

**Minutes  
Town of Skowhegan  
Regular Selectmen's Meeting  
5:30 P.M.  
Tuesday, May 28, 2019  
Municipal Building – Council Room**

**Board of Selectmen:**

Paul York, Chairman  
Gene Rouse, Vice Chairman (Absent)  
Betty Austin  
Roger Staples

**Town Manager:**

Christine Almand

**Executive Secretary:**

Cara L. Mason

Call Selectmen's Meeting to order.

Paul York called the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

1. Town Manager's Report

Town Meeting is on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in the Opera House. Elections are on Tuesday, June 11<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm in the Council Room. We would like to have all voters try to attend. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, the Selectmen's Meeting will be held in the Opera House.

Congratulations to Randy Gray. He received the 2019 Code Enforcement Officer of the Year Award at the Maine Building Officials and Inspectors Association Annual Conference last week.

The town has municipal surplus property for sale online through Auctions International. For more information, visit our website or our Facebook page for a link to the auction.

2. Items by the Public

Paul Pono said he had a problem with the Town's fire department billing for accidents.

His daughter went off the road. She called 911. Then she called him. There was no damage to anything. She just slid off into the ditch. There was no report. Here was no damage. No claim was filed with the insurance company.

He then received a call from his insurance company about a claim being filed. After going back and forth with them for a few weeks he found out that the claim was made by the Town for \$1,240.00, payable to Central Maine Cost Recovery. He called Central Maine Cost Recovery. They told him that the Skowhegan fire department billed \$1,240.00 for the fire truck to go to the accident scene.

He wanted to know why he is being billed for something that he pays taxes for. He said he has a lot of questions about this. This goes against him, when he never made a claim.

He then called the Fire Chief.

Paul Pono also wanted to know how you can bill for something and then this third party company writes off whatever they want and you get what you get.

It is also his understanding that if you do not make a claim on your insurance, then the fire department does not make a claim. He asked who is overseeing this company... and he also wanted to know why this money does not go to the fire department. It goes into the general fund.

He said there are a lot of unhappy people about this.

Paul York said that this company only knows that there is a bill when it is sent to them from the fire department.

In 2010 the Selectmen decided to enact this. A lot of towns do this. He is not sure where the shortfall was...but it is only supposed to be billed if there is already a claim open. This has been corrected. Unfortunately Paul Pono had to go through some stuff to get this corrected. He is not sure how it slipped through.

Paul Pono asked who is minding this.

Paul York said this company is only billing what they are given. The bill comes from the fire department.

Paul Pono asked how the fees are determined.

Chief Howard said that the fees schedule is set by the Selectmen and it is on our website.

Paul York said the he didn't disagree, but many of the fees go into the general fund.

Christine Almand said that the Town is required to budget revenues. For instance excise tax is a budgeted revenue. Those funds are to fix the roads. We spend more on the roads than what we take in for excise tax. Revenues don't go directly to the department. The revenues offset the entire budget.

Paul Pono wanted to know if he could come in to see how much is being taken in for this.

Christine Almand said that there are records of how much was received and there is a billing history as well.

Paul Pono asked who oversees what the company is doing.

Christine Almand said that collection agencies sometimes don't collect the full amount of the bill. This is how third party billing usually goes.

Paul York agreed that the third party company should not have negotiating power.

Chief Howard said he would need to look at the contract. This is the first instance that he has heard of this happening.

Paul York asked how this one slipped through where it should not have been billed because it was not a reportable accident.

Chief Howard said that the company did not have a solid answer regarding why that happened. It was a mistake. Within two hours he let State Farm know that he had made a mistake and got that claim dismissed.

Christine Almand said that their collection rates are much higher than what we were able to collect. We weren't getting paid. She doesn't have a problem with them negotiating. Their collection rates speak volumes.

Paul Pono said that it was very unprofessional. He doesn't need his insurance going up. This company gets a percentage so his incentive is to make a claim.

Betty Austin said that we might find it different now. Things have changed since 2010. We may not need a third party for this.

Paul Pono said that the insurance company told him that they only pay a percentage. Paul Pono said that somebody can't make a claim on his insurance. It is illegal.

Paul York said that they would revisit this and get some answers.

Paul Pono asked how long before the police department starts charging to come to accidents.

Paul York apologized for this happening, and thanked Mr. Pono for bringing this mistake to their attention.

Recording Time: 27:27

Jason Gayne said that Candidates Night is June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the old VFW hall.

Somerset County is now contracted with CGI (the company the town used for some marketing in the past). They are contacting people just like they did then.

Jason Gayne has been speaking to some out of state people looking to bring businesses to Skowhegan.

### 3. Selectmen's Items

Betty Austin presented a legislative sentiment to Randy Gray.

Roger Staples said that the Memorial Day parade and ceremony was very nice. He thanked the departments that were involved in that.

Betty Austin also talked about the Memorial Day parade. Chief Bucknam and Walter Powell were there in uniform.

Roger Staples asked when the North Avenue paving would be completed.

Greg Dore said that if the weather cooperates...probably the third week in June. There is still work left on the Dudley Corner Road and the East River Road.

Paul York passed out pictures of the Dudley Corner Road. He asked Greg Dore why we do this. The grader demolished the pavement.

Greg Dore said what he saw was some breakage on the edges. The grading is done after the leveling course is put on. The grader follows that in order to cut the shoulders back. Corey is the best operator we have. This didn't happen because he doesn't know what he is doing. There will be some issues with the shoulders on the Dudley Corner road just because of how that road is.

Paul York said that we are finally getting it paved and now this.

Greg Dore said that once the shoulders are done and the sod is cleaned up...they will come back and pave it. That will fill in those areas and make it straight.

Paul York said there has got to be a better way to fill the side of the road. We have these marks on brand new hot top. They grade the shoulders and leave dirt all over the road. It looks terrible. We have a rotary broom, so why aren't we using it.

Greg Dore said he did not notice any debris left on the road. When there is we clean it up.

Roger Staples asked why the shoulders are not done before it is paved.

Greg Dore said that you need that leveling course to get the pitch of the road in order to cut the shoulders.

Paul York said there has got to be a better way. Maybe we should train these guys better.

### 4. Department & Committee Reports

Randy Gray said that he received the Code Enforcement Officer of the Year last week. He thanked his co-workers for going to the award ceremony. He said he has gotten more from this town than the town has gotten from him.

Christine Almand said if we could have kept it a secret and shut down the town, we would have all gone. Many more people wanted to go.

Chief Howard said it was a pleasure to watch Randy Gray receive that award. Everybody wants to know how we are going to replace him.

Chief Bucknam congratulated Randy Gray.

Andrew Bowman just graduated from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. Officer Burns will be headed to the Academy in July.

Chief Bucknam said that the turnout for the parade was great.

Earlier today there was a fatal car crash on Route 2. He asked everybody to please pay attention when out on the road.

Greg Dore said that he and Christine Almand met with DOT last Thursday regarding the second bridge. We have worked out the schedule. There has been no discussion about where it will be.

We did find out that the lights at the intersection of Commercial Street and Madison Avenue has been funded. Next summer the lights will be going in.

He also met with the DOT and Pike regarding Waterville Road and West Front Street paving. They should be here the week after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. This will all be night work. They will mill it and then come back through to pave.

Highway Congress is June 6<sup>th</sup>.

Paul York asked about the schedule for Island Avenue.

Greg Dore said that the water company is done. He believes they intend to start on July 5<sup>th</sup>. That is night work as well.

Roger Staples asked how long this would take.

Greg Dore said that it would take most of the summer.

Gail Pelotte congratulated Randy Gray.

Absentee ballots are available until 4:30 p.m. on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Elections on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Trisha Austin said that interviews will be conducted tomorrow for the Solid Waste Management Facility, Transfer Station Attendant position. She also congratulated Randy Gray.

Randy Gray said that his son is in the Airforce as Master Sergeant for 18 ½ years. He was chosen last week to be Grand Marshall of a NASCAR Race.

**Public Hearing:**

1. Public Hearing: Discussion and decision to approve the Victualer Licenses, as listed on the Public Hearing Notice, through May 31, 2020.

Paul York opened the Public Hearing at 6:18 p.m.

There was no discussion.

Paul York closed the Public Hearing at 6:18 p.m.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the Victualer Licenses, as listed on the Public Hearing Notice, through May 31, 2020.**

**Vote: 3/0**

**Consent Agenda:**

1. Approve and sign Minutes from the following:  
Regular Selectmen's Meeting – May 14, 2019

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the Consent Agenda as written.**

**Vote: 3/0**

**Regular Agenda:**

1. Discussion and decision to appoint the following with terms expiring January 1, 2021:  
Larry Bonneau – Deputy Registrar of Voters  
Chelsea Gardiner – Deputy Registrar of Voters

**A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to appoint the following with terms expiring January 1, 2021:**

**Larry Bonneau – Deputy Registrar of Voters  
Chelsea Gardiner – Deputy Registrar of Voters**

**Vote: 3/0**

Recording Time: 49:44

2. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$170,000.00 from the Highway Department Roads and Sidewalks Account, Resurfacing Designation for other work related to paving.

**A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to expend an amount not to exceed \$170,000.00 from the Highway Department Roads and Sidewalks Account, Resurfacing Designation for other work related to paving.**

**Vote: 3/0**

3. Discussion and decision to re-designate \$2,430.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Cruiser Replacement designation to the Police Department Reserve Account, Firearms Designation.

**A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to re-designate \$2,430.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Cruiser Replacement designation to the Police Department Reserve Account, Firearms Designation.**

Paul York asked why.

Chief Bucknam said he made an error when he purchase the Watchguard system. It came out of the Cruiser Replacment Designation, instead of the Firearms Designation. Those funds were put back into the Cruiser Replacement Designation, which left \$12,000.00 in the Firearms Designation. The AR-15 bid came in higher than that.

**Vote: 3/0**

4. Discussion and decision to award the AR-15 Bid. The following bids were received:

A&G Shooting & Supply	\$10,830.00
	\$17,955.00
Moosehead Trail Trading Post	\$17,444.85
	\$19,184.85
	\$17,189.85
	\$17,999.85
Yeatons Service & Supply	\$20,730.00
	\$23,880.00
First Due Firearms	\$21,375.00
	\$21,975.00
Road Send Outfitters	\$14,327.55
	\$13,884.00

Chief Bucknam recommends awarding the AR-15 Bid to A&G Shooting and Supply with a total bid price of \$14,430.00 and expending that amount from the Police Department Reserve Account, Firearms Designation.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to award the AR-15 Bid to A&G Shooting and Supply with a total bid price of \$14,430.00 and expend that amount from the Police Department Reserve Account, Firearms Designation.**

**Vote: 3/0**

5. Discussion and decision to allow Chief Bucknam to apply for the Department of Justice, 2019 Bullet Proof Vest Grant in the amount of \$2,500.00. There is a 50% match for this grant.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to allow Chief Bucknam to apply for the Department of Justice, 2019 Bullet Proof Vest Grant in the amount of \$2,500.00.**

**Vote: 3/0**

6. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for an equipment lift system.

Paul York said that this is contingent upon Town Meeting.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for an equipment lift system.**

**Vote: 3/0**

7. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for a loader.

Paul York said that this is contingent upon Town Meeting.

**A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for a loader.**

**Vote: 3/0**

8. Discussion and decision to approve the Municipal Partnership Agreement between the Town of Skowhegan and the Maine Department of Transportation for project # WIN 021932.17 (Route 150).

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the Municipal Partnership Agreement between the Town of Skowhegan and the Maine Department of Transportation for project # WIN 021932.17 (Route 150).**

**Vote: 3/0**

9. Discussion and decision to allow WesArts to install a temporary art project on Debe Park Trail.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to allow WesArts to install a temporary art project on Debe Park Trail.**

Paul York asked if we were responsible for any of this art.

Mary Haley answered no. She said that it is invisible unless it rains. It is poetry written by area school kids. The spray is biodegradable, environmentally friendly

**Vote: 3/0**

10. Discussion and Decision to approve the AFSCME Union Contract.

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the AFSCME Union Contract.**

**Vote: 3/0**

11. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

#93	\$	38,955.05 (Payroll #20)
#94	\$	39,493.77 (Payroll #21)
#95	\$	14,004.84 (State Payables)
#96	\$	874,041.67 (FY 2019 Accounts Payables)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>966,495.33</b>

**A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the Treasurer's Warrant as written.**

**Vote: 3/0**

12. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

13. Unfinished Business

- Review Policies and Ordinances
- Run of River/Economic Development
- Utilizing Outside Services
- Marketing/Celebrating Skowhegan
- Vehicle Charging Station
- Public Safety Building
- Sidewalks and Bike Trails/Lanes

Christine Almand said that she has a conference call scheduled for tomorrow regarding the vehicle charging stations.

