

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Called to Order at 5:00 p.m. With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Elissa Viarengo, Will Emmet and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator.

This meeting was recorded.

Others in Attendance: See attendance list.

Review Agenda: Added: DLTA, Resident letter. Cancelled: Appointment with Budge Litchfield.

Review Minutes: *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of December 30, 2024, as amended.*

Salt Shed Project Update: Highway Superintendent Tyson Howard and Hilma met on Friday and selected the contractor to demolish the old Emergency Operations Center (EOC) office. The award went to the lower of the two bids. The work will be done by Hillman Construction for a cost of \$6,400. The electrician moved and upgraded the panel box for the fire station. Fire Equipment, Inc., was working at the station today and will return tomorrow to update and move the alarm equipment from the old EOC. All equipment has been reinstalled in the fire station. Moving of the broadband cable and relocation of the internet site equipment will be completed on January 16 and 17 by Whip City Fiber and Northeast IT technicians.

Public Comment: Pat McGahan commented that she has felt safe driving on the roads this winter.

Review Minutes: *On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of December 10, 2024, as amended.*

Community Hall Windows Update: Although the renovation bids were due yesterday, no bids were received. Robyn will be contacting the solicited contractors to try to determine the reasons why they did not submit bids.

Appraisal Update: The Board agreed that, although it would be of value to have an appraisal of potential rental space completed, an RFP for rental use could be done simultaneously. They will continue to consider how they will proceed with rental of extra space in town-owned buildings. The income would help offset utility expenses of the buildings until the rental process becomes more work than it is worth. In preparation for issuing an RFP a list of allowed uses needs to be drawn up.

Council on Aging Survey Results: COA Chairperson Susan Lively met with the Board to present an introduction to the results of the survey that was distributed during the November 5th polling hours. The results are a necessary step for towns engaged in the age- and dementia-friendly community process. There were over 200 responses with a wide range of ages from participants. Sue recommended that the

results be shared with other relevant boards such as the Board of Health. Sue issued a grateful ‘thank you’ to Dena Briggs, Cynthia Johnson, and Gale Hubley, for the work they did in preparing the survey and helping to compile results.

Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) Update: Art Schwenger, School Committee Representative, and Superintendent Rick Martin met with the Board to present an update about the school and the new programs. There are two new trade areas: aviation maintenance and veterinary technician. Enrollment this year is 640 students with 13 students from Heath. It is anticipated that there will be seven new Heath students next year although two students will graduate from FCTS this year. The FY2026 budget will be final by the end of January.

The Superintendent introduced a possible plan to build a new main building. The current classroom building is 50 years old and approaching a point of being obsolete. There is a feasibility study being undertaken now. The cost of the building will not be known for about a year.

Public Comment: Bob Gruen asked about the timing of the Community Hall windows renovation project. He also said he had talked to one of the contractors who said they would have submitted a bid except for the work of supplying storm windows.

DLTA: FRCOG had sent the DLTA survey for the new year with the request that the town submit its top three priorities for future needs and projects. The Board will compare results at the January 21st meeting.

Letter to Residents: The Board discussed whether to write and send a letter to residents that would be enclosed with the annual street listing to be sent out by the Town Clerk. Elissa agreed to draft a letter that the Board would review.

Mail:

- J. Diamond re: response to request to cease inside use of wooden spools
- EDV re: marked utility poles on Taylor Brook Road
- Veterans Agent C. Demars re: adopting acts for extra tax assessment benefits

Next Meetings: Tuesday, January 14, and 21 at 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 16, at 6:00 p.m., Pole Hearing Continuation

6:59 p.m. On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator