Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
May 15, 2024
Regular Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; T. Bourgoin; E. Dill
Also Present: A. Ponanski; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimous aye.

3. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of May 1, 2024

   Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 1, 2024 as written. Unanimous aye.

4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence discussed at the meeting.

5. First Selectmen's Report

   Ms. Haines provided the following report:

   - She provided an update on the Swing Bridge construction, future closings, and openings for water traffic.
   - The FY2024-2025 budget passed referendum 429 to 305.
   - The Town went out to bid for its employee health insurance coverage and she expects it will result in a new carrier.

6. Public Comment

   Mr. Ponanski expressed his concern for the number of trees on Newberry and Wickham Roads that he believed are marked for removal. He stated that many of the tagged trees are healthy and their removal would drastically change the nature of the neighborhood.

   Mr. Ponanski stated that he is a member of the Conservation Commission and Land Trust and neither of those organizations have any information regarding the plan to remove so many trees in one neighborhood. He requested the Town delay the project and provide the Conservation Commission with a tree management plan and the opportunity to comment on it.

   Mr. Ponanski read a written statement from Conservation Commissioner Gary Wilson, who also expressed concern about the number of trees marked for removal and requested the Town provide the public with a tree management plan and the opportunity to provide their input. He confirmed that all

of the trees being considered for removal on Newberry and Wickham Roads are within the Town's right-of-way.

Ms. Haines advised that the tree removal contractor does the first tagging of trees for potential removal and then Public Works Director Velez, who is the Town's Tree Warden, inspects the marked trees and makes the final decision as to which of them will be removed. Ms. Haines stated that she will ask Ms. Velez to get in touch with Mr. Ponanski to explain the process and to also meet him at the site when she will be inspecting the tagged trees on Newberry and Wickham Roads.

There was a general discussion about the need for transparency during the tree removal program and Ms. Bourgoin recommended that Public Works notify the Conservation Commission whenever a large number of trees in any one area are being considered for removal. Ms. Zemienieski read sections of a statute pertaining to the role and responsibilities of a municipality as it relates to the removal of trees.

7. Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business discussed at the meeting.

8. New Business

   A. Board/Commission/Committee Changes (SUSCT)

      Sustainability Team

      Ms. Haines called the Selectmen's attention to a copy of an email from James Ventres, dated May 6, 2024, requesting he be removed from the Sustainability Team and, instead, be appointed their Land Use liaison.

      Motion made by Ms. Bourgoin, seconded by Mr. Dill, to approve the removal of James Ventres as a regular member of the Sustainability Team and assign him as the Land Use liaison to this committee. Unanimous aye.

   B. Tax Refunds: Ms. Haines called the Board's attention to one tax refund.

      Motion made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to award a tax refund in the amount presented:

      - $547.45 to Toyota Lease Trust.

      Unanimous aye.

9. Public Comment: There was no additional public comment discussed at the meeting.

10. Selectmen's Discussion

   A. Liaison Reports: There were no liaison reports provided at the meeting.

   B. Other

      1. Memorial Day Parade (May 27, 2024): Ms. Haines reminded the Board and the public that the Town's Memorial Day Parade is scheduled for May 27th.

In response to a request from Mr. Dill, Ms. Haines stated she would ask Public Works Director Velez to re-post the speed limit signs on Beebe Road.

11. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Dill, seconded by Ms. Bourgoin, to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary