

# TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING

October 16, 2024

6:00pm

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

2. **WARRANTS/BILLS - Signed**

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Norwood made a motion to approve the agenda for October 16, 2024; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Norwood made a motion to approve the minutes for October 2, 2024; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE**

- A. Thank you to Greg Martinez of Iron Tails who donated \$635 toward Neighbors Helping Neighbors from various little fund raisers through out the year.
- B. Sherrif Dept had a 4 hour detail on East Shore Drive and Youngs Ridge Road; there were no stops.
- C. Received several applications for the Firefighter/EMT. The Fire Chief and Liasion will start interviewing that position.
- D. Per the Select Board's request, the handyman with the aid of some staff did some pressure washing of the building. The entire thing was not done due to time but the green algae off the immediate areas.
- E. The office to date has issued 400 absentee ballots and collected \$3.21 million in taxes between October 1<sup>st</sup> and October 16<sup>th</sup>.

6. **LIASION UPDATE**

McGurty: Municipal Finance, Warrant & Finance Committee, APAT

- Warrant & Finance - had an organizational meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup> where they elected officers and did some of their housekeeping tasks. The various warrant article were reviewed and the committee's recommendations will be gone over later on the agenda.
- Municipal Finance - As indicated by the Town Administrator, there was \$3 million brought into the Town's cash receipts from taxes. The cash investment accounts there are \$6.3 million dollars; \$2 million in Treasury bills and \$3 million in a varying rate Treasury bill fund called Wisdom Tree; that is 5% whereas the Treasury bills are 5+%. There is \$900,000 with Partners and that is running about 4.5%.

Walsh: Transfer Station, Mary Grant Committee, Animal Control Officer

- Mary Grant – no update
- Animal Control – no update
- Transfer Station - new Superintendent search will be further down on the agenda for Transfer Station.

Norwood: Fire Department, Recreation Committee, Conservation Forest Committee

- Fire Department – Had a brief check in with the Fire Chief and will be meeting later this week for monthly meeting.
- Recreation Committee - Been keeping in communication with new Rec Director talking about planning for first meeting on Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. Working with Town Administrator to schedule two interviews with two potential members as well.
- Conservation Forestry Committee – Reached out for follow up on last meeting missed.

Denekamp: School Department, Planning Board/Land Use, Cemetery Committee

- School Dept met last week; unable to attend due to attending a CRP grant public forum.
- Planning Board meets tomorrow, October 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Cemetery – been quiet.

Winchell Jr.: Roads & Road Committee, Municipal Grounds

- Roads – No update.
- Municipal Grounds – Parking lot warrant article was taken off the warrant. Brainstorming what can be done all at once (parking lot, handicap access, etc.). Listening to what was heard at public hearing. Will confer with Will Langley regarding snow and plowing.

## **7. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES**

A. Joyce Bakshi, W & F Vice Chair reported that W & F had their first meeting on October 15, 2024 and would just be reiterating what McGurty said. It was a good meeting; chose liasions and will be reaching out to the Select Board as there is a cross over and members for certain groups will want to talk to Select Board Liasions for same. A new secretary (Lori Wood) was selected and she will be meeting with her to show her what was done in the past.

McGurty mentioned that the W& F Committee also had a discussion about their assessment of the budget and would like to continue the process that was set in place last year.

Winchell indicated that the Select Board was looking at revamping the policy to give that guideline of what was done last year. Both parties thought that worked very well.

Bakshi indicated the committee had come up with a few questions for the Town Administrator (sorry during busdy time) but will make a better understanding between everybody concerned, so they will wait to here back on those.

## **8. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Special Town Warrant

Special Town Meeting Warrant

The Town Administrator indicated that she will go through each warrant article to make sure there were no typos and to get the Select Board's motion and vote.

In the name of the State of Maine you are hereby required to notify and warn the inhabitants of said Town of Acton, qualified to vote in Town affairs to assemble at the Acton Elementary School 700 Milton Mills Road, Acton, Maine on October 30, 2024 at 6:00 pm to vote on the following articles:

- Article 1 – to choose a moderator for said meeting.
- Article 2 – To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to expend monies from the approved contingency fund of \$31,312 (previously allocated to Municipal Management) for any Town Department as they deem advisable to support operations in the current fiscal year.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 6-0.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 2 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 3 – To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a total of \$10,490 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to ratify the overdrafts in the Transfer Station Account for FY23-FY24.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 6-0.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 3 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 4 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$14,150 from the Unassigned Fund Balance for Transfer Station expenses for the current FY24-FY25 year.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 6-0.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 4 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried..**

- Article 5 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$55,819 from the Unassigned Fund Balance for the purchase of a skid steer.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 5-1.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 5 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 6 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$90,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance to increase Acton's law enforcement services with the York County Sherriff's department and purchase a new Patrol vehicle. This will increase Acton's coverage from 20 hours to 40 hours a week, therefore no longer sharing this contracted service with the Town of Shapleigh.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 5-1.

Winchell clarified the reasoning behind dropping the stated number due to the Select Board already budgeting 6-months of contracted service and would unfortunately be different next year, but it is lower than what was given at the public hearing.

McGurty stated at the previous night's Warrant & Finance meeting he made a comment based on what he believed to be true and has found out since then that it was not true; indicating that Shapleigh was moving towards a full time officer. McGurty continued that it is not clear what Shapleigh will be doing at this point and there isn't maybe support within the town to do that. McGurty wanted to clarify it was a misunderstanding on his part.

The Town Administrator noted that Shapleigh knew about Acton's Special Town meeting and after this vote, Shapleigh will make their next step because they run on a calendar year.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 6 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 7 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$41,215.45 from the Unassigned Fund Balance and place in "Peck Road Reserve Account" to finish the reconstruction and paving of the portion of Peck Road from Milton Mills Road to the dirt. Any funds remaining in this account after the completion of the repair, no later than 6/30/2025, shall be returned to the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 6-0.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 7 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 8 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$9,000 to deposit into the existing Statutory Reserve Fund pursuant to Maine Revised Statute, Title 30-A, Chapter 223, subchapter 7, section 5801 to assist Road Associations in preventing storm runoff pollution from reaching great ponds, as authorized by 23 M.R.S.A, §3106. Road Associations formed pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A, §3106 or Title 13-B are eligible for funding. If the requirements of 23 M.R.S.A, §3106 are met, and is determined by the Select Board and/or the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the Town shall fund the proposed repairs until the \$9,000 is exhausted or June 30, 2025, whichever comes first.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 6-0.

The Town Administrator spoke to the questions received from the Warrant & Finance Committee regarding this article and her follow up. The W & F Committee questioned whether this money could be dissolved into the Unassigned Fund Balance if it was not spent and the answer was yes.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 8 as written; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

- Article 9 - To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$45,000 from the Unassigned Fund Balance for the purchase of land located at Tax Map 133 Lot 040.

Warrant & Finance recommended to approve the article as written 4-2\*.

**McGurty made a motion to approve Article 9 as written; Denekamp seconded. Vote 4-0-1 (Walsh abstained). Motion carried.**

- \* Bakshi's notes indicated the Warrant & Finance vote was 5-1; Town Administrator received an email from the Warrant & Finance Chair stating that the vote was 4-2.

Norwood asked about the perspective of those who did not vote for an Article. The Town Administrator indicated that could be asked at the Special Town meeting.

The warrant will be signed after the housekeeping changes are made.

*Heard out of order after Public Comment:*

**McGurty made a motion to approve the town warrant for the October 30<sup>th</sup> Special Town Meeting with articles 1 – 9 as presented; Denekamp seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

### A. CRP Update

Denekamp commented that there was a public meeting held last Thursday for CRP. Mr. Alexander Brown, Springvale office presented. The next funds will be made available on December 17<sup>th</sup>. If the Board wants to get in on that for the Town, the Board will need to get going and pass a resolution first before garnering assistance for that.

Winchell asked if the board needed to know what they wanted the funds for? Denekamp responded that the Town Administrator did a cost assessment and that he had sat down with Mr. Brown and reduced it further. Then at the public hearing reduced it even a little more further. It is no longer \$50,000 available; it is \$75,000. The rep is contracted to work with the Town of Acton through March. The next funding round after December is scheduled for sometime in August. This rep can be a lot of help to the Town and there does not need to be just one project picked.

Example: There is \$75,000 there and the Board can go through all the town buildings and retro fit them with energy efficient units, heat pumps, energy efficient appliances, renewable energy; there are many things on the list the Board can apply for quickly that do not need engineering studies.

However, if you need a storm water run off, you will need an engineering study. Denekamp recommended it was worth doing and once done, there was 2-years permitted for implementing

everything. When asked if the rep was writing the grant for Acton, Denekamp stated she would assist with the grant writing, so he will meet with her again. The the rep would like to address the Select Board (via telephone call or in person) so that the Board knows what they are signing up for and what she can help the Board with.

Norwood recapped that John did a lot of work and that the rep indicated a lot of it was outlined and it just needed to be filled in. Denekamp stated the clean energy items were pretty simple.

B. Adopt 2024 General Assistance Ordinance

**McGurty made a motion to adopt the General Assistance Ordinance as written and presented; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

C. Transfer Station Superintendent/Handyman

The Town Administrator asked the Select Board on whether they wanted to keep the position as one position or was it better suited separate. Thirty-five hours are required for benefits; if separated the Transfer Station position will be between 24 and 26 hours (maybe 30 during training). The important thing to figure out is snow shovelling but the handyman tasks, the Town Administrator might have a plan for them. The Town Administrator asked the Board for their thoughts on whether to separate or not. Discussion ensued: Norwood liked the idea with benefits because with the job market it is hard to attract people and will increase our chances for more applicants. Winchell and Walsh noted the combined position didn't work they way they had expected it to work. It was discouraging when people didn't want to clean. There is an outside cleaner now. Winchell had some ideas about shovelling which he expressed. Discussion continued about plowing and shovelling options and the use of the Road agent. A discussion ensued about dropping benefit hours down and whether there would be other eligible for that same situation. An idea was to list the position as it stands now at 35 hours, but for the right person there was options to split the position.

D. Mousam Watershed Dam Coalition committee member

McGurty has served as the committee member for the last several years and the Board was looking to appoint a new member to have a new set of eyes on that committee. McGurty has done well going through the budget with Sanford and deserves a break. Norwood indicated he was always open to learn new things. **Walsh nominated Norwood as the new committee member; Winchell seconded. All in favor.**

E. Executive Session M.R.S.A. 405 6 A 1 – Personnel

**Norwood made a motion to go into Executive Session M.R.S.A. 405 6 A 1 at 6:36 pm ; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

**Norwood made a motion to come out of Executive Session M.R.S.A. 405 6 A 1 at 6:59 pm; Denekamp seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.**

F. Appointments

1) Lauren Hazekamp, Treasurer

**McGurty made a motion to appoint Lauren Hazekamp as Treasurer, she has been serving as Interim Treasurer for the past 6-months, making her appointment effective from October 16<sup>th</sup> until June 30, 2026; Norwood seconded. All in favor.**

McGurty noted that and he has had an opportunity to work with and get to know her and that she is doing a great job. Winchel mention the entire staff has come together well.

2) Charlie Crespi, Saco River Cooridor

**Winchell made a motion to put Charlie Crespi on the Saco River Cooridor; Walsh seconded. All in favor.**

**10. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Susan Meehan approached the board to ask about Article 6 whereas the wording states to increase the hours from 20 to 40 hours. What happens if it doesn't pass? Response is that there is a contract commitment through December by contract. If it fails, it stays at 20 but a one-year contract can be signed and the police car would need to go on April's Town meeting. When the contract expires in December the Board has the authority to approve contracts with out voter approvals. Discussion ensued about what can be done due to the line item and budget. Susan thanked for the clarification.
- Joyce Bakshi indicated that the Owls had a luncheon and thanked the Town Administrator for her presentation on voting. She also noted it was boss appreciation day and she had looked out from the lunch and there was Jennifer powerwashing the building. It is just the way she is; always looking out for the Town. Norwood seconded the sentiments made by Bakshi and noted their appreciation for Jennifer's work and knowledge.

**11. MEMBERS PRESENT – David Winchell Jr., Chair, Tom McGurty, Ed Walsh, Daniel Norwood, Jon Denekamp and Jennifer Roux**

**12. ATTENDANCE – Joyce Bakshi and Susan Meehan**