

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025
Minutes**

Call to Order: 5:30 PM.

Attendance/Quorum

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

Approval of Minutes

S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2025, and February 20, 2025, as edited. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 4/0.

Public Comment

No public comments.

Business

1. School Budget Review (J. Snow and D. Perkins)

J. Snow and D. Perkins reported to the Select Board that the School Committee has approved its budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, which represents an increase of approximately 5%. They explained that most of this increase is attributable to pay raises and the increased need for special education. The extreme increase in the Gifted and Talented budget is due to an existing salary moving from elsewhere in the budget in order to take advantage of a state subsidy. J. Snow and D. Perkins also suggested various warrant articles for the upcoming Town Meeting, including those authorizing the funding of reserves and the reconstruction of a bridge on GSA property. The Select Board discussed which Boards and Committees need to publish their recommendations for each of the articles.

D. Perkins then shared that he has applied for and received a grant to improve the heating and ventilation in the Consolidated School. The grant consists of an interest-free loan of \$481,225, 30% of which will be forgiven. The School Committee will move forward with accepting the loan, and the Select Board determined that the borrowing should be put to a Town vote at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting.

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

J. Dow opened the public hearing. No public comment. J. Dow closed the public hearing. S. Miller moved to approve Blue Hill Co-Op's Liquor License Renewal. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0.

3. CDAR's Renewal

Tabled.

4. 2025/26 Winter Plowing Plan

Ben Astbury thanked the Town for its patronage and asked about its plans to potentially purchase a plow and hire a driver. He was told that no concrete plans have been made yet.

B. Astbury advised the Board to plan well in advance and compare price-per-mile if they intend to make that investment. He presented the Board with four contract proposals and discussed sand availability in case of another snowstorm this winter.

5. Parking Violation Notice

S. Miller sent J. Atwell a Violation Notice draft last week, although it did not get issued. J. Atwell asked for permission to edit the Violation Notice as needed in order to make it faster to issue; the Board agreed to ask Agnieszka Dixon for guidance.

6. Warrant Articles

The Warrant Articles must be completed soon in order to allow S. Lavallee sufficient time to get the warrant and absentee ballots printed. The Board plans to meet to review them on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 10:00 AM, pending E. Best's availability. The Board also agreed to put Jeff Milliken forward as the Moderator for the Town Meeting. J. Atwell will ask the school board if they plan to give a recommendation on Article 3.

Other Business

J. Atwell intends to submit an insurance claim for a fire truck repair. The Board had no objection.

The Board discussed B. Emerson's plans to adjust how she splits her working hours between Blue Hill and Brooklin.

S. Miller provided an update on the Toddy Pond Dam situation. The Toddy Pond Association has expressed fear over the Towns' abilities to fail to appropriate funds; the current proposal is that each town be responsible for a fixed percentage of the upkeep costs (with Blue Hill's share being 6%), with the gap left by any given Town's failure to appropriate to be split amongst the private owners, either in that Town or around the whole Pond. On Friday, February 21, 2025, Bucksport Mill delivered approximately 900 pages of information about the Dam, including historical and projected operating costs. A meeting with the DEP is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Executive Session

S. Miller moved to enter executive session per 1 M.R.S. §405(6)(A) - Personnel Matter at 7:20 PM. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0. Executive session ended at 7:40 PM.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM subject to signing Disbursement Warrants. The Disbursement Warrants were signed.