

**Minutes of a
Selectboard / Board of Health / Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
in person & via Zoom
December 3, 2024**

Present: Will Cosby, Robert MacLean – Selectboard
Virginia Gabert – Financial Administrator
Tinky Weisblat, Gal Friday; Chris Tirone, Gary Mitchell, and Lloyd Crawford

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Minutes from a previous meeting were signed.

The warrants were signed after some discussion. Virginia shared information about them. She noted that the sums of money were larger than usual for two reasons. One was that the semi-annual payment for firefighters was in this warrant. The other unusual feature was a payment to Ashfield for the previous fiscal year's assessment for dump use. Virginia had just discovered that Ashfield had never billed Hawley, and consequently Hawley had never paid. She asked whether the board wanted to schedule a Special Town Meeting to deal with the latter bill or whether she should pay it and catch up later with free cash. The board urged her to pay the bill right away.

Lloyd brought up the town officers' survey Hussain had designed. He suggested that Tinky print a number of copies both for the firefighters and for other others. The group debated emailing versus just mailing the surveys and talked briefly about constructing some kind of online poll. Tinky said she would figure something out.

Tinky shared a letter from the State Department of Fish and Game notifying the Selectmen that it was considering purchasing property that included parts of both Buckland and Hawley. The board looked at the map provided by the department and determined that the Hawley land in question seemed to belong to Kevin Richardson. Both Will and Bob wanted to go on the record expressing their opinion that Hawley didn't need to cede more land to the state, although they agreed that the Selectboard couldn't prevent the state from acquiring the land.

On the topic of state-owned land, Bob suggested that the agreement with the Department of Conservation and Recreation about road work in the forest should be revisited soon as it would probably expire in a year or two.

Will brought up the topic of the Town Office mini-splits, which had been stopping and flashing their lights with increasing regularity. He noted that Matt Crowningshield at Belval Refrigeration had said that it would be helpful to have a video of the flashing lights. Virginia observed that fortunately the security system kept track of the building's temperature and would notify the town if the office became too cold. Will asked who was on the call list, suggesting that Hussain would be a good contact person since he lived so close to the Town Office. Chris said he appeared to be on the list; he had once received a call about the issues. In the meantime, all agreed that the propane heater should be left on.

Will asked whether there were any highway reports. Gay noted that there had been a lot of slipping and sliding in the messy weather.

Tinky explained that Police Chief Jason Pelletier had returned from his National Guard work and was once more serving Hawley and Charlemont.

Virginia reminded the group that it needed to reschedule its meeting for the end of December, which was scheduled for New Year's Eve. Will suggested Monday, December 30. The group tentatively agreed on that date but said that it would wait to see whether the 30th worked for Hussain Hamdan, who was not present.

Tinky reported that the once and future interim town clerks, Pam Shrimpton and Ellie Van Iderstine, were still trying to find a time to get together so that Pam could walk Ellie through some of the ins and outs of the job. Virginia said she was concerned about the overall town clerk's budget. Tinky was asked to invite Ellie to come to the next Selectboard meeting, in person or on Zoom.

Virginia said that the tax rate for the coming year had been set at \$16.35 per thousand collars.

Will explained that he and Hussain had met with the representative from Charter/Spectrum on the telephone. He reported that within the next 12 to 14 months, poles would be replaced; then the company would sign a franchise agreement with the town. Hussain was looking at the agreement with Savoy. Internet should start arriving in Hawley in less than two years, although it would take a while to wire the entire town.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Tinky Weisblat, Gal Friday

Williams Cosby

Robert MacLean