

**Minutes
Town of Skowhegan
Regular Selectmen's Meeting
5:30 P.M.
Tuesday, August 13, 2019
Municipal Building – Council Room**

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.

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

1. Town Manager's Report

Last week I attended the New England Management Institute. I was elected to serve on the Maine Town, City and County Management Association (MTCMA) Board of Directors. There were several good sessions including information on solar energy and workforce development.

The Police Cruiser Bid closes on September 10th at 10:00 am. For more information, visit our website or contact Chief Bucknam.

Free Concerts in the Park at Coburn Park every Sunday night at 5:00 from now through August 25th. For more information, check the Coburn Park website.

The Skowhegan State Fair is open August 8th – 17th.

During the fair, don't forget to stop by the New Balance Tent Sale.

2. Items by the Public

Jason Gayne said that next Tuesday is the grand opening for Spineology in Madison.

3. Selectmen's Items

Betty Austin said that National Night Out was an awesome time for kids and families. A great opportunity for kids to know that people in uniform are safe people to be around.

At the time of the last meeting, Betty Austin said she was in Wisconsin at a Rural Sustainability conference. There was a farm that was changed into a wedding venue and a farm that was changed into a wine tasting place. Lots of good information that she will be sharing with people.

Paul York said it looked like a good crowd at National Night Out. We had a good crowd through RiverFest. He cooked 72 doughboys at Moonlight Madness. The year before we only did about 12.

4. Department & Committee Reports

David Bucknam said that National Night Out was a phenomenal event. He thanked Chief Howard and the fire department, Denise LeBlanc and the recreation department, Jason Gayne and Paul York.

There is a pickup truck going around to see if you want to get your driveway fixed. We are not sure how legitimate these two gentlemen are. Once they complete the job, their bill seems to be a little high. If somebody approaches you, without a license of some sort, he would be hesitant to have them working on his property.

Make sure to lock your car doors. The fair is in town, which brings a large amount of people here. There are a lot of people walking around.

Chief Howard said it has been busy with fires in and out of town. Our guys will be attending funeral services for the retired Captain of the Fairfield Fire Department.

Denise LeBlanc said that RiverFest was successful. The glow stick run was our biggest yet, with over 70 in attendance. We were very busy at Moonlight Madness with fried dough.

Summer programs are wrapping up this week. Our goal with the summer food program this year was to feed 5,000. We exceeded that number.

Football and all of the fall stuff starts next week and school starts the week after that.

Next Saturday is the celebration of the 30th year at the Community Center from Noon to 2:00 p.m. There will also be an adult celebration at T&B's that evening.

Recording Time: 13:25

Jeff Hewett said that the front entrance to the building is coming along pretty well. There are some other places around the building where the brickwork is in trouble. When they have the lift here, they are going to go around the whole building and give a report.

We should be starting the heating/cooling system this Friday. In another month we should be finished, with the exception of training.

Trisha Austin said that there are a couple of conditional offers out for the solid waste and highway positions.

Presentation:

1. Bill Primmerman will present the Aging in Place Plan.

In November 2017 the Selectmen submitted a letter to AARP to become recognized as an age friendly community.

Bill Primmerman said that AARP's process to become an age friendly community is combined with the World Health Organization's efforts.

Bill Primmerman went over the components and the information in the draft plan.

Ken Town went over the data that went into the draft plan.

Discussion and decision to accept the Aging in Place Plan for Skowhegan.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to accept the Aging in Place Plan for Skowhegan.

Vote: 5/0

Recording Time: 27:10

Consent Agenda:

1. Approve and sign Minutes from the following:
Regular Selectmen's Meeting – July 23, 2019
2. Approve and sign a Taxi Driver Permit for Robert A. Laweryson, Jr.

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

Vote: 5/0

Regular Agenda:

1. Discussion and decision to create a nine-member Age Friendly Steering Committee and appoint the following and one Selectman representative with terms expiring June 30, 2020.

Deb Casey
Jeff Hewett
Bill Laney
Jennifer Olsen
Roger Renfrew
Dena Rich
Elaine Wallace
Gary Wallace

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Roger Staples to create a nine-member Age Friendly Steering Committee and appoint the following with terms expiring June 30, 2020.

**Deb Casey
Jeff Hewett
Bill Laney
Jennifer Olsen
Roger Renfrew
Dena Rich
Elaine Wallace
Gary Wallace
Gene Rouse**

Vote: 5/0

2. Discussion and decision to approve the Special Event Liquor License to allow Main Street Skowhegan to hold the Craft Brew Festival downtown on August 31, 2019 from 2:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to approve the Special Event Liquor License to allow Main Street Skowhegan to hold the Craft Brew Festival downtown on August 31, 2019 from 2:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Vote: 4/1 (Dennis Willette opposed)

3. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$15.00 from the Revolving Loan Reserve Account for a renewal UCC filing for the Marc and Angel Paradis RLF Loan.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to expend an amount not to exceed \$15.00 from the Revolving Loan Reserve Account for a renewal UCC filing for the Marc and Angel Paradis RLF Loan.

Vote: 5/0

4. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,400.00 from the Recreation Department Reserve Account, Grounds Equipment Designation to purchase a new 22' utility trailer.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to expend an amount not to exceed \$4,400.00 from the Recreation Department Reserve Account, Grounds Equipment Designation to purchase a new 22' utility trailer.

Dennis Willette asked what is wrong with the old one.

Paul York said that it is old.

Denise LeBlanc said that it is 20 years old. It is in rough shape.

Vote: 5/0

5. Discussion and decision to expend an amount not to exceed \$2,049.50 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Drug Forfeiture Designation for the Watch Guard warranty, evidence library and software maintenance renewal.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to expend an amount not to exceed \$2,049.50 from the Police Department Reserve Account, Drug Forfeiture Designation for the Watch Guard warranty, evidence library and software maintenance renewal.

Vote: 5/0

6. Discussion and decision to award the Cemetery Reconstruction bid. The following bids were received:

Elias Monuments	\$6,682.50
Maine Highland Contracting	\$49,870.00

The Cemetery Committee recommends awarding the Cemetery Reconstruction bid to Elias Monuments with a total bid amount of \$6,682.50 and to expend that amount from the Cemetery Account, Monument Reconstruction Designation.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to award the Cemetery Reconstruction bid to Elias Monuments with a total bid amount of \$6,682.50 and to expend that amount from the Cemetery Account, Monument Reconstruction Designation.

Vote: 5/0

7. Discussion and decision to allow the Highway Department to build the road at the East Skowhegan Cemetery. The following bids for this project were received:

Littlefield's Construction, LLC	\$16,547.00
Pratt & Sons Inc.	\$34,685.00
Mantor Construction of Maine, Inc.	\$35,600.00

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to allow the Highway Department to build the road at the East Skowhegan Cemetery.

Paul York said that he is not for highway doing this. He has been trying to get highway away from doing construction projects. There isn't that much of a difference in what Greg Dore gave for a cost and what our lowest bid was. We voted to put this out to bid.

Roger Staples said that this takes highway away from their normal duties. He said he agreed with Paul York.

Jason Gayne asked why highway was not listed with a price on the Agenda.

Paul York said that we got that cost after the fact. The cost was \$13,556.50.

Steve Govoni asked for clarification...it was received after the bids were due?

Christine Almand said that the highway department doesn't bid on projects. There was a bid opening. The Cemetery Committee decided they would rather have the highway department do the work, expecting it to be a lower price. Greg was out. He came in Monday to put together what our costs would be to do the project.

Dennis Willette said that this isn't actually a bid.

Betty Austin asked if when the Cemetery Committee met...did they want to do it with these bids.

Gail Pelotte said that the Cemetery Committee thought that...the Cemetery is a Town property. When it was developed, the highway department built the roads. It is a Town of Skowhegan road.

Paul York said that this would take away from their other duties. They are busy and they are short handed.

Betty Austin said that the Cemetery Committee put it out to bid. They didn't ask the highway department how much it would cost?

Gene Rouse said that they did not. It was done after the bids were opened. Gene Rouse said he was not aware that we were going to get a quote from Greg Dore.

Christine Almand said that Cara Mason and herself know that, from past projects, it has always been asked of Greg what he estimates his costs to be. When this was going on the Agenda to ask to have the highway department do it...we asked Greg to provide those estimated costs. That is how we have always done it.

Betty Austin said that it doesn't sound like the Cemetery Committee was going to ask Greg to do it. They got their bids and then somehow it got changed.

Gene Rouse said that is correct.

Steve Govoni said that he would caution that contractors are coming into this town, spending the time doing bids...then being undercut because something comes in after. A number of contractors won't even bother to put in a bid.

Betty Austin said that is why we are having this discussion. Betty Austin said that it sounds like the Cemetery Committee expected us to choose one of these bids.

Gene Rouse said that that was his understanding.

Gail Pelotte said that they did not make a recommendation at their meeting.

Christine Almand said that they made a recommendation to go with the highway department.

Gail Pelotte said that it was for discussion to see if the Selectmen would go that route. If they don't go that route then the Cemetery Committee will have to decide if we go with low bid or put it off for another year. We have a right to accept or reject any of the bids.

Vote: 0/5 (motion failed)

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to award the Cemetery Road Bid to Littlefield's Construction, LLC with a total bid amount of \$16,547.00 and expend that amount from the Cemetery Reserve Account.

Gail Pelotte asked what happens if the Selectmen approve this and the Cemetery Committee doesn't want to do it. Does the Committee then have to do this?

Paul York said he isn't sure why the Committee wouldn't want to do it. They put it out to bid.

Betty Austin said that because it was put out to bid, and Littlefield's was the lowest...that is what they would expect. That is what we would expect. That is what contractors would expect.

Christine Almand said that once it is awarded we will move forward, unless it is awarded contingent upon the Committee's approval.

Betty Austin said, no...that was not part of her second.

Dennis Willette said that the highway department said it would take them four days to do the job. How long did Littlefield say it would take?

Paul York said unless they asked for it to be broken down in the bid...it could take them two weeks. It's still the same price.

Betty Austin said that the way that the bids went out, we need to honor the bid process.

Gene Rouse agreed.

Vote: 5/0

8. Discussion and decision to move Jeff Hewett, Trisha Austin and Gail Pelotte from Class 1 to Class 2 on the Department Head pay scale.

This item moved to the end.

9. Discussion and decision to allow Denise LeBlanc to go out to bid for Tennis Court Maintenance.

A motion was made by Roger Staples and seconded by Betty Austin to allow Denise LeBlanc to go out to bid for Tennis Court Maintenance.

Vote: 5/0

Recording Time: 44:30

10. Discussion and decision to allow the Cemetery Committee to go out to bid for Tree Removal in Southside Cemetery and Bloomfield Cemetery.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Betty Austin to allow the Cemetery Committee to go out to bid for Tree Removal in Southside Cemetery and Bloomfield Cemetery.

Vote: 5/0

11. Discussion and decision to allow the Cemetery Committee to go out to bid for Stump Removal in Bloomfield Cemetery.

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to allow the Cemetery Committee to go out to bid for Stump Removal in Bloomfield Cemetery.

Dennis Willette asked why, if we are removing trees at two cemeteries, we are only removing stumps at Bloomfield.

Gene Rouse said we typically let the stumps sit for two years before we remove them.

Paul York said that these are trees that were previously cut in Bloomfield.

Gene Rouse said that two years ago four big pines were removed.

Vote: 5/0

12. Discussion and decision to approve the License to Enter and Use to allow Wentworth Partners and Associates to utilize two mulched areas located at the southwest corner of the Municipal Parking Lot for planting and landscaping.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to approve the License to Enter and Use to allow Wentworth Partners and Associates to utilize two mulched areas located at the southwest corner of the Municipal Parking Lot for planting and landscaping.

Paul York said he appreciates somebody stepping forward to want to do this. He feels that the Town has fallen short. Jeff has tried very hard to try to find people to do things. We need to start thinking about the things that we need to do.

Betty Austin said she saw a sign in another town where they thanked several businesses for taking care of the roadside.

Dennis Willette asked why we are approving a License to Enter and Use.

Paul York said that he wants to landscape the islands near his business that are owned by the Town. We have done this for other businesses in the past.

Christine Almand said that we have a similar agreement with Variety Drug. The landscaping in front of their business is Town property. Cara Mason modified that agreement to work for this space.

Dennis Willette asked why they need a license. Why don't we just go into an agreement?

Steve Govoni said that the license actually protects the Town.

Vote: 5/0

Recording Time: 49:57

13. Discussion and decision to appoint two representatives for the KVCOG General Assembly (one Selectman and one other representative).

A motion was made by Gene Rouse and seconded by Roger Staples to appoint Betty Austin and Christine Almand as the representatives for the KVCOG General Assembly.

Vote: 5/0

14. Discussion and decision to schedule a joint meeting with the Planning Board.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to schedule a joint meeting with the Planning Board for October 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Dennis Willette asked what the purpose of this meeting is.

Christine Almand said that we meet with the Planning Board to discuss things that we would like them to work on. Some of what was discussed in the goals workshop will carry over into that meeting. They work on all of our ordinacnes.

Vote: 5/0

15. Treasurer's Warrants to be approved:

#8	\$	46,622.02 (Payroll #30)
#9	\$	43,765.30 (Payroll #31)
#10	\$	11,702.64 (State Payables)
#11	\$	45,153.11 (Payroll #32)
#109	\$	21,053.84 (FY 2019 Accounts Payables)
#12	\$	423,304.44 (FY 2020 Accounts Payables)
#13	\$	19,354.02 (State Payables)
Total	\$	610,955.37

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

Vote: 5/0

Discussion of #8 moved from earlier in the meeting.

8. Discussion and decision to move Jeff Hewett, Trisha Austin and Gail Pelotte from Class 1 to Class 2 on the Department Head pay scale.

A motion was made by Betty Austin and seconded by Gene Rouse to move Jeff Hewett, Trisha Austin and Gail Pelotte from Class 1 to Class 2 on the Department Head pay scale.

Recording Time: 54:14

Dennis Willette asked why at this time.

Paul York said that it was a request from them.

Dennis Willette asked why we wouldn't talk about that when we do the budget.

Paul York said that it doesn't make much difference when we discuss it. We implemented these pay scales. The purpose of the pay scales was to create a top of the scale so it doesn't just keep going. We placed people into classes where we thought they should be.

Gene Rouse said that his understanding is that some of the criteria has changed for some of these people.

Christine Almand said that there was an added duty for Jeff's position. She is not aware of changes for anyone else.

Betty Austin said that there was a lot of talk when we did that. We said that we could always look at it again. She think this is a good time to do it.

Paul York said that part of why they are placed where they are is based on the time that they have been here. That means they will have that much longer to move up the scale. Then there is nobody in class 1. When we rehire where do we put them?

Betty Austin said when we hire somebody we can put them in class 1.

Paul York said that where they are on the scale is based on job title. We can't just flip flop back and forth.

Betty Austin said she is hesitant about how much we can say...if we start talking about people's personal positions. When someone new is hired you can look at that.

Christine Almand said that we have six pay scales in Town. The pay scale defines which class each title is in. If this is approved, and Jeff retires...his position is in class 2. In order to move that position to a class 1, the Selectmen would have to approve a new pay scale.

Christine Almand said she had a thorough conversation with the attorney about discussion. Everything concerning compensation, and duties, including individuals is public information. The only reason we would be able to go into executive session is if what we talk about would reasonably be expected to cause damage to an individual's reputation. Unless we were to bring performance into the conversation, everything else has to be done in public session.

Roger Staples said that the departments that are in class 1 are administrative. The departments that are in class 2 are on an emergency call basis. He is not sure why the recreation department is in class 2.

Christine Almand said that the likelihood of those position being called in on an emergency is much lower. When we looked at these pay scales...we looked at the old pay scales. We also looked at pay through salary surveys. The first draft of this pay scale had three classes. Originally the recreation department director was in class 1. Based on number of employees and facilities that she maintains...that position was moved to class 2.

Dennis Willette said that if we move these three positions to class 2...that eliminates class 1.

Christine Almand said that pay scales are based on duties, responsibilities and qualifications. She isn't really sure why you would want to move them back and forth. If someone comes in with higher qualifications, we would bring them in at a higher step within the class.

Paul York said that we should tread lightly if we are thinking that we are going to flip flop back and forth.

Gene Rouse said that he feels that we have adequate slots on class 2 that we could do what needs to be done.

Paul York said that just moves these people to a slot where they are that much further from reaching the top of the scale. They are where they are in class 1 because of their years here.

Dennis Willette asked if we move them to class 2, will they be higher on the scale.

Christine Almand said that based on the request they are looking to go into the class 2 scale at just above what they currently make. Christine Almand handed out the pay scale with each position shown where they currently are and where they would move to with this approval. They will continue to receive increases for a longer period of time.

Gail Pelotte said that when these pay scales were first discussed. There was discussion about whether you supervised people and the facilities that you managed. Jeff has taken on new responsibilities, Trisha deals with every department head and every employee, Gail takes in millions of dollars in the Clerk's Office and supervise four people. She also runs state elections and manages the cemeteries. We all wear a lot of different hats. We are all department heads. We should all have the opportunities of being able to... The other department heads are going to top out higher than us. You also have people in different departments who have worked for the Town less years. They will have the opportunity to top out at a higher rate, and they are not department heads.

Christine Almand said that there is no other pay scale where an employee would make more than a salaried employee...unless they are working overtime.

Trisha Austin said that there are department heads without the years of service. There are all kinds of things, like budget meetings that she is required to attend. She doesn't get compensated for these things. She has a part-time staffer that, due to the clerk's office being busy...she doesn't get as many hours from her. She believes that they deserve to be in class 2. Nor because they want to get rich. The job experience that they have, they have been here a long time and work really hard. She does not feel that there was criteria as to how they got to class 1.

Christine Almand asked, if it's not more money, and it's not more steps to top out higher, she's not sure what we accomplish by putting these positions into class 2.

Betty Austin said that we wouldn't be singling them out in one class that is lesser than the other class. When we originally did this, some of us were not comfortable with that.

Dennis Willette asked what they would be gaining.

Trisha Austin said that they fit under the same criteria as the other department heads...duties responsibilities, when they have to be here, how much they have to be here. We give 155%.

Dennis Willette said he is trying to figure out what the criteria was.

Jeff Hewett said that it was never said what the criteria was. Jeff Hewett said he is never going to top out, because he isn't going to be here that much longer. The stuff that he had taken on and that everyone else has taken on, justifies them being in class 2. It just doesn't sit right.

Roger Staples asked if they thought their job descriptions should be changed.

Jeff Hewett said his has changed.

Trisha Austin said she doesn't know how you could add much more to some of them. We stay as many hours as we need to. She doesn't think their job descriptions are any less than.

Roger Staples said he is getting a feeling that it has changed from when they were first hired.

Jeff Hewett said that his has changed multiple times over the years. He said he had no problem taking on the Municipal Building, but it is a lot more hours. It is not a 40 hour per week job.

Dennis Willetter said he still wanted to hear the criteria.

Betty Austin said that there wasn't any clear criteria. There was lots of talk and people's opinions.

Christine Almand said that she has multiple pay scales from over the years. There has always been a separation of classes. We mirrored that somewhat. It is based on qualifications, duties and responsibilities.

Amy Rouse said she didn't understand why we wouldn't want to support these positions. We are talking about people who have been here 20 plus years in their positions. They are talking about being recognized for the many, many extra hours that they put in to make this town run.

Paul York said that nobody has said that they don't do their jobs, or that they don't go above and beyond. If they were to stay we are talking about a lot of money over time. Every department head, every employee, can sit here and make the argument for why they should make more money.

Amy Rouse said that there is a component of recognition after you have been somewhere for 20 plus years.

Paul York said that we put pay scales in place so that people top out...so it doesn't just keep going. There is only so much money to go around.

Vote: 2/3 (motion failed)

Trisha Austin asked what other recourse they had to come back.

Christine Almand said that if there is more information to add, they may listen to that.

Trisha Austin said that if you look over job descriptions. People are allowed to go into a class with many less years, not as much job responsibility. It is unfair to us. She does not believe that her job description is less than any other. People are being judgmental on what we are asking. We are not looked at the same as others.

Paul York said that for him that is certainly not the case. This is not an easy topic one way or the other. He struggled with this, he looked it over. These pay scales were implemented...are there people where they shouldn't be...he doesn't know. We did this because for years it was basically a free for all, with no end. This would destroy the pay scale. Nobody is going to argue that you guys do more than your share. Nobody looks at you any differently than anybody else.

Jeff Hewett said that might not have been the intention, but it is very clear that that is what is happening. It is going to affect how things go in the future. You voted...that is what it will be.

16. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

17. 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

Christine Almand said that we are waiting to hear back on the grant for the vehicle charging stations.

18. Sign Documents

The Selectmen signed documents.

Adjourn Selectmen's Meeting.

Approved and signed on August 27, 2019.

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