hot chocolate for attendees.

The event coordinators will explore potential tree donations from Clapp Farm or a farm in Sedgwick. They will also coordinate the decorating and will utilize the existing lights owned by the Town. The Board was asked to submit other suggestions or requests.

-Barb Haskell mentioned other area Holiday projects including "Holiday Boxes" for families in need. Each box costs \$75 and contains four meals. The initiative is being coordinated by Jessica Veldez through Community Compass. S. Miller additionally stated The First Congregational Church of Blue Hill's "Christmas Angels" which helps those needing children's clothing.

3 Review Appointed Positions

Item was tabled until next week.

Other Business

- Special Town Meeting

Having been notified that the Toddy Pond Dam has been proposed to be abandoned, the Town is required by statute to hold a Special Town Meeting to consider the situation. S. Miller will send a draft of a warrant article for review, requesting voter approval to "stay in the game" by participating in the statutory consultation process together with the other affected towns. It was agreed to target the November 24 Select Board meeting time for the Special Town Meeting. The Board set a special Select Board meeting for Friday, November 15 at 8:00am to review and sign

the Special Town Meeting warrant. S. Miller has posted information about Toddy Pond on the Town website for public access.

In addition, Maine statutes require dam abandonment petitioners to hold a public meeting to consult with parties in interest about the proposed abandonment; this meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 5 PM at the Maine Maritime Training Facility in Bucksport. This meeting is expected to draw many people opposed to the process.

- SHIP Grant

S. Miller received information regarding the Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP), an MDOT program that provides up to 50% of the cost of harbor improvements. If the Town applies for it, both a Letter of Intent and a worksheet for the application need to be submitted. The worksheet should outline the project costs and demonstrate the Town's commitment to completing the project. The SHIP program manager felt that construction of finger floats for South Blue Hill fits within the program, and he suggested an expedited application process (no on-site inspection) since he is familiar with the facilities.

Having consulted with the Marine Resources Committee, Miller proposed a \$24,000 grant request, to be matched by an additional \$24,000 from Town funds, providing a 50% local match. The Town appropriated \$47,000 for the floats so the Town match amount is already covered.

The goal is to submit the application as soon as possible to begin the process. Once granted, the Town will receive assistance in compiling the necessary documentation and conducting the required competitive bid. The target is to be ready for a winter bid and to begin construction in the spring—all parties understand that the floats should be ready for seasonal deployment by late April.

J. Dow moved to authorize S. Miller to submit both the Letter of Intent to Apply and the full Application for the SHIP grant; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

Executive Session

Not required

Adjournment

S. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 pending the signing of the disbursement warrants; B. Adams seconded. Vote passed 4/0.

The disbursement warrants were signed.