

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Heath
SELECT BOARD
Jacobs Road Municipal Center
Tuesday, May 7, 2024

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: Recorder and camera, Next meeting, Sue's surprise.

Appointment for Accountant: Ben Gelb, a recent employee of Hill-Town Municipal Accounting, met with the Board and introduced himself. In hopes of being approved to step in as the primary accountant, Ben gave an overview of his education and experiential background. Ben received his MBA in Business Analytics from Isenburg School of Business (UMass). He currently works as treasurer in three other municipalities. He has been able to offset his salary in each of those towns by reinvesting funds in higher interest rates.

Ben explained that he would be taking over the roll Dave Fierro has fulfilled while having Dave as his supervisor for questions and oversight. There will continue to be another employee who will enter the payroll and invoice information. Although he works at various locations, Ben stated that he has the flexibility in his schedule to come to Heath and meet with a department head if necessary.

After Ben left the meeting, the Board discussed his qualifications noting that he was also familiar with VADAR accounting software and was available during the day to meet with department heads as needed. *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to continue the contract agreement for accounting services with Hill-Town Municipal Accounting*

Review Minutes: *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 29, 2024, as presented.*

On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 30, 2024, as amended.

Annual Town Meeting: School Committee Representative Budge Litchfield met with the Board to discuss moving forward Articles 29, 30, and 31. Discussion involved the concern of some voters leaving the meeting before all the important business of the town's operating budget can be dealt with. Budge stated that he wants to show consideration to MTRSD officials who may be attending the meeting.

Funding for the late bus was also discussed. MTRSD does not provide late bus service. Budge affirmed his position that it was a valuable service providing more opportunities for students to which the Board agreed. The Finance Committee is not recommending this because of the financial challenges that the Town will be facing.

Budge offered to meet with the Board to provide updates on MTRSD matters on either the first or second Tuesday of the month. He would do this on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

There were two changes found in the review of the warrant that will be corrected. The Board will prepare a statement regarding their position regarding Articles 29-31. There will also be a statement read at the beginning of Article 3 regarding the evaluation and determination of setting employee salaries.

Center Fence Installation: After review, it was determined that Hilma will speak with Mike Cucchiara to explain the invoicing process to which the Town must adhere of receiving a service first before any payment can be made. The donations must also be deposited into a Town account.

Accountant Software Purchase: After final review of the agreement for purchase of VADAR software, *on a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to accept VADAR accounting software.*

Hilltown Youth Performing Arts Lease: *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the lease and send it to the tenants.*

Town Nurse Job Description: *On a motion by Susan Lively and seconded by Elissa Viarengo, the Select Board unanimously voted to approve the updated Town Nurse job description.* The Board noted that the update was done in collaboration with the Board of Health, the Council on Aging, the Town Nurse, and the Community Public Health Service nurses.

Community Hall Windows Fundraising: The current total of donations is approximately \$16,000.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2024

Sue's Surprise: Since this was her last meeting, Sue expressed appreciation for the work of the other two Select Board members and the Town Coordinator. She presented each person with a small gift that illustrated how she saw the highlights of each person's contribution. Sue stated that she saw Robyn as well-balanced and willing to hear both sides of an issue. Elissa is seen as focusing on communication while staying conscious of "beware of the press." Sue said she appreciated the knowledge and background information that Hilma has and considers her a "fount of wisdom."

Mail:

- Cucchiara, M. re: Center park fence draft contract
- Gruen, R. re: Thank you to highway department for spring cleaning in the center
- Litchfield, S., MLP re: Broadband updates
- Rabbitt, C. re: April Town Nurse report

9:20 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