

**MEETING MINUTES**

Town of Heath  
SELECT BOARD  
18 Jacob Road  
April 25, 2023

**Called to Order at 6:00 p.m.** With Robyn Provost Carlson, Susan Lively, Brian De Vriese, and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator.

**Others in Attendance:** See attendance sheet.

**Review of Agenda:** Added the salt shed study and the severance agreement.

**Public Comment:** Susan Gruen presented a copy of the Town Nurse appointment letter from Oct. 8, 2008, which stated that the current nurse was hired to work eight hours per week.

**Review of Minutes:** *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 11, 2023, 11:00 a.m., as amended.*

*On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 11, 2023, as amended. Robyn Provost Carlson abstained.*

*On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 13, 2023, as amended. Robyn Provost Carlson abstained.*

**Transfer Station update:** Jeff has been able to find substitutes to work during the hours the transfer station is open.

**B. Kovacs' Request for Trailer Removal:** The Board reviewed an email requesting that the trailer that has been parked on Bray Road be removed. Robyn and Hilma will determine whose purview enforcement comes under.

**E. Viarengo's Resignation:** Elissa Viarengo sent a letter of resignation from her position on the Board of Health, effective May 1, 2023. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept the resignation with regrets.*

**Municipal Light Board's Internet Troubleshooting Document:** The Board reviewed a draft document outlining protocol for any time when there is trouble with internet service. It was suggested that there should be back-up contacts listed on #4. Since this is a town property, there should be a Knox box installed on the hut in case emergency services need to gain entrance.

**Annual Town Meeting Review:** The Board met with Eric Sumner, Moderator, to discuss the ATM warrant and set-up of the meeting area. The Select Board and Finance Committee members will be seated at tables at the front of the room with microphones. Non-voters will be seated on the stage. The pre-pandemic process of allowing a motion and second to be made by any voter at the meeting will be followed.

The Moderator asked a few questions to clarify some information on a few of the warrant articles. Prior to Article 3, he will ask to move forward the articles related to the two school districts. At the end of the meeting, Article 31, Eric will ask if there is any other business such as announcements or "thank you's" but not any matter of discussion.

**Salt Shed Study:** Brian met with the landscape architect and his assistant today. They walked through the Bray Road property as well as viewing the site of the present salt shed. The existing site is one acre in size. A solution to the rainwater runoff will need to be determined if the shed is rebuilt on the same site. Sketches of a possible arrangement of buildings that would be constructed on the Bray Road property will also be done.

**Severance Agreement:** Robyn Provost Carlson recused herself and left the room. The remaining Board members reviewed the severance agreement that town counsel had written for an agreement with Mike Shattuck. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the two Select Board unanimously voted to approve the severance agreement to be offered to Mike Shattuck.*

Robyn Provost Carlson rejoined the meeting.

**Public Comment:** Since there was some time before the next appointment, the chairman asked if there were any other people wishing to make a public comment.

Sam Lane read a letter he had prepared that centered on the highway department and his concerns about recent decisions that the Select Board had made.

Pat McGahan stated that she had been in favor of adding five hours of administrative work for the highway department to assist the superintendent.

**MTRSD Articles:** Budge Litchfield, School Committee Representative, explained that the articles to change the district agreement were proposed because towns' assessments need to be based on the number of students in each town going to all public schools, not just those enrolled in a district school.

Ken Rocke stated that he was speaking as a Heath resident and was not representing DESE in what he was about to say in the meeting. He agreed that assessments based on accurate student counts was an important issue but that it was also important to understand the estimates of the impact for both the initial and cumulative years. Ken stated that he would advocate to take sufficient time to analyze the numbers and the interests of the towns.

The spreadsheets provided only represent one-fifth of the cumulative financial impact. The increase will be done in increments with an additional amount added each year. Students are assessed differently depending on where they go to school (in-district or out-of-district). The school district wants to make sure all towns are being equally assessed for every student. School choice students are currently only assessed for the minimum local contribution. If changed, each student will be assessed for both Minimum Local Contribution and Above Minimum Contribution amounts. DESE does not require regional districts to assess towns for the Above Minimum Contribution part of the assessment for School Choice and charter school students, but leaves it up to each regional school district to decide.

Another approach would be to begin with an amendment to the district agreement that changes the assessments for only charter school students. A change in the agreement for equity in assessment for choice students, which is more complex, could come at a later date after more analysis. The current explanation is not good at predicting the future for enrollment. The changes in the proposed articles would affect both the operating and capital assessments for the district towns.

Budge commented that what was driving the changes was to come to a more fair method of assessment. Although this was the explanation given, remarks made by others expressed the need for more information and understanding that there was not adequate time to obtain. Ken offered to work directly with the MTRSD business personnel to analyze the impact of the proposed changes.

***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to not recommend Articles 18, 19, and 20 due to the lack of time for comprehension of the impact of the proposed changes to the MTRSD agreement.***

**Notes for Town Meeting Articles:** Article 3: Line 29, Technical Support: Add insurance requirement; Line 87, Tractor Note: change to “final year.”

***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to recommend Article 3 accounts, with the exception of Lines 54, 58, and 96, contingent on Finance Committee recommendation.***

***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to recommend Article 3 accounts, Lines 54, 58, and 96, contingent on Finance Committee recommendation. Robyn Provost Carlson abstained.***

***Fire Department Donation: On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to authorize the Accountant to establish a new account for donations to the Fire Department.***

***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept a \$50 donation made to the Heath Fire Department.***

**Mail:**

- E. Viarengo re: resignation from BoH
- B. Kovacs re: complaint of house trailer on Bray Road
- M. Sumner, Town Clerk re: request to authorize Clerk to appoint law enforcement-- ***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to authorize the Town Clerk to appoint necessary law enforcement officials.***
- M. Freeman, COA re: request to create a stone patio committee—***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to authorize the Council on Aging to form a patio planning sub-committee.***
- MLB re: process for managing and troubleshooting technical support
- Shelburne Town Admin re: Selectboard position on MTRSD articles
- K. Barrows re: projects ahead-- ***On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to support the two library projects.***
- RPC & G. Garland re: town nurse hours
- Heath Connects re: Select Board activities
- E. Viarengo re: appreciation for Select Board work
- D. Grinnell re: budget cuts
- FCSWMD re: April reports
- Make Our Voices Heard! Day in Boston
- Congressman McGovern re: newsletter

**Next Meeting:** May 1<sup>st</sup>, Monday—Preparation for Annual Town Meeting: Meet with Finance Committee.

**Items to Address after ATM:**

- Public Comment Policy
- Telephone system
- Board and Committee charges

**9:02 p.m. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Brian De Vriese, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.***

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner  
Town Coordinator