

Town of Stow

Selectmen Meeting Minutes DATE 05-10-2022

Opening: The Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm in Stow, Maine by Jim Wilfong.

Present

Selectmen: Ray Ryan, Jim Wilfong, Carl Linblade (absent)

Town Clerk: Christine Carone **Treasurer:** Nancy Boros **Secretary:** XXXXX

Road Agent: XXXX

Residents/Guests: Dick Moore, Robert Flint, Hilly Lutter, Kathleen Panno

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved (2-0, 1 absent)

Approval of Minutes: Minutes Approved from 04/19/2022 (2-0, 1 absent)

Treasures Report:

Cash balance in MM, before tonight's warrant is \$171,133. Our next payment to MSAD 72 of \$41,133.23 will be due the end of May, it is included in this warrant. We anticipate our TAN note will be in place before the June MSAD 72 payment is due. This will allow us about \$90k for the roads in June, before the TAN note.

We have received the final audit report and management letter. The auditors included in 2021's financials the \$18,000 reimbursement from the USDA for the Deer Hill Road. This increases our carry forward for Roads and Bridges to \$32,047.68

I have signed a TAN application for \$300k, with an interest rate of 2.65%. (note that last year's rate was 1.51%) however we anticipated a higher rate this year. We are hoping to have the documents ready to sign for the May 24th meeting and funds available for the first draw in early June.

I have corresponded with Kerri Lewis, VP Governmental Banking at TD regarding better access to our TD accounts including the ability to pay many of our bills via their ACH. A sheet is attached. I discussed this in detail with an attorney Michael Lichtenstein, from MMA who concurred. This does not change the need for a warrant to be approved before I make any payments. Selectmen approve pursuing. (2-0, 1 absent)

Clerks Business:

Deputy Town Clerk, Deputy Tax Collector and Deputy Registrar– Kathleen Panno came to the board meeting. She has accepted the job as Deputy Town Clerk Deputy Tax Collector and Deputy Registrar. She will work 15 hours per week. She will work with Christine for 12 hours a week and spend the additional time taking courses on line to learn the registration processes and she will work with the Selectmen to organize the town files. She will earn \$18 an hour to start and will be compensated more as she completes training. The Selectmen are also looking for assistance in completing grant applications for roads, broadband and other monies that may come

available. There are many areas that require training – motor vehicles, elections etc. The Selectmen anticipate the training process take over a year to complete. Kathleen Panno will start May 16th.

Vote to approve Kathleen Panno as Deputy Clerk, Deputy Tax Collector and Deputy Registrar
Selectman approved 2-0, 1 absent

Open Issues:

911 Coordinator: Resident Dick Moore came to discuss becoming the 911 coordinator. He and the board discussed in detail the specifics of the job. The property owner calls the Town Hall and the Clerk connects the owner with our e-911 coordinator. The property must have taxes paid, a driveway established, and a building permit submitted to the town. A policy will be established recording the requirements for a property owner to have a number assigned. Address numbers are not given for land only. Dick Moore will forward the information he collects to the Town Office. The Deputy Clerk will register the information on line with the utilities and county. Notification goes to the Utility, Property Owner, Post Master, and Town Clerk and Emergency Services Oxford County (211). CMP does not need to be notified but the property owner needs a designated address before they call CMP. Town Clerk has a list of the current address numbers and current owners, she also has the forms to complete for an E-911 number. House numbers are assigned every 50 feet, one side of the road is even, one side odd. The Property owner is notified in writing of the address number. Payment to Mr. Moore will be \$40 per assignment.

Vote to approve Dick Moore as e-911 officer. **Selectman approved 2-0, 1 absent**

Broad Band Coalition of 7 towns (Eastern Slope Regional Broadband) – Speaker, Robert Flint. Chatham is not pursuing the project with the Broadband Group, therefore, there are now 7 towns in the Coalition. Two firms provided a response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) sent out by the Coalition. The Request for Proposal sought a contractor to provide plans for a shovel ready project by fall of 2022. The Coalition recommended **Mission Broadband**. (The other contender was Casco Bay Advisors.) Mission Broadband will be hired to determine: what it will cost to build the broadband out, what can the Coalition get from grants and what will be the cost of operating it. The cost per household will be determined by this study.

The Coalition preferred Mission Broadband because the proposal encompassed much of the work involved for a fixed price. The Coalition mission statement indicates that broadband will be available to every home in town. The intent is to have fast ‘up and down’ data access. A fiber optic network most likely will be placed on existing poles. The contractor will assess the areas without poles and evaluate how to address those areas. The cost will be approximately \$7-10k per town for this contract. The Coalition got a \$72k grant, Stow will committed up to \$10k of the ARPA money received. Stow received \$24k in ARPA money and anticipates another \$24k to come. The Maine Connectivity Authority has been established to manage the \$400k that is coming to Maine from the Federal government. The areas are defined as either, unserved, underserved or served, in terms of broadband access. The funding prioritizes unserved and underserved areas. Stow is considered an ‘unserved’ community because the internet speed is slower than in other areas. Fryeburg and Denmark, in contrast, are defined as a mix of unserved, underserved and served.

Selectman to vote Selectman approved 2-0, 1 absent

Note of Approval is to be sent to: Denmark Town Office after minutes are approved at 5/14 meeting.

Road Work: J. Wilfong is monitoring the increase in prices for product due to the increasing fuel costs. He is looking into crushing stone on site rather than having it delivered. He has ordered culverts for some of the road projects.

New Business

Generator – J. Wilfong presented a proposal for a generator. The cost is \$8,100, with additional accessories such as cold weather kit, warranty, annual servicing etc. **Selectman approved 2-0, 1 absent**

Jaws of Life - \$2,500 payment approved for a vehicle extrication tool. This expense will be recorded as restricted funds from the ARPA money. **Selectman approved 2-0, 1 absent**

Public Comment:

Hilly Lutter asked about the cost of the Stone House Road maintenance. The town has the responsibility of maintaining the road up to the gate during the summer. About 9/10ths of a mile of road is on forest service land. The Town turned down an offer by the Forest Service to maintain the road in the 1980's. The Forest Service is no longer offering that option. J. Wilfong submitted a budget to the Forest Service on April 29, 2022, for the Forest Service to assist in replacing the culverts and spreading the gravel. The Forest Service is offering to give the gravel and truck it in. The visitors in the summer park on Stone House private land, they do not park on government land, much of the hiking trails are on private property as well.

Next meeting will be Tuesday May 24, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Minutes submitted by Nancy Boros