

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Town of Heath**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**Jacobs Road Municipal Center**  
**Thursday, June 20, 2024**

**Called to Order at 6:01 p.m.** With Robyn Provost-Carlson, Elissa Viarengo, Will Emmet, and, Nancy Thane, Office Assistant. Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, was absent.

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

The meeting was recorded.

**HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: Meeting with Highway Superintendent, Jeff Johnston**

Robyn told Jeff that the Select Board did not accept his resignation at the previous meeting as they first wanted to have a full conversation with him. Jeff affirmed that he wanted to receive a higher rate of pay which he could do in the Shelburne Highway Superintendent position. Professional goals he has will not be achieved in Town as there is not the opportunity for advancement. Noting that he believes the situation in Heath has improved over the previous few years and the fleet is better than when he began working in Town.

Jeff also stated that his decision was not against the Town, only with his personal goals. After he has left Heath employment, Jeff would like to help as much as he can in the transition and volunteer his time.

In deciding on July 12<sup>th</sup> as his resignation date, Jeff said he wanted to make certain there were two people working and Jason had already planned to take vacation that week. Noting that there will be only two people working, perhaps for an extended period of time, Steve Thane was asked if he would consider helping in a part-time administrative capacity.

In assessing fiscal concerns, the Board noted that the Town would need to pay Jeff for all his accrued vacation time which included three weeks for FY 2025 since the date of his resignation is within the next fiscal year. They also noted that there is a lack of clarity in the Personnel Policy when defining how vacation time is earned and given. This section of the Policy needs review.

Future plans and road maintenance projects have been compiled into a written list. Jeff will also prepare a list of contacts for the various aspects of the work such as companies that are used on a regular basis and what is obtained from each, MASS DOT, Ch. 90, and other entities. Snows Landscaping will continue mowing the Town Common and cemeteries for the remainder of the year. Robyn has been evaluating feasible options for winter snow plowing services.

The Board discussed the job posting and the need to have the required licenses of the minimum CDL Class B with air-brake endorsement preferred and the 2A Hoisters License. It was agreed not to specify as a MA license as someone from out of state may apply. The notice is being

advertised in the Greenfield Recorder, the Brattleboro Reformer, the Berkshire Eagle, Craigslist, and Indeed as well as being posted around Town. It was decided that an interview committee will consist of Steve Thane, Will Emmet and Hilma Sumner.

The Position Description was revised last year. New changes that the Board would like are to add under 'Specific Requirements,' that there will be random drug tests two times per year, and CDL driver's license verification two times per year. It may be necessary to consider new and different configurations of the Highway Department such as a separate administrative position and an additional laborer.

The FY 2024 highway budgets need to be reviewed and closed out. Jeff said he will review the end-of-year reports for each account and note any discrepancy.

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet the Select Board unanimously voted to accept the resignation of Jeff Johnston from his position as Highway Superintendent with thanks and regret, and with a stop date of July 12, 2024.***

**Public Comment:**

Steve Thane presented a Tree Warden Report. National Grid has identified 90 trees to be removed. Steve indicated that he had approved and signed the permit for all trees except for one, the ash on the Common. He put a do-not-cut notice on this tree. He noted the community service of National Grid trucking wood from removed tree sites and delivering the wood to a specified location on the owner's property or to the home of people needing assistance who heat with wood.

Barbara Gordon expressed her appreciation for Jeff's work in town. She was impressed with all that he did for the town.

***On a motion by Elissa Viarengo and seconded by Will Emmet, the Select Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thane  
Office Assistant