

**Town of Blue Hill
Select Board Meeting
Monday, March 31, 2025
Minutes**

Call to Order: 5:31 PM.

Attendance/Quorum

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

Approval of Minutes

S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of March 27, 2025. J. Dow seconded; vote passed 5/0. S. Miller moved to approve the minutes of March 17, 2025, as amended; vote passed 4/0.

Public Comment

A member of the public, who is considering opening a recreational dispensary in Blue Hill, asked the Board to clarify the current legality of such a business. S. Miller told him that dispensaries are currently illegal within Blue Hill, and although the Town could vote to change that at a Town Meeting, the matter has been brought up several times in recent years and consistently been voted down.

Business

1. Abatements

Two abatements requests for condos were received, both due to overassessment errors in TRIO. S. Miller moved to approve both requests as recommended. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0. B. Adams moved to approve a supplemental bill for a parcel of land removed from tree growth. J. Wootten seconded; vote passed 5/0.

The Blue Hill assessors' agents recommended an abatement of \$97,800 on one of M. Richardson's lots due to a previous misunderstanding about the condition of a barn. S. Miller moved to approve the abatement as recommended. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0. The remainder of M. Richardson's request was tabled, with his consent, so that he could review the assessors' findings.

2. WWTP – Extension of Existing Bond Anticipation Note

The proposed extension of an existing line of credit with First National Bank, lasting until April of 2027, which carries a 5.05% interest rate and no prepayment penalties, was presented. B. Adams moved to authorize J. Atwell to sign the extension contract; J. Wootten seconded. S. Miller pointed out that the project using ARPA funds is mandated to be completed by September of 2026, but it is possible to change the parameters of that project to only include milestones that can be completed by then. J. Atwell agreed to ask whether prepayments on the loan principal would reduce future draws against the total loan amount. The Board discussed what had already been borrowed and repaid and agreed to table the vote pending more information.

3. Payroll Processing Request

J. Atwell told the Board that she would like to begin paying town employees biweekly on Thursdays and switch payroll processing companies. The Board discussed various such companies and expressed hesitation over switching. S. Miller moved to authorize J. Atwell to adjust to biweekly paychecks on Thursdays, contingent upon Bangor Payroll not charging fees for making the adjustment. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0. S. Miller moved to make the commensurate changes to the town employee handbook. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0.

4. Park Lights

The Board discussed what type of lighting should be installed at the park. They agreed that it needed to be dark sky compliant, could not spill onto neighboring properties, and must have some way of preventing electricity theft. J. Atwell will contact Flash in the Pans to ensure that whatever amperage is installed will meet their needs. B. Adams will also contact MDOT to fix the streetlights at the roundabout and J. Atwell will ask B. Emerson about an excessively bright light at the Bay School driveway.

5. Accounting Proposal

J. Atwell brought three proposals from Blue Star Accounting and Advising to prepare the Town's financial statements for auditors. S. Miller favored the least expensive proposal, which includes quarterly check-ins for both Town Hall and the Transfer Station beginning in 2025 with no retrospective work.

6. Audit Engagement Letters

J. Atwell has been having difficulty getting in contact with RHR Smith & Company; the Board agreed not to sign any contracts without establishing reliable communication.

Other Business

S. Miller reported that the finger floats project is currently delayed because an invitation to bid cannot be published until a contract is signed. He also spent the morning testifying in Augusta regarding the Toddy Pond and Alamoosook Lake dams, which went well; the necessary legislation has been drafted.

J. Dow informed the Board that a new Water District Trustee is needed and obtained confirmation that the rest of the Board had no objection to his performing stone cleaning in Seaside Cemetery.

The three citizens who wrote the original Healthy Ecosystems Ordinance are opposed to the proposed amendments, the debate over which will be held at Town Meeting on Saturday, April 5, 2025. The Select Board discussed who would answer questions on which articles during Town Meeting.

Adjournment

S. Miller moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 PM subject to signing Disbursement Warrants. B. Adams seconded; vote passed 5/0.

The Disbursement Warrants were signed.