

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, February 10, 2025
Minutes**

Call to Order: 5:29 PM.

Attendance/Quorum

S. Miller (Chair Pro-Tem), B. Adams, J. Dow, J. Wootten, J. Atwell (Town Administrator), D. Goettler (Minute Taker).

Approval of Minutes

J. Dow moved to approve the minutes of February 3, 2025, and February 5, 2025. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 4/0.

Public Comment

No public comments.

Business

1. Town Sidewalks & Curbs

The Board intends to publish a statement, both on the Town website and in newsprint, clarifying that the Town is not responsible for immediately clearing sidewalks following snow or ice, and that home and business owners should keep sidewalks on their own properties clear. The notice will also remind them of the availability of the salt/sand shed.

2. Public Hearing: Liquor License Renewal – Blue-Hill Co-Op

Postponed until February 24, 2025.

3. CDAR's Renewal

A \$2,000,000 CDAR is maturing. J. Atwell suggested putting \$1,000,000 into the NOW account at First National Bank and \$1,000,000 into Bar Harbor Bank and Trust. The Board had no objections and determined that no action was required to authorize the transfer. S. Miller asked J. Atwell to look up the interest rates on the relevant accounts for next week's meeting.

4. Healthy Ecosystem Ordinance

S. Miller distributed the pest control ordinance committee's draft of edits. They narrow the invasive species loophole to a list of three specific pests, remove unneeded educational preamble and findings, clarify the list of prohibited substances and uses, and define "pest emergency" to enable the local health officer to declare one. The Board discussed whether the Ordinance should be incrementally updated or entirely rewritten. A public hearing will be scheduled prior to the 2025 Town Meeting.

5. 2025/26 Winter Plowing Plan

The Board discussed whether to renew the Town's plowing contract with M.E. Astbury & Son or purchase equipment and hire an employee directly. S. Miller expressed concern about the potential for a Town employee to quit at an inopportune time; J. Wootten and B. Adams both stated that, in that unlikely event, they would be willing to fill in until a new

employee could be hired. The Board agreed to wait for E. Best to return and for the budget to be finalized before making any decisions on the matter, but will ask Astbury for estimates on 1- and 3-year plow-only contracts in the meantime.

6. Wharf Building Plan Donation

S. Miller met with a resident who offered the prospect of a \$10,000 donation to replace the Town-owned wharf building with a public green space. The Board discussed constructing a building to house the equipment currently stored on the wharf somewhere that is more protected from sea level rise, but agreed that, because the wharf building is likely to remain safe for a few more years and was recently updated, such a project is not currently a priority, despite the thoughtful donation offer.

7. Toddy Pond Dam Public Information Session

The public information session will be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, in the theater above the Town Office. The multi-town survey will close on Friday, February 14, 2025, and has so far received approximately 600 responses, the majority of which agree that the Towns and property owners should share the upkeep costs on the dams. S. Miller expressed reluctance about drafting legislation that committed the Towns or their taxpayers to unpredictable annual payments regardless of how each Town voted each year. Since the loss of shorefront zoning would cost Blue Hill an estimated \$46,000 per year in property taxes, S. Miller suggested that he could get comfortable with the Town paying ~15% of Blue Hill's ~5% share of the dams' operating costs, estimated to be roughly \$10,000 per year, if it were "perpetualized" and paid up front, with no ongoing funding obligation. He also estimated that each property owner's added annual expense would average less than \$50.

Executive Session

S. Miller moved to enter executive session per 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(A) - Personnel Matter at 6:44 PM. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 4/0. The executive session ended at 7:39 PM.

Adjournment

B. Adams moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM subject to signing Disbursement Warrants. S. Miller seconded; vote passed 4/0.

The Disbursement Warrants were signed.