

Town of Stow

Selectmen Meeting Minutes August 13, 2024

Opening: The Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in Stow, Maine by Jim Wilfong.

Present

Selectmen: Jim Wilfong, Carl Lindblade Ray Ryan

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

Road Task Force: Steve Dupuis, Belle Stafford, Mike Cocci

Residents/Guests: NA

Approval of Agenda: Agenda approved (**Select board 3-0**)

Approval of Minutes: Minutes Approved from July 30, 2024, meeting (**Select board 3-0**)

Treasures Report:

Cash Balance \$176, 461

Warrant 52 \$42,840.37

(**Approved Select board 3-0**)

C. Lindblade and I met with Rick Alimi of the USFS. We can't submit for reimbursement for the bridges until the work has begun and we have paid the invoices. J.Wilfong and I will monitor payments closely for the bridge work, we will draw on the Tan to pay it. We will submit progress reports as soon as possible after receiving the invoices.

We received a notice from Oxford County that due to an error our county tax is increasing by \$3,352. We will owe \$72,729 in September. The prior year's county tax was \$60,031, this represents a 21% increase from PY.

I have printed a basic form for road agents to use when assessing storm damage.

J.Wilfong will reach out to residents and create a call list. Volunteers and Selectboard will use the form to assess road damage after a storm, in the event the data is needed to apply for government assistance (state or federal).

Clerks Business

C. Carone suggested that in the future the deadline for the bid submissions will be on a day the office is open until 6 pm.

For elections, a blue tooth scanner was purchased, but the Clerks are unable to get the Blue Tooth to work on the computer. C. Carone suggested we hiring an IT consultant on retainer for these issues. C. Carone will reach out to Doug Albert.

(**Selectboard approves 3-0**)

The Selectboard is still looking for a representative for the GLLT. The bathroom needs to be snaked. C. Lindblade and K.Panno are waiting for an estimate from Field Electric for the MMA grant. C. Lindblade has passed the grant application responsibility to K. Panno.

Selectman's Reports:

Policy Contracts and Insurance (Ray Ryan)

Safety lights have been addressed.

In the future the deadline for the bid submissions will be on a day the office is open until 6 pm.

Snow contract bids were opened. One bid was submitted, from Troy Morse:

T.Morse presented a 3 year contract with costs as follows: \$108k, \$111.8, \$115k (year 1, 2, and 3 respectively)

Belle Stafford asked what the process is for advertising the bid. R. Ryan stated the Snow bid was published in The Bridgton News and Conway Daily Sun.

Selectboard approves the contract, subject to R. Ryan obtaining further clarification from T. Morse. Final approval dependent on Ryan's discussion with vendor.

Maintenance Report: (Carl Lindblade)

1. Foreclosures. We have 3 currently in the works. One occupied home on Union Hill and 2 lots. One on Quint Street and one in the Fernald Development. I have placed a call to the occupants on Union Hill to bring them up to date on where we are and what might happen going forward. Keenan auctioneers of Portland Maine have been retained to provide auction services in compliance with Maine statutes. NOTE: The occupied home, under Maine law, will have 2 years to pay their taxes and fees before having to relinquish the home. An attorney is also required. First refusal has been offered to Hastings Law of Fryeburg, otherwise Keenan will recommend a firm with which they work. The actual auction(s) will take place in September. Update from C. Carone, taxes were paid in full for the occupied home, it has been removed from foreclosure list.

2. Website. As Broadband comes to Stow and the internet becomes more and more a tool of government AND we need to bring our current website into ADA compliance we are working with a company called Civicplus on a non-binding basis. Civicplus is in the specific business of building websites for municipalities large and small. A ZOOM meeting is scheduled for September 3rd, 2024, 3:00 PM for a presentation to Town Officials . If that is satisfactory a warrant (through the budget process) may be presented at our 2025 Town meeting. The amount requested would be in the range of 4K-5K. That is a guesstimate from preliminary

conversations. This would continue to be an ongoing expense with administration and maintenance fees.

3. Parking Lot The bill for crack filling and sealing has been paid. During the course of that process the company was sold . We worked through that, and the work and amount paid was within the original contract.

4. Lighting Enhancement. Kathleen is working with Field Electric on adding to our lighting at the Town House. Outside, Exit and Flagpole are being upgraded. She has also taken on the responsibility of applying for an available grant through MMA.

5. GLLTrust. Stow still needs to find a person (or 2) to represent the Town. GLLT is anxious to have representation from all the towns it serves.

Road Report (Jim Wilfong)

J.Wilfong is going to talk to the USFS regarding how the grant funds for the two bridges will be allocated. Expenses for each bridge must be accounted for separately. The contractor must give the Town 2 weeks' notice before the bridge work starts. M. Cocci asked if the bridge work was put out for bid. J.Wilfong stated forty bid packages were sent to contractors who work on bridges, the town received 4 bids. The Selectboard selected the lowest bidder, Micklon from Lovell.

J.Wilfong announced the Town received a \$76,000 ME DOT grant. It is to cover costs for an engineer report and construction on the Lake Road. He had submitted requests for several roads, ME Dot awarded it for the Lake Road. J Wilfong will work on finding civil engineers and seeking bids. The town's responsibility is \$4,000. (Total project cost \$80,000). The engineers' report will provide a comprehensive plan for the road.

New Business - Road Task Force

Belle Stafford, Rob Flint, Steve Dupuis met with Heather Dumais and Zack Stegeman from The State of Maine (MEMA) regarding a \Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC) grant Grants. The Town is eligible for this grant. The Funding would be split 90% state and 10% town. Awards are made in August (2025). The town would pay for the road work in advance, the state could reimburse within 2 weeks. The task force hopes this may speedup the State's repair of the bridge. The work may not occur until Spring of 2026. J. Wilfong will provide the Task Force with a letter to present to road contractors so the Task Force can get the requisite information for the grant application.

Adjourned 7:22pm. Next meeting will be Tuesday August 27, 2024

Open Items

Policy Contracts and Insurance (Ray Ryan)

Snow Contract – follow-up discussion w T.Morse and selectboard

Obtaining cost to soundproof the town hall – in progress

Maintenance and Broadband: (Carl Lindblade)

Ordinance regarding lots with trailers on them and no septic system – planning board is overseeing this

Sale of foreclosed properties – in progress

Broadband project – in progress

MMA grants applications– (C. Lindblade passed this to K.Panno)

Researching cost of shed at TH for 2025 budget

Researching upgrade of website for 2025 budget

Road Report: (Jim Wilfong)

Ezra Heald Bridge/Stone House Bridge – in progress

J. Wilfong to set up meeting with Select board, CEO and Planning Board regarding road and building issues

J. Wilfong will contact P. Coughlin re traffic counters

J. Wilfong will contact Union Hill resident regarding culvert replacement

J Wilfong to contact LA Drew, Burke and Colman for road estimates and provide letter to Task Force to present to vendors for roadwork discussion

Town Office

K Panno to finish bulletin board

K Panno to submit MMA grant

N.Boros continue w FEMA

Tally timesheets submitted by JW RR CL CC KP NB to determine how time is allocated to different areas and tasks – no timesheets submitted; project dropped.