

**Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Regular Selectmen's Meeting
5:30 P.M.
Tuesday, July 14, 2020**

****Public wishing to see this meeting may do so from the
Town of Skowhegan Facebook page****

Board of Selectmen:

Paul York, Chairman
Gene Rouse, Vice Chairman
Betty Austin
Roger Staples
Dennis Willette

Town Manager:

Christine Almand

Executive Secretary:

Cara L. Mason

Call Selectmen's Meeting to order.

Paul York called the meeting to order.

1. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Town Manager's Report/Department & Committee Reports

On June 30th we sent out 552 – 30 Day Lien Notices for the 2020 taxes. To date we have collected in full on 155 of those accounts.

If you are a registered voter in Skowhegan and have not voted yet, please do so before polls close at 8:00 tonight.

Gail Pelotte:

- I want to thank – Christine, Cara, Jeff, Dayson & Cindy for everything that they have done to help us get ready for the election. Jeff and Dayson – setting up the building and the cleaning during this time. Cara – for being monitor in the hallway and getting absentee ballots ready for the front office. Christine – for being available for hall monitor and doing whatever to help the day run smoothly. Cindy – for being a monitor in the hallway. And also, the Front Office Clerks – Tonja, Larry, Jenn & Chelsea – all have been a great help and have done a first-class job in everything that has been asked of them. I also want to thank the other individuals that came forward that are not Town Office employees – Joe Almand, Patricia Horine, Deborah Hutchins, and also the regular ballot clerks. I want to thank them all very much!!!! Together we are getting through a very unusual time.

- I am on vacation from July 23rd to August 3rd and can be reached by phone, if necessary.

Trisha Austin:

- The audit for fiscal year 2019 has been completed with no findings.
- The Highway Department jobs are posted with a closing date of July 20th. It was advertised in the Morning Sentinel.

Jeff Hewett:

- We were not successful in our application for the façade grant. But I will be coming to the Board at the next Selectmen's Meeting to propose an alternative funding source to do a local façade program.

Shawn Howard:

- The Fire Station had a lightning strike on July 4th weekend causing some damage. We had to replace one computer, our base radio, a laptop and a pressure switch on our air compressor.
- We are still waiting on Pyramid Network for movement on the radio tower work. The company is still working from home and is not processing applications for installations.

Bryan Belliveau:

- I am currently working with Plymouth Engineering to evaluate damage to our retaining wall on the Transfer Station side. This damage was noticed and documented last week. Due to the damage, we are prohibiting anyone from dumping their trailers and trucks. We are asking that people pull up parallel to the dumpsters and offloading by hand. We have jersey barriers in place to prevent further damage. We may need to evaluate whether or not dumping will be allowed from here on out.
- Another reminder that picking is prohibited at our facility. This is for the safety of everyone who uses the facility. I have had a lot of push back on this. I understand that picking is a form of recycling, but safety is our number one priority. Our staff will continue to enforce this issue.
- We had a contractor on-site last week to chip our wood and brush pile. What typically takes 2 days took 4 days. The reason for this was the demand for chipping operations recently, and that led to us having to wait 2 months longer than we should have. This was out of our control as other facilities were facing the same issue. I am working on finding other ways to dispose of our brush so that we don't find ourselves in this situation again. Our pad is now cleared off, and it should be easier to unload now.

Greg Dore:

- The turn ramp from West Front Street onto Main Street is taking shape and looking very good. I have received many comments on how it has improved the intersection. The Lions Club has contacted me and would like to join forces with the garden club in hopes to plant wild flowers on the bank of the project. I told them I would need to know by the end of the week so not to delay the contractor from completion.

- The left turn lane into the Community Center status to date is the utility poles have all been set, and CMP has moved the lines from the old poles onto the new. CMP is now working with the other utilities to move the telephone, internet and cable.
- The roadside mowing has begun. The first mowing should be complete by the end of the week if the weather permits.
- The basin cleaning is going well, and they should have all 800+ basins cleaned by the end of the month.
- I am continuing to gather information on several different streets in town to help determine speeding issues. We have analyzed Greenwood Avenue, Winter Street, Palmer Road, Bennett Avenue, and we are presently collecting data on Chandler Street. All of the before mentioned streets were determined not to have a speeding issue with the exception of Elm Street. The traffic analysis for Elm Street proves to be a good location for the installation of the speed tables. I have met with Chief Dave Bucknam and he agrees. I am scheduling the installation for the middle to the end of next week. We have installed the lane dividers on Pleasant Street and Norridgewock Avenue to help reduce the speed. I haven't done a recent analysis on this area, but I will as soon as we are done with Chandler Street.
- I am still negotiating with the insurance company for the repairs to the Wacker Neuson, and Central Maine Equipment has rented us one while ours is being repaired.
- We are working as two crews now, one basin cleaning and the other is doing maintenance jobs.
- We are still struggling to fill the two open positions, but today I was in contact with a very promising candidate for the position. The applicant has several years of experience working in the construction field and in public works as a plow truck driver, laborer and equipment operator. He has recently move to Skowhegan. I will keep you informed!

3. Selectmen's Items

Betty Austin said she was pleased that the Film Festival was in Skowhegan.

Betty Austin asked if a vote was needed to allow the Lions Club and the Garden Club to plant flowers.

Paul York said that we have had this issue before. If you plant wild flowers there will be weeds that need to be taken care of. We have this issue now in other spots.

Greg Dore said that whether they plant wild flowers, or we go with grass, we won't be any worse off than we are already.

Betty Austin said that we have people from the Garden Club that have planted flowers in other spaces in town and they look great.

Paul York asked who would maintain them after they were planted.

Greg Dore said that what they intend to plant will not need maintenance.

Paul York said that everything needs maintenance. Weeds will overtake the wildflowers.

Greg Dore said that at that point we would mow, which is what we would be doing anyway. They offered and he thought it was a good idea.

Betty Austin said that the Garden Club weeds when they see places that need it.

Paul York would hate to have it all overgrown like a jungle.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to allow the Lions Club and the Garden Club to plant wild flowers in the triangle at the intersection of Main Street and West Front Street.

Dennis Willette said he would like to wait to see if they intend to maintain it first. He would like an agreement.

Vote: 2/3 (motion failed) (Paul York, Roger Staples and Dennis Willette opposed)

Paul York said that an individual called him to see if he could purchase some of our cardboard.

Bryan Belliveau said he is not comfortable loading a bale cardboard and risk damaging somebody's personal vehicle. A bale weights over 2,000 pounds.

Roger Staples asked where the cardboard goes.

Bryan Belliveau said that Casella purchases it from us. They come get it once a month.

Betty Austin said she thought we used to sell the cardboard.

Bryan Belliveau said he is not aware of personal sales. Casella pays us for the cardboard.

Gene Rouse said he would leave it the way it is. We are getting money for the cardboard and we are not putting ourselves at risk.

Dennis Willette agreed.

Recording Time: 22:55

Paul York said that the left hand turn at the Main Street/West Front Street intersection is looking good. That is a nice improvement there.

Paul York said that we are losing one of our board members. Dennis Willette has sold his property and is moving out of town. It has been nice working with him short term. He wished him and his wife good luck.

Dennis Willette said that it is regret that he submits his resignation. He has enjoyed working with the town employees, department heads and Selectmen.

Paul York said that he would wait until the end of the meeting to accept the resignation, so that Dennis Willette can vote on the items tonight.

Consent Agenda:

1. Approve the minutes from the following:

Regular Selectmen's Meeting June 23, 2020

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to approve the Consent agenda as written.

Vote: 5/0

Regular Agenda:

1. Discussion and decision to approve the Parades & Processions Application to allow the Rotary Club to hold the Lobster Bake in the Municipal Parking Lot on August 7, 2020 from Noon until 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to approve the Parades & Processions Application to allow the Rotary Club to hold the Lobster Bake in the Municipal Parking Lot on August 7, 2020 from Noon until 7:00 p.m.

Vote: 5/0

2. Discussion and decision to approve the Parades & Processions Application to allow the Chamber to have food truck vendors in the Municipal Parking Lot on July 17, 24 and 31 and August 14, 21 and 28 in 2020 from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to approve the Parades & Processions Application to allow the Chamber to have food truck vendors in the Municipal Parking Lot on July 17, 24 and 31 and August 14, 21 and 28 in 2020 from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Betty Austin asked where they would be located. The photo is unclear.

Christine Almand said that the photo shows the parking spaces in the middle directly behind the Chamber building.

Betty Austin asked if people would still be able to drive through.

Christine Almand answered, yes. It says using 8 parking spaces.

Roger Staples asked if this was associated with a particular event.

Christine Almand said that there is no event tied to this. He is just looking to provide the local food truck vendors another way to serve the public during the pandemic. Some of these food trucks typically set up at the fair each year, and that is not part of the plan for the called down version of the fair this year.

Vote: 5/0

Recording Time: 28:19

3. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$850.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Protective Vest Designation to purchase a patrol vest for Emily Dix.

A motion was made by Gene rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to expend an amount not to exceed \$850.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Protective Vest Designation to purchase a patrol vest for Emily Dix.

Vote: 5/0

4. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$3,000.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Audio/Visual Equipment Designation for camera maintenance and replacement as necessary.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to expend an amount not to exceed \$3,000.00 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Audio/Visual Equipment Designation for camera maintenance and replacement as necessary.

Vote: 5/0

5. Discussion and decision to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for repairs to the highway garage.

A notion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Greg Dore to go out to bid for repairs to the highway garage.

Vote: 5/0

6. Discussion and decision to allow Bryan Belliveau to add two textile recycling bins at the transfer station.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Bryan Belliveau to add two textile recycling bins at the transfer station.

Gene Rouse asked about what can go in the bins and how does it get sorted.

Bryan Belliveau said that they want clean clothing nothing dirty or fowl smelling. The bins are approximately the size of the three-yard tip dumpsters.

Gene Rouse asked about restrictions on what can go in there.

Bryan Belliveau said there is information in the provided materials. If that is not in there, he can get some clarification from them.

Christine Almand said she is excited about this. Typically she takes clothing to the church if it can be reused. Things with tears or stains get thrown in with the trash. She has a couple of bags full that have been waiting for us to provide this service. This will take a lot out of our waste stream.

Gene Rouse said that 25% to 27% of what they receive at the clothes closet is unacceptable to put out and has had to be thrown away. They have has 317 bags of clothes come in in the last three weeks.

Dennis Willette asked if there would be somebody there monitoring what is thrown in.

Bryan Belliveau said that the company will take the bins, sort the material and return them emptied.

Vote: 5/0

7. Discussion and decision to set July 31, 2020 as the deadline for Skowhegan residents to register their new and/or expired vehicle registrations.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to set July 31, 2020 as the deadline for Skowhegan residents to register their new and/or expired vehicle registrations.

Chief Bucknam said he has been following the Governor's Orders. With each extension of the State of Emergency, the deadline for vehicle registrations gets pushed further back. As of right now, unless the Selectmen select a date for their municipality, the deadline is 30 days after the State of Emergency ends. As of right now, if a municipality is able to process registrations, it can set a deadline. We have been using July 11th, but have not officially set a date. He is asking the Selectmen to set July 31st as the deadline for expired vehicle registrations to be up to date.

Recording Time: 35:16

There are a lot of issues going on. We don't know if cars are stolen. We can't identify different things that are going on when a car is on the road with no license plate. It is causing some issues.

Paul York people are just avoiding the inevitable. This is something that needs to be taken care of. It has to be done every year.

Chief Bucknam said it doesn't matter how long you wait to register your vehicle, they will be dated as of the expiration date on your registration.

Roger Staples said that we are open for business, so there is really no reason that people can't get it done.

Vote: 5/0

8. Discussion and decision to move forward with the Fireworks Ordinance.

A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to move forward with the Fireworks Ordinance.

This was sent to the Planning Board. The Planning Board felt that it wasn't necessary.

Paul York said that he feels that the State's regulations are sufficient.

Roger Staples said he wants to make our neighborhoods as safe as possible. The issue for him is the fire hazard...not to mention the noise pollution and kids getting their fingers blown off. It is only fair to send this to the voters.

Dennis Willette asked Chief Howard what his thoughts are.

Chief Howard said that we have State guidelines that do a pretty good job. He would like to see people follow those guidelines and follow manufacturer recommendations. He does not recall ever responding to any fires caused by fireworks. It can happen, but he has not seen an issue.

Paul York asked Chief Bucknam about calls with noise complaints.

Chief Bucknam said that over the 4th of July weekend we had zero fireworks complaints. He does believe that there needs to be some type of safeguard in the downtown area. People shooting off fireworks off of the roof of businesses or homes. He recommended the same distance that is used for firearms of 300 feet from buildings.

Christine Almand said that the draft ordinance does include that 100 yards, unless they have permission from the property owner.

Vote: 3/2 (Paul York and Dennis Willette opposed)

Recording Time: 43:01

9. Discussion and decision to move forward with the revised Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to move forward with the revised Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

Bryan Belliveau said that this is omitting section O which the State now regulates. The State's guidelines are the same as what was in our Ordinance. The Municipality no longer needs to regulate that.

Vote: 4/1 (Roger Staples opposed)

10. Discussion and decision to approve the Pole Location Permit to allow CMP and Northern New England Telephone to place 2 poles on Bigelow Hill Road 1.5 miles south of the intersection of Bigelow Hill Road and Back Road.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger staples to approve the Pole Location Permit to allow CMP and Northern New England Telephone to place 2 poles on Bigelow Hill Road 1.5 miles south of the intersection of Bigelow Hill Road and Back Road.

Vote: 5/0

11. Discussion and decision to allow Chris Laney to place some fill on Town Property at the southeast end of the football field.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to allow Chris Laney to place some fill on Town Property at the southeast end of the football field.

Dennis Willette asked if we were going to regulate what he used as fill, and who would monitor that.

Paul York said he thinks it is a bad idea. He isn't sure what the purpose is. He is already right at the property line. At one point he was using Town Property to travel through.

Roger Staples asked if this would enhance our property.

Paul York said it isn't going to help us in any way.

Greg Dore said Chris is trying to level off that lot. It is by the corner that we bought from him. The idea is that he would fill in that corner just so it looks better. He can't make it level because he has to maintain the drainage that goes between the two properties. You can't just dump anything for fill. He wouldn't be using brush or anything because that would cause voids.

Paul York said that he is dumping old pavement and chunks of concrete there. He doesn't think that we want that dumped on our property. If we allow it, we won't have any control over what gets dumped there.

Greg Dore said he could check on it from time to time. He is planning to get most of it from the Main Street project which will be shale, loam and gravel. There is a chance that there will be some hot top and boulders in there. If it's buried at the bottom, it won't be an issue.

Roger Staples asked how big the area is.

Greg Dore said it is about 100' by 40'.

Dennis Willette asked how much fill it would take.

Greg Dore said a few hundred yards.

Betty Austin asked if this would keep the edges from deteriorating.

Greg Dore said that the banking will be pretty steep. Pretty sure there will be some erosion. It won't ever look good unless he puts in a retaining wall.

Greg Dore said that there were two things that we were concerned about...the drainage and the irrigation system. It will not have any effect on the irrigation system. He will make sure that nothing is done that will affect the drainage.

Paul York asked what happens if he does do something to the drainage and he doesn't fix it...we end up in a court battle.

Greg Dore said that if we say no, and there is erosion we will have to go to court to get him to fix it anyway. Greg Dore said he thinks that we should let him do it. It improves his property and ours.

Paul York said he feels that it is not something we should get involved in.

Greg Dore said that he thinks it is just being a good neighbor, after we built our football field on his property.

Paul York said we already took care of that and we paid for it.

Vote: 4/1 (Paul York opposed)

Recording Time: 58:13

12. Discussion and decision to appeal the Code Enforcement Officer's decision on violations of the Property Maintenance Ordinance.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to appeal the Code Enforcement Officer's decision on violations of the Property Maintenance Ordinance.

Bryan Belliveau said that Christopher Peck came to him about putting up a fence. He told him it needed to be no more than six feet high and that although you are allowed to place the fence on the property line it is not recommended for maintenance purposes. He did keep the fence back five feet from the property line. Bryan received a complaint. The fence is eight feet tall which requires a building permit. He filled out an application, but it cannot be approved. He need to prove that the foundation is suitable for an eight foot tall fence in a 115 mile an hour wind zone. In regards to the Property Maintenance Ordinance Bryan asked that he reach out to Greg Dore about the setback from the center line of the road on South Factory Street. There is a section that is about 60 feet long that is in the Town's drainage plain.

Christine Almand said it also appears to be a spite fence.

Bryan Belliveau said that we shouldn't be allowing people to put fences like this up and keeping their neighbors from enjoying their views or their own property.

Christine Almand said that Mr. Peck was invited to attend this meeting and he chose not to.

Vote: 0/5 (motion failed)

Betty Austin asked about wording these differently to be easier to understand.

Christine Almand said if we had worded it differently it would have been a negative motion, which is not allowed.

13. Discussion and decision to allow the Chamber of Commerce to place crushed stone in the area adjacent to the front of their building.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to allow the Chamber of Commerce to place crushed stone in the area adjacent to the front of their building.

Gene Rouse asked why they didn't use a site plan. This looks like they are just going to pile it in front of their building.

Christine Almand said that we had a previous conversation regarding the Chamber's plans. We had hoped that he would come back to us with a full plan regarding his plans surrounding the building.

Gene Rouse said that this is useless as far as determining how, why, what, where and when he wants to do it.

Paul York said he isn't sure why he wants to put crushed stone there. His concern is that it will get strewn all over the place and gives one more item for people to throw around at windows and whatnot.

Gene Rouse asked if he intends to use a bender board or something to contain it.

Betty Austin asked if we should postpone the vote until we can get more information.

Gene Rouse said we can vote no and he can come back when he has paperwork that is conducive to approve it.

Vote: 1/4 (motion failed) (Paul York, Gene Rouse, Betty Austin, and Roger Staples opposed)

14. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

#97	\$	42,146.58 (Payroll #26)
#98	\$	42,689.21 (State Payables)
#99	\$	278,574.49 (FY 2020 Accounts Payables)
#1	\$	41,724.12 (Payroll #27)
#2	\$	46,876.68 (Payroll #28)
#3	\$	156,230.06 (FY 2021 Accounts Payables)
Total	\$	608,241.14

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to approve the Treasurer's Warrants as written.

Vote: 5/0

15. Other Business

Paul York said that he knows this has already been voted, but there were some questions regarding the Fireworks Ordinance.

Comment from Facebook...The Planning Board discussed this for many meetings and felt comfortable that the State regulations were sufficient

Somebody also asked who was going to move it forward.

Paul York said that the Selectmen would move it forward to the voters. The planning Board couldn't come to a consensus, so we will use the draft that Joel Greenwood provided.

Christine Almand said that the Planning Board voted to not do the ordinance. They feel that we should go with the State Law. The Board of Selectmen are the ones that decide what goes on the Warrant to be voted on by the voters. They task the Planning Board with drafting ordinances. It is ultimately up to the voters to make that decision. Even with the Planning Boards opinion, the Board of Selectmen have the authority to put that to the voters.

The Chamber also commented on their item...It is just weeds there now. It would look better to spread it out.

Betty Austin said she wanted to thank the department heads for taking care of things quickly.

16. 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
- Second Bridge
- Solar Power
- Foreclosure Sales

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to accept, with regret, the resignation of Dennis Willette from the Board of Selectmen and associated committees effective when his move is complete.

Vote: 4/0/1 (Dennis Willette abstained)

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to fill the vacant Selectman's seat during the November Election.

Vote: 5/0

17. Sign Documents

The Selectmen signed documents.

Adjourn Selectmen's Meeting.

Approved and signed on July 28, 2020.

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