

TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING

November 6, 2024

6:00pm

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

2. **WARRANTS/BILLS - Signed**

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Walsh made a motion to approve the agenda for November 6, 2024; Denekamp seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Norwood made a motion to approve the minutes for October 23, 2024; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE**

A. Election Recap:

- There was 1,763 who voted in the town of Acton.
- 2,300 registered voters; 76% of the town voted.
- Thanked all election staff; the day went very smoothly and quickly. No complaints or issues.
- Tabulator got full and had to be emptied several times during the day.
- The difference in ballot count between the candidate and referendum ballots was ballots not returned by absentee voters.
- All staff contributed to making the day successful.
- There were only a few ballots that needed to be hand counted.
- Results are posted on the website; State has all the results.
- Transfer Station is closed next Monday for Veteran's Day
- Sherrif's Log Report was read aloud.
- It's time to think about Neighbor Helping Neighbor's Thanksgiving dinner and baskets. Please tell the Town Administrator if you know of anyone who should be on the list,

6. **LIASION UPDATE**

McGurty: Municipal Finance, Warrant & Finance Committee, APAT

- Warrant & Finance - This committee will probably be starting soon. The budget process is something that needs initiated. Town Administrator and McGurty will be putting together the schedule of activities during the budget process. The committee likes the process conducted last year. Process was to bring in department heads to present budgets, invite W&F so that both Select Board and W&F can asked their questions while the department heads are presenting. This cuts down on a lot of the back and forth. McGurty plans to start this timeline in November.
- Municipal Management – There was some money moved; a T bill came due. Placed in a 3-moth with Wisdom Tree as their rates were still the best. Keeping an eye on rates.

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

- Transfer Station interviews were conducted and will be discussed later on agenda.
- The Skid Steer has been ordered; should receive in a week or two
- Other Special Town meeting items were attended to; thanked folks in town for turning out and supporting the Transfer Station.

Norwood: Fire Department, Recreation Committee, Conservation Forest Committee

- Chief Ham and Norwood conducted interviews for the Fire/EMT position and will be addressed later on the agenda.
- Town Administrator and Norwood will be conducting EMA interviews on November 7, 2024
- Rec Committee –
 - Attended the first Rec Committee meeting. Went well. Excited to see the direction the committee will be taking this year.
 - Meeting with the Rec Director on a weekly basis.
 - Soccer had their final closing ceremonies.
 - Practices for basketball. Basketball registration open until Nov. 8th. Still looking for assistant coaches; please contact Rec Director if interested.
- Forestry Conservation Committee -
 - Received feedback on the signs they will be placing; specified the two town properties – Old Farm Town Road and Hebo Hybo
 - Next meeting is November 12th.
 - Lenkowski is working on the closing date for the newly acquired town property

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

- School Committee –
 - The Superintendent and Principal will be meeting with the Select Board at next stated meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2024 for a meet and greet.
 - The School Department's next meeting is Thursday, November 14, 2024.
 - McGurty asked for School Committee's budget calendar; Town Administrator indicated it was a good time to tell them what the town is doing so that they can count backwards. McGurty wanted Denekamp to confirm their choice.
- Planning Board is meeting Thursday, November 7, 2024.
- Cemetery Committee now has a full committee and looking to schedule a meeting.

Winchell Jr.: Roads & Road Committee, Municipal Grounds

- Roads - Special Town meeting articles were voted in; Peck Road and Article 43.
 - Municipal Grounds – spoke with Mr. Taylor, Sebago regarding project. State of Maine might be interested in staging equipment; need to talk with them before putting out to bid. Town Administrator will follow up. The survey for the town hall came back and will be discussed at workshop on November 16th.
- Mr. Dennis was talked to regarding not starting Memorial project now but moving work to Spring; he indicated he was cutting rock.

McGurty asked about Special Town meeting improvements for resident's to be able to hear. Krampetz will work with the school to work out for next time.

7. **DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES - None**

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. A. Old Skid Steer

- Going out to bid for a minimum of \$12,000 "as is" on MuniBids.com. Winchell will verify if buyer's premium goes on top of that.
- McGurty asked about possible grants for acquiring an ambulance. Town Administrator passed information onto the Fire Chief.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Salt Bid

Will Langley, Road Commissioner approached the Board to go over the Salt bid.

- Reached out to Southern Maine; the price posted is the same as Eastern Salts. The price of \$79.20 is 4 cents cheaper than last year.
- Advantage of having Eastern Salts is availability of salt and quick delivery times.

McGurty made a motion to issue a contract to Eastern Salt Company for bulk De-Icing Road Salt at a rate of \$79.20 per ton; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Sherriff Dept. Contract

- The Town Administration asked the Select Board about how they wanted to handle the renewal of the contract as the current contract is expiring Dec. 31, 2024. January 1 – June 30th is currently funded.

Norwood suggested based on the Special Town meeting feedback the Select Board get more input from the town's residents. Winchell asked that the Select Board review the contract and question some of the items mentioned regarding reimbursements.

A list of questions should be developed and then ask the Sherrif's office to come in and address them.

Any sense of what Shapleigh is doing? Shapleigh is content to sign another 1-year contract if that is the direction Acton would like to go in.

McGurty's perspective was that if the Board was going to buy a \$52,000 vehicle it would be good to know if the town was not going to continue the contract, then they would not want to buy a vehicle. Let's decide first.

Town Administrator will look at the schedule, send an invitation and have it out there with plenty of time for resident's to be a part.

C. SRPC Request

Strafford Regional Planning Commission received some funding and wants to develop a watershed management plan on Milton Mill pond. The pond strattles a small part of Acton and the commission wants to offer the Select Board a seat on the committee.

McGurty was curious of what the study was going to be on. Town Administrator will keep the Select Board updated.

D. Fire Dept. Grant Request

The Fire Chief reached out for permission to apply for a grant. It requires matching funds and he has the money allocated. Maximum award is \$5,000. Board agreed to permit.

- Lawncare Bid

Seacoast Property Maintenance who has the Town's lawn care contract for the 2024 season and asked if the Board was going to go out to bid. Discussion ensued about extending contract.

McGurty made a motion to renew the contract with Seacoast Property Maintenance for mowing and maintenance of town lawns, fertilizer and mulch for the amount of \$15,960; Norwood seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

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 - Personnel at 6:38 pm ; Denekamp seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Norwood made a motion to come out of Executive Session M.R.S.A. 405 6 A 1 – Personnel at 6:55 pm; Denekamp seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

F. Firefighter/EMT Hire

Norwood made a motion to offer the Firefighter/EMT position to candidate A; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

G. Transfer Station Superintendent

Walsh made a motion to offer Transfer Station Superientent position to candidate A; Norwood seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

10. **PENDING – None**

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Mr. Bernard Broder approached the Select Board with comments on the following items:

- **Publishing the agenda a day prior to the meeting** – discussion ensued regarding the items and when they are added to the agenda; it is difficult because items come in late. Important items (example: Sherriff's contract) are pushed out as soon as they can push them out for notification and comments.
- **Public Comment** - Allowing Public comment after each agenda item before the Board made a final decision - discussion ensued regarding the process for asking comments after a motion is made and reinstating the process to allow comments before seconded.
- **Election** - Wanted to echo what Jennifer said about the election, it was really busy, there was a lot of people there, everything went well and the missing piece of what Jennifer said was her role in that. The town is really lucky to have her here. There is no way he could have done the day like she does. Board: Here! here! Clapping ensued.
- **Special Town Meeting** - Wanted to express his appreciation to the Select Board and everyone involved in the Special Town Meeting. It was obvious a lot of work went into that and he was left feeling that the town asks a lot of the Select Board, perhaps too much, in that, people have a lot of questions (which is good), but where he believes the town expects too much is, the Select Board is made up of lay people and not always an expert on topics at hand, and a lot is expected. These are public service positions, even though some people think the Board is getting paid a lot of money, the Board is not. Especially with the amount of hours worked (the warrant articles are an example of that).

Mr. Broder continued that he felt the discussions about the Sherriff's Department warrant article (and Mr. Broder felt very bad for Denekamp, who put a lot of work in on that article and it was literally shot down.)

One of the takeaways Mr. Broder cited was, that care be taken when information is given, that the information is identified by where it came from, whether it is valid or not and so forth. He remarked in this case there was a miscommunication with Warrant & Finance and he knew it was corrected, but the missing piece to that was during Warrant & Finance how did they know or think they know how that Shapleigh was going to do X, Y and Z or how did they know, or think they know how that would implicate what is done in Acton. Those questions weren't asked and could have prevented a lot of what happened at the town meeting on that article.

Mr. Broder continued that after town meeting he did further research and saw that there was a statutory provision for municipalities to hire a Sherriff's Department or the State Police. And that, in this particular instance, it is atleast at minimum a possibility the State Police would consider contracting with the Town of Acton.

Why Mr. Broder brought this up was that before any meeting being conducted with Sherriff King that this option be considered for what they could after and use it as a comparison. Winchell indicated that he spoke with the State Police who clarified that they covered the area and the process of coordination. However, he was not sure that contracting was an option. Remedy is to call the Luietenent to verify and if so, get a representative in to talk to the Board.

Discussion ensued regarding the scrutiny, questions, reactions, feedback and outcome. Again, Mr. Broder commented that if there were more options, the outcome of Town meeting may have been different. It is possible to support increased presence but not support the measure put forth.

12. **MEMBERS PRESENT – David Winchell, Jr., Chair, Tom McGurty, Dan Norwood, Ed Walsh, Jon Denekamp and Jennifer Roux, Town Administrator.**
13. **ATTENDANCE – William Langley, Joe Ruma, Robin Ham and Bernard Broder**

Norwood made a motion to adjourn at 7:18 pm; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.