

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
October 17, 2023

Called to Order at 6:00 p.m. With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Susan Lively, Elissa Viarengo and Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator.

Others in Attendance: See attendance sheet.

The meeting was recorded.

Review Agenda: Added Sawyer Hall roof.

Review of Minutes: *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of October 10, 2023, as amended.*

Public Comment: None.

11 Bellor, LLC: The Board reviewed a letter addressed to the Building Commissioner from a neighbor's attorney. A request was made in the letter for the Commissioner to revoke the four Special Permits (one to each farm) since more than twelve months had elapsed without significant progress of development. The Commissioner will contact Heath town counsel for consultation before reaching a decision and responding. The letter, along with the Board's draft letter to 11 Bellor, LLC, will be forwarded to town counsel for their review.

Heath Historical Society (HHS), Sawyer Hall Room: The prepared license agreement was sent to town counsel for final review. Attorney Reich responded with clarification that there must either be a "no strings attached" license agreement that can be terminated at will, or the Town would need to obtain an appraisal that would determine a fair market value for rent of space in the building. This would be needed no matter what final rental price was agreed upon. President of the HHS, Ned Wolf, will discuss this new information with the Board of Directors to determine if they are willing to move forward with a license.

Sawyer Hall Roof: The estimate to repair areas of damaged slate on the roof was \$2,700 from Titan Roofing. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the repair to be completed by Titan Roofing.*

Police Department: Police Chief John McDonough played a recording of Paul Harvey talking about all the duties of a police officer. The chief followed that by stating that, even in a small town, the duties are the same but with fewer incidents. Chief McDonough then read and presented two commendations to Lee Lively for his 18 years of service to the Heath Police Department. One commendation was issued by the State House of Representatives and the other from the State Senate.

Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) Proposed Assessment Amendments:

At the beginning of their discussion, the Select Board stated that the ensuing discussion and decision were not about their opinions on the proposals but a decision on whether to call a special town meeting (STM) to vote on the proposed amendments or to include the articles in the warrant for the annual town meeting (ATM) that will be held in May 2024.

The Board members' thoughts centered on concern that holding a special town meeting would be rushing the decision without having accurate financial numbers. The highest possible number of voters need to be present to hear information and make the decision. Voter turnout at an STM is historically much lower than at the ATM. It was also noted that voters in the town of Shelburne raised other concerns about the proposed wording for sharing capital costs.

Robyn stated that prior to the MTRSD School Committee Representative asking for an STM late this summer, discussions included bringing the articles back to be voted on at the next ATM. She also reminded the meeting that it was the Board's task to sort out issues and positions in making a determination of what was best for the Town.

An email from Finance Committee chairman Tom Lively was read. In it, Tom stated that at their last meeting the committee had discussed when to vote on the proposed articles. Their opinion was that more time was needed to study the proposal. They voted unanimously to recommend that the Select Board not call an STM.

School Committee Representative Budge Litchfield stated that he appreciated the concerns expressed but he felt it was important to bring the proposal to an STM so that the changes could be approved by the Commissioner of Education before the end of the year. Six towns had already approved the articles, and Plainfield was expected to set a date for an STM.

The Select Board agreed with Budge that the voters should decide on whether to approve the proposed changes to the district agreement but that it should occur with as many voters as possible present to make the decision. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to not hold a Special Town Meeting for the purpose of voting on the articles for proposed changes to the district agreement as presented by the Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee.*

The Board directed Hilma to notify officials in the school district of their decision. They wrapped up the discussion with the hope that a collaborative meeting could be organized for further analysis. The entire Board hoped that their position would be taken as an attempt to educate themselves and the town and not as a position of resistance.

Special Municipal Employees: After reviewing the list of various town offices, paid and/or volunteer, the Board determined that the entire list should be added to the agenda of the next meeting for final approval.

Truck Bid: The Board reviewed the one bid that had been received through the FRCOG bidding process. Both the Highway Superintendent and Foreman/Mechanic were present and reported that they had looked the truck over and concluded that it was in good running condition. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept the bid from ATG Westminster, LLC, for purchase of a used truck in the amount of \$84,500 to be paid from the town's ARPA funding.* It is expected to be delivered in about three weeks. The 2012 International will be taken by the dealer as a trade-in.

Winter Plowing: The Highway Superintendent reported that he and Kyle would be plowing the paved roads while Jason would plow dirt roads. There had been no response from Saladino Land Management regarding the proposed contract for snow plowing.

Other Highway Matters: The mower broke today and cannot be repaired for a period of time since parts have to be ordered and take several months to arrive. It was announced that Kyle Jarvis had taken his exam yesterday and was now a licensed Hoisting Engineer.

Mail:

- Tom Lively re: Finance Committee recommendation of STM
- MCC re: award of grant
- M. Reich (KP Law) re: lease/license to private entity
- DLS re: announcement of FFIO meeting
- News article of Federal Funds Partnership for Municipalities
- FRCOG re: Truck bid received
- FCRHRA re: quarterly report of activities
- J. McLaughlin, Esq. re: letter to Blding Commissioner addressing 11 Bellor, LLC

Next Meeting: Monday, October 30th, 6:00 p.m.

8:38 p.m. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.*

Respectfully submitted,

Hilma A. Sumner
Town Coordinator