

**Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Regular Selectmen's Meeting
5:30 P.M.
Tuesday, July 13, 2021
Municipal Building – Council Room**

****Anyone wishing to view this meeting may also do so from the
Town of Skowhegan Facebook page****

Board of Selectmen:

Todd Smith, Chairman
Charles Robbins, Vice Chairman
Harold Bigelow
Paul York

Town Manager:

Christine Almand

Executive Secretary:

Cara L. Mason

Call Selectmen's Meeting to order.

Todd Smith called the meeting to order.

1. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Town Manager's Report

On June 25th we sent out 466 – 30 Day Lien Notices for the 2021 taxes. This is the lowest number of notices sent out since I started tracking them in 2014.

I will be out of the office July 23rd – 26th. If you need assistance, you may contact Chief Bucknam.

3. Items by the Public
4. Selectmen's Items

Harold Bigelow said that Augusta has been sending out questionnaires to the small businesses, and sent someone out to question the small businesses. He doesn't feel that they did a good job. They keep saying that they want to help small business, then they extend the unemployment again. There are so many help-wanted signs right now. He wrote an answer to that and sent it to Jarod Golden, Janet Mills, Augusta, Lewiston...he sent out quite a bit...about \$5.00 worth of stamps. He complimented them on what they have done with the covert and everything. Anything to hamper small business, they have been doing. Fining

businesses because somebody on a fryolator didn't have a mask on. Somebody walked into a store and it's their second offense. He thought it was BS. They don't hear this...it is about time they did.

Harold Bigelow said that, Janet Mills said in a press conference that she was doing all she could for small business. In the next breath she said that she was extending unemployment for another six months. That is a torpedo to any small business.

Todd Smith said that the ballfields have been looking really good this year.

Shout out to Randy's Auto and other local businesses that are hosting car washes for our local sports teams.

5. Department and Committee Reports

Chief Bucknam said that Andrew Goldrup will be starting full-time next week. He will be FTOing with Jacob Pierce. He will be filling Jacob Boudreau's position at the hospital. Josh York will be graduating from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy this Friday.

Denise LeBlanc said that we had 14 teams of baseball/softball, four field hockey teams, 45 kids in track, outdoor adventure camp is going on right now with about 35 kids. The other programs are all going very well. The Summer Food Program started on June 14th. In June we fed 3,752 kids. It has doubled this year. Our three sites are Yogi Bear Campground, the Community Center and Lake George beach and Camp Padooc. Travis at Maine Meal has been helping us with freezer space.

Chief Bucknam said that on August 3rd we will have National Night Out at Coburn Park from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Public Hearing:

1. Public Hearing. Discussion and decision to approve the Victualer License for:

David McGregor
Meme (Food Truck)
Motor Supply Parking Lot
203 Madison Avenue
Skowhegan, ME 04976

Todd Smith opened the Public Hearing at 5:40 p.m.

There was no discussion or comments.

Todd Smith closed the Public Hearing at 5:40 p.m.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Harold Bigelow to approve the Victualer License for Meme (Food Truck).

Vote: 4/0

Recording Time: 13:51

Consent Agenda:

1. Approve the Minutes from the following:

Special Selectmen's Meeting – June 15, 2021
Special Selectmen's Meeting – June 22, 2021
Regular Selectmen's Meeting – June 22, 2021

2. Approve Cemetery Deeds in the East Skowhegan Cemetery for:

April and Mark Taylor – Lot 181
Shirley Weston – Lot 182 N 1/2
Sharon and Gerald Fitzmorris – Lot 182 S 1/2

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the Consent Agenda as written.

Vote: 4/0

Regular Agenda:

1. Discussion and decision to waive the bid process and expend an amount not to exceed \$800,000.00 from the Public Safety Building Bond for built-in equipment, moveable equipment and technology.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to waive the bid process and expend an amount not to exceed \$800,000.00 from the Public Safety Building Bond for built-in equipment, moveable equipment and technology.

Chief Howard said that we have had questions come up about equipment that will be going into the new building. Some equipment we have, that would be moved. Some stuff has to be updated. Some will be new. In our current Purchasing Policy, anything over \$7,500.00 would go out to bid. There are a couple of option in these types of builds. Either the equipment goes into the bid and goes to the contractor. The contractor would make the purchases as part of that package deal. What we are looking to do is to make these purchases, so we are not being up-charged on these items. We can work with vendors that we usually work with, shop for best price and save the Towa little bit of money. It isn't feasible to go out to bid for each of these items.

Harold Bigelow said that one company is going to be in charge of all of this, so nothing is going to go out to bid.

Chief Howard said that the building will be put out to bid. Some of the equipment that goes in, many times that is just part of that bid. Instead of doing that, we believe that by us making these purchases we can save some money.

Charles Robbins asked who "we" is.

Chief Howard said that he is talking about the Town making these purchases – Chief Howard and Chief Bucknam.

Harold Bigelow said that if you were building a house and having one contractor do everything, you would be making yourself vulnerable.

Chief Howard said that this is the equipment that will be going into the station.

Christine Almand said that she has been in the progress meetings with the Chiefs and the architect through this design process. She asked Matthew Carter to explain this process.

Matthew Carter said that he is the project manager with Haley Ward. He said that there are a lot of things in a building that aren't nailed down to the building or structure...furniture, electronic equipment, things that aren't attached to the building, alarm systems. Typically, the client has arrangements with other vendors for these types of things...they don't want those items to be included in the bid for the construction contractor. We will have a contractor who will provide the building, a contractor who provides some of these other systems, and some stuff that is provided by and obtained from the owner. It is a lot of things to pick out.

Charles Robbins asked why this stuff wasn't already in this project.

Matthew Carter said that all of these items are included in the budget for this project. It is just a question of who we are buying it from.

Harold Bigelow said you wouldn't want to go to Harbor Freight to buy firefighter equipment.

Matthew Carter said you want to make sure what you get is compatible with what is currently being used. For example, computer equipment...you don't necessarily want that from the lowest bidder.

Todd Smith asked about the numbers provided by Chief Howard.

Matthew Carter said that they are an estimate from the budget that was shown to the taxpayers. Costs will depend on availability of things. Those numbers are based on percentage of construction costs.

Harold Bigelow said we need to look at this realistically. He just had a shed built. The cost went up 15% in three weeks.

Matthew Carter said that the Town making these purchases, they can shop around. Contractors will have markup on whatever they purchase.

Charles Robbins said that Matthew Carter is also marking it up to the Town as the General Contractor.

Matthew Carter said he is not the General Contractor. He is the architect. A contractor has not been hired yet.

Todd Smith said that he would have felt better about this had it been worded differently. He has no issue with hiring a specific company to relocate the exhaust system. What he does have a problem with are things like furniture or a stove. We are still a year away from needing those items. There is still ample opportunity to go through the bid process. He would be ok with not having to ask to put items out to bid. Do the bid specs at your leisure.

Chief Howard said that the list is only a partial list. That list goes on and on. That \$800,000.00 is a percentage of the total project. We don't know everything that we will need to go out to bid for. He is getting calls asking what we want for a piece of equipment in a certain room. He can't answer that, because he needs the authority to say what he wants for equipment. For each of these questions he then has to do bid specs, come to the Selectmen (a couple weeks)...then another couple weeks to receive bids...then get the bid awarded. To do this for the numerous pieces of equipment that are necessary, it is a massive delay and a massive work load. You are asking him to repurchase every piece of equipment that has been purchased over the last 25 years in this short timeframe. In this type of project, you just don't see that. If this is put out as one big bid package, we believe that we will pay more. We have decreased the floor space to try to save money. Now we are trying to purchase these things ourselves to try to save money. A contractor making money on each piece of equipment will be more than if we purchase it ourselves. We want to be responsible We are not asking for something different than what the Purchasing Policy says. The Purchasing Policy, gives the ability to waive the bid process in certain instances. Although Chief Bucknam and Chief Howard will be making these purchases, Christine Almand is the Purchasing Agent. The purchasing forms will still be going through her. There are still checks and balances in place.

Recording Time: 31:16

Charles Robbins said he doesn't have an issue with giving the authority to go out to bid...but we still need three competitive bids for this.

Chief Howard said that this will create unnecessary delays.

Paul York said that we have been working on this project for a long time. If people look at how much money has been lost because if issues on where it was going to be located...so we went back out. All of these delays are costing money. The longer we wait, the more money it is going to cost. Some of these items may be able to be purchased now. It is a long process if we are going to require a bid for every little piece. It will cost us more money. We say that we have plenty of time, but when this starts, it is going to happen fast.

Charles Robbins said he is going to go out to bid for all of the individual items, he's just not going to wait the two weeks to come to the Board.

Paul York said that he has heard over and over that we need to have faith in our department heads. They know what they need and which vendors to use. We need to make this as easy as we can. This is a big project. We are complicating it. This is a way to move this along, get the items that we need and save money.

Harold Bigelow said that we have a \$5 million school coming. They don't go to the School Board to ask for everything. We have to have faith in them. Chief Howard knows what he needs. We have people that we are responsible for. We want it right. He thinks this will be 10% to 20% more. This country is different than it was a year ago. Order something and see if you get it.

Christine Almand said that the architect needs to know exactly what we will need in order to finish putting together the bid specs to hire a contractor to build the building. We need those answers before that can happen. Not being able to make those decisions and purchases will delay this. This could put us in an arbitrage situation with the tax-exempt bond.

Todd Smith said that we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that everything we do, we are spending taxpayer money. We have an obligation to do what is best with their dollar. We do have a Purchasing Policy in place that should be followed. He has voted to forego the bid process, because he felt that it was in the best interest of the community. He asked Chief Howard if with these items the purchasing policy would be followed for items under \$7,500.00...three quotes, purchasing form, etc.

Christine Almand said that it is actually covered in the Purchasing Policy. In some instances, there is only one company. It is stated on the purchasing form that it is a sole source vendor. With multiple vendors, we may make a decision to spend a little more but we have to be able to justify that reason. We currently get our fire extinguishers from one company. We are going to stick with what we are doing.

Chief Howard said that getting quotes and doing bid specs are completely different. Bid specs take a lot of time. Sometimes 2 to 3 weeks to come up with the specs. He can call anybody and get a price. Bid specs are very specific...a 4-10 page document depending on what the equipment is. Just to move the SCBA equipment will cost enough that, by policy we would have to go out to bid.

Charles Robbins said that his problem is with the purchasing of new equipment. Can you provide the taxpayers with three quotes.

Chief Howard said that we won't always get three quotes. 50% of the time we can't get three quotes. We will ask three people for quotes. We can typically call and get a price. A lot of companies will give us a price, but won't put in a bid. The other option is to put it all into one bid.

Paul York said that would cost a ton of money to do it that way.

Vote: 3/1 (Charles Robbins opposed)

Recording Time: 44:13

2. Discussion and decision to appoint Todd Smith as a member of the Run of River Committee with a term expiring June 30, 2022.

A motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Harold Bigelow to appoint Todd Smith as a member of the Run of River Committee with a term expiring June 30, 2022.

Vote: 4/0

3. Discussion and decision to appoint Bonnie Young as a member of the Heritage Council with a term expiring June 30, 2026.

A motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Paul York to appoint Bonnie Young as a member of the Heritage Council with a term expiring June 30, 2026.

Vote: 4/0

4. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow the Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce to hold Moonlight Madness on Water Street, Commercial Street and in the Municipal Parking lot on August 5, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow the Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce to hold Moonlight Madness on Water Street, Commercial Street and in the Municipal Parking lot on August 5, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Vote: 4/0

5. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow the Rotary Club of Skowhegan to hold the Lobster Bake in the Municipal Parking Lot on August 6, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow the Rotary Club of Skowhegan to hold the Lobster Bake in the Municipal Parking Lot on August 6, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Vote: 4/0

6. Discussion and decision to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow Maine Street Skowhegan to hold Brew Fest on Water Street and Commercial Street on September 4, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. contingent upon receipt of insurance certificate.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Harold Bigelow to approve the Application for Parades and Processions to allow Maine Street Skowhegan to hold Brew Fest on Water Street and Commercial Street on September 4, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. contingent upon receipt of insurance certificate.

Vote: 4/0

7. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the Downtown TIF, Parking Lot Maintenance Designation for downtown area maintenance.

A motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Paul York to expend an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the Downtown TIF, Parking Lot Maintenance Designation for downtown area maintenance.

Vote: 4/0

8. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Audio/Visual Equipment Designation for maintenance and replacement of downtown cameras.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to expend an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Audio/Visual Equipment Designation for maintenance and replacement of downtown cameras.

Vote: 4/0

9. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,100.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Cruiser Replacement Designation to purchase a Stalker DSR radar unit and two Phantom Spike tire deflation systems.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Harold Bigelow to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,100.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Cruiser Replacement Designation to purchase a Stalker DSR radar unit and two Phantom Spike tire deflation systems.

Charles Robbins asked if this is for a new cruiser.

Chief Bucknam said that the Stalker radar will be for the new cruiser. One of the tire deflation systems will be for the new cruiser and one of them will be replacing one that is out of service now.

Todd Smith asked if there would be a radar available to relocate from the old cruiser.

Chief Bucknam said when we turn a vehicle in, we try to reuse the equipment. We are not turning the vehicle in this time. That vehicle will become his cruiser.

Vote: 4/0

10. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,392.00 from the Administration Reserve Account, Information Technology Improvements Designation for a lease to replace five of our copiers.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,392.00 from the Administration Reserve Account, Information Technology Improvements Designation for a lease to replace five of our copiers.

Vote: 4/0

11. Discussion and decision to award the Municipal Building Masonry Repair Bid. The following bids were received:

Buzzard Masonry	\$25,700.00
TITO Masonry & Construction LLC	\$59,860.00
Maine Highlands Contracting	\$114,757.00

Jeff Hewett recommends awarding the Municipal Building Masonry Repairs Bid to Buzzard Masonry with a total bid amount of \$25,700.00 and expending that amount as follows:

- \$21,500.00 – Municipal Building Reserve Account, Masonry Repairs Designation
- \$4,200.00 – Municipal Building Reserve Account, General Repairs Designation

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to award the Municipal Building Masonry Repairs Bid to Buzzard Masonry with a total bid amount of \$25,700.00 and expend that amount as follows:

- \$21,500.00 – Municipal Building Reserve Account, Masonry Repairs Designation**
- \$4,200.00 – Municipal Building Reserve Account, General Repairs Designation**

Vote: 4/0

Todd Smith noted that Buzzard Masonry is a local business and thanked them for their bid.

12. Discussion and decision to allow Chief Bucknam to go out to bid for a police cruiser.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to allow Chief Bucknam to go out to bid for a police cruiser.

Vote: 4/0

13. Discussion and decision to allow Chief Bucknam to go out to bid for equipment and upfit for the new cruiser.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to allow Chief Bucknam to go out to bid for equipment and upfit for the new cruiser.

Vote: 4/0

14. Discussion and decision to approve the following resolutions for the CDBG, Community enterprise Program Grant:

Section 504 Self Evaluation and Transition Plan
Fair Housing Resolution

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the following resolutions for the CDBG, Community enterprise Program Grant:

**Section 504 Self Evaluation and Transition Plan
Fair Housing Resolution**

Vote: 4/0

15. Discussion and decision to assign a pickup truck to the Road Commissioner.

A motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Paul York to assign a pickup truck to the Road Commissioner.

Todd Smith said that he would support this provided that it be stipulated that the Road Commissioner live in Skowhegan. He would not support this if the Road Commissioner lived outside of town.

An amended motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Paul York to assign a pickup truck to the Road Commissioner with the stipulation that the Road Commissioner be a resident of Skowhegan.

John Grohs said you have a guy that is in charge of the roads and you are not going to give him a vehicle to deal with emergencies. He has to use his own vehicle. When Greg Dore was the Road Commissioner, he had a vehicle. He didn't live in Skowhegan. Is there a reason why you can't let the guy who is running the department have a vehicle?

Todd Smith said that he is misunderstanding.

Charles Robbins said that Don Kinney is a resident of Skowhegan.

Harold Bigelow said if someone did live out of town, we have to consider that if there is an emergency...has he got to go back to the highway garage to get a vehicle and then go? Having a vehicle at home you can go directly to the scene.

It has been policy that employees do not take vehicles home. Recently, the Selectmen voted to allow the Police Chief to take a vehicle home, and there is a policy for that. The new Road Commissioner has requested a vehicle, so he would be the second employee that is allowed to do that if this vote passes. If we have another Road Commissioner one day that lives out of town, they would have to come back to the Selectmen to change that policy.

Harold Bigelow said he thinks it should be left open. You are talking about one or two vehicles in an emergency situation.

Paul York said that the Selectmen at that time can make that determination. Nothing is etched in stone. It can come back and be changed.

Vote: 4/0

16. Discussion and decision to approve the Side Letter Agreement with the Skowhegan Firefighters Local 4618, International Association of Firefighters through June 30, 2022.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the Side Letter Agreement with the Skowhegan Firefighters Local 4618, International Association of Firefighters through June 30, 2022.

Vote: 4/0

17. Discussion and decision to approve the amended Personnel Policy.

A motion was made by Charles Robbins and seconded by Paul York to approve the amended Personnel Policy.

Vote: 4/0

18. Discussion and decision to shorten the nomination process and hold a special election on August 31, 2021 to fill the vacant seat on the Board of Selectmen.

This item needs two separate votes.

A motion was made by Charles Robins and seconded by Paul York to fill the Board of Selectmen vacancy.

Vote: 4/0

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Harold Bigelow to shorten the nomination process and hold a special election on August 31, 2021 to fill the vacant seat on the Board of Selectmen.

Gail Pelotte said she came up with the August 31st date in order to give the voters a full 30 days for absentee ballots. This means that nomination papers will have to be back on July 30th.

Christine Almand said that nomination papers will be available on July 14th and due back by July 30th.

Vote: 4/0

19. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

#1	\$	48,013.82 (Payroll #26)
#2	\$	53,663.80 (Payroll #27)
#3	\$	181,517.50 (FY 2022 Accounts Payables)
#100	\$	48,631.45 (Payroll #25)
#101	\$	10,874.56 (State Payables)
#102	\$	401,779.72 (FY 2021 Accounts Payables)
Total	\$	744,480.85

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to approve the Treasurer's Warrants as written.

Vote: 4/0

20. Unfinished Business

- Review Policies and Ordinances
- Run of River/Economic Development
- Utilizing Outside Services
- Marketing/Celebrating Skowhegan
- Public Safety Building
- Sidewalks and Bike Trails/Lanes
- Second Bridge
- Solar Power

No discussion.

21. Other Business

Paul York asked about the mowing of the Main Street intersection.

Don Kinney said that it will be mowed this week.

22. Sign Documents

The Selectmen signed documents.

Executive Session:

1. Executive Session in accordance with M.R.S.A Title 1 § 405(6)(A) to discuss AFSCME union negotiations.

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to enter into Executive Session in accordance with M.R.S.A Title 1 § 405(6)(A) at 6:43 p.m. to discuss AFSCME union negotiations.

Vote: 4/0

A motion was made by Paul York and seconded by Charles Robbins to exit Executive Session at 7:20 p.m.

Vote: 4/0

Nothing to report.

Adjourn Selectmen's Meeting.

Approved and signed on July 27, 2021

A True Copy Attest: _____
Cara L. Mason, Executive Secretary