

Town of Buxton
Minutes for January 13, 2016 Selectmen's Meeting

Prepared by: Beverly Gammon

*Members Present: Clifford L. Emery, Jean C. Harmon, Peter E. W. Burns, Dennis P. Santolucito
Chad Poitras*

Others Present: Michael Grovo, Frank Pulsoni, Ellen DeCotiis, Patrick Hanna

Selectmen's Meeting Agenda

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:18 PM. Selectman Emery apologized for the late start of this meeting and explained that the Board was in a meeting with the Town's Auditor to talk about the last audit.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Michael Grovo announced his resignation as Chief of Police. He will remain in his position until March 31 to allow time for the Board to get a new Police Chief in place. Chief Grovo thanked the people and the Selectmen for the support they have given him during his time here.

Selectman Emery thanked Chief Grovo and said the Board appreciates the time he spent here and he has been an easy person to work with.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

*Selectmen Meeting Minutes January 6, 2016
Approved 5-0*

Discussion held between 5:00 & 7:00 p.m.

At 4:00 two residents came in to talk with the Board about some issues with a piece of land on Towle Street. The Board is going to look into it and get back to them with answers to their questions.

At 4:30 another resident came in to discuss lack of communication between Girls Softball and the Little League. As the Board understands it, the Little League may be taking over softball this year. The resident asked the Selectmen for information. Selectman Emery said there is a limit to how much the Board can do but they will try to get some answers for them before the week is out.

After that LeeAnn Pratt, our Tax Collector, met with the Board to talk about some tax reports going into the Town Report and some issues dealing with motor vehicles.

Ron Smith, the Town's accountant, came in and went over the audit for last year with the Selectmen. He reported that the Town of Buxton is in excellent financial condition with very little debt. The General Fund would cover 60 days. Although the Board would like to have enough to cover 90 days but Ron Smith agreed that those days are gone.

Chief Nate Schools met with the Board to discuss the replacement of some old lights that have burned out at the Bar Mills Fire Station, and all of the outside lights that have burned out at the Groveville Station, with the new style LED lights. The cost to replace them will be around \$2500.00.

Chief Schools also talked with the Board about the Town's ISO Fire Rating. With everything that has been done, and after talking with the ISO inspector, it would appear that our rating will drop from a 9 to a solid 6 and possibly a 5 which would be a tremendous accomplishment by everyone involved. Selectman Emery said the Board is very proud of everyone involved in the Fire Department and the effort they put in over the last year and a half to accomplish this.

Review of Correspondence

Email from John Myers, Town Clerk – Re: 2016 Caucuses

*Email from Kayla White, Maine D.O.T. – Re: Bar Mills & Canal Bridge Replacement
Progress Meeting Minutes*

Review of Projects and Issues

Selectman Santolucito reported that he reviewed the work that Jean Harmon has been doing with Krystal Dyer and Bev Gammon on the new website that will be rolled out later this month, and thinks it looks very good. Also, Selectman Santolucito reported that he attended the SAD #6 Budget Advisory Committee meeting last week along with Selectman Burns. They are just starting to look at preliminary numbers for the next fiscal year and he expects that over the next 2-3 weeks they will have more definitive information to bring back.

Selectman Harmon reported that on Monday night she and Selectman Emery attended the Planning Board Meeting. She said Selectman Emery wanted to present what the Buxton Business Advisory Group has developed and will hopefully be presenting to the Planning Board shortly. Selectman Harmon said the Planning Board was also reviewing ordinances and had some questions about our Victualer's License Ordinance that has not been updated or changed since its inception in 1968 and needs to be brought up-to-date.

Selectman Harmon reported that a resident had emailed a complaint about some water issues. She (Selectman Harmon), Selectman Emery and Tom Kennie, our Public Works Director, went out to look at the area to see what it was and Selectman Emery has been dealing with the Maine Municipal claims representative on that.

Selectman Harmon reported that this morning Bev Gammon and Krystal Dyer met with a representative from Virtual Town Hall regarding the Town's website and the hope is that the new site will be going live next Friday. There was a question about who currently hosts our website and a discussion about that and possibly transferring some information so that Virtual Town Hall will be our host. Selectman Harmon said the site looks really nice; it is very user-

friendly, and she said she thinks everyone will be pleased with it.

Selectman Burns spoke briefly about the SAD #6 Budget Advisory Committee meeting he attended last Thursday night.

Selectman Burns also reported on the 12 Town Group meeting he attended Monday night. He said one of the items that came out of that is that the State of Maine is going to build a new court house in Alfred on the site where the York County Jail is located. He went on to say that there are three court houses in York County right now. Only two of them are large enough to do jury trials. The group was told that the new building will have 10-12 court-rooms all capable of doing jury trials. Also, there will be tunnels from the jail to the court house to save the thousands and thousands of dollars that departments are spending transferring prisoners to the courthouse for their hearings. Selectman Burns said there was some discussion about the insufficient number of judges, District Attorneys and support staff in York County to support the new building. He said that will be an ongoing topic of discussion.

Selectman Burns has been working on his budget items and he said he talked with the Transfer Station, Fire-Rescue, and Chet Ouellette who takes care of this building, about items to see what we need to do. He said he still needs to talk with Public Works on this.

Selectman Poitras reported that he was in at the end of last week to see how things were going and was in Monday working on the budget items he has. He said he made a few calls to get some prices to reflect accurately in those budgets and went over to Public Works to see how things are going with their equipment.

Selectman Emery reported that he has been in the office quite a bit working to keep some projects moving along. He mentioned the Planning Board Meeting he and Selectman Harmon attended and said that went well. The Planning Board is anxious to see what the advisory group has put together and to see how we (the Selectmen) want the 202 corridor to look for future development.

Selectman Emery also talked about the water issue Selectman Harmon mentioned off Atkinson Road that was presented as an insurance claim against the Town. Selectman Emery said after looking at it he talked with the insurance adjuster at Maine Municipal, went over Tom Kennie's report, and said they are all in agreement that there is no liability on the part of the Town.

Selectman Emery reported that he and Selectman Harmon drove over to look at what is going on at the Bar Mills bridge and then went over to familiarize themselves with the property on Towle Street that the gentleman who came in earlier tonight talked about.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Executive Orders

E.O. 151601008 – An order to appoint Scott Warchol to the position of Member of the Board of Appeals to be effective until December 31, 2018

Approved 5-0

E.O. 151601009 – An order to approve 16 hours of vacation time for Greg Heffernan

Approved 5-0

E.O. 151601010 – An order to approve 40 hours of vacation time for John Myers

Approved 5-0

E.O. 151601011 – An order to approve John Myers' attendance at IIMC Region I & NEATC Meetings

Approved 5-0

Executive Orders by Initiative

E.O. 151601012 – An order to accept the resignation of Michael Grovo to be effective March 31, 2016

Approved 5-0

Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

E.O. 151601006 – An order approving expenditures as documented in the Accounts Payable Warrant #61

The total was \$612,506.80

E.O. 151601007 – An order approving expenditures as documented in Payroll Warrant #60

Approved 5-0

The total was \$50,157.29

Next Meeting of the Board

SAD #6 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting Thursday, January 14, at 6:00 PM at Central Office

Board of Selectmen Meeting Wednesday, January 20 at 7:00 PM

Other Business

The Town Office will be closed Monday, January 18 and the Transfer Station will be closed Tuesday, January 19 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. There will be no change in the curbside trash pickup schedule.

Selectman Emery took a minute and on behalf of the Board of Selectman to again thank Chief Mike Grovo for all he has done for this community over the past years. He said it is a tough job and the Board sincerely appreciates all the Chief has done and wishes him well in all of his future endeavors.

Public Comments and Questions

A resident, Ellen DiCotiis, went to the podium and introduced herself. She asked the Board a question about response from the townspeople regarding selectmen meetings, things they read on the website, or when we had the Buxton Newsletter.

A brief discussion followed with the Selectmen asking for clarification on her question and then talking about the minimal amount of feedback they receive from the public.

Selectman Emery talked about people being able to subscribe to receive notice of certain information from the town and the ability to send comments on line.

Ms. DiCotiis asked about the 12 Town Group discussion regarding solar energy.

Selectman Burns said he has suggested to the Board that they invite gentleman who spoke to the group to come here to make the presentation to them. Selectman Burns gave a lot of details about the presentation that was made to the Town of Alfred and said the Board is going to get a copy of that. Selectman Burns said there was a tax credit that was expiring December 31, 2016 that has recently been extended by five years. Now that there is not such a rush to meet the deadline, the Board can look into this more. He went on to describe more specifics about the credit and how it would work. He said the town has 19 meters spread out over the town; we are large enough to produce enough kilowatt power that there may be a financial advantage for us to enter into some deal. Selectman Burns said the Board is always looking at ways they can reduce our expenses and the town has gone out to different vendors or suppliers to get the best deal we can. He said the Board is going to take another look at this.

Ms. DiCotiis asked if individuals can benefit from this program.

Selectman Burns explained that this is for the Town but individuals can form groups to see if they may be eligible. Again he said that now that the tax credit has been extended, it makes sense for the Board to look at this.

Ms. DiCotiis asked about the Board's discussion about a Town Manager and asked if the people could have input in discussing that.

Selectman Emery said before the Board starts looking into it, there would have to be more than just the Board asking for it. He said if a fair sized group of people actually came to the Selectmen they would consider it. He said it will take a lot of time, there is a lot of information to gather, and people have to want it.

Selectman Harmon explained that part of the process would be a Charter change and at this point in order to develop something, get public input, and have a public hearing, there is not enough time to put it on the June ballot. She said in order to present it and have it voted on, it would take about a year. She said we have been very fortunate that the people on this Board have the best interest of the town at heart and have done a good job but there are times when

they are dealing with things that would be nice to have a Town Manager deal with such as personnel issues. She said she is here most every day but answers need to be given and she may not always have that availability so she thinks the Board needs to explore it.

Ms. DiCotiis said she was just asking about the process and opening that up to see what people think.

Ms. DiCotiis went on to ask questions about the suggestions from the Business Development Group that will be going to the Planning Board and asked if people can still build on Route 202 before those suggestions are accepted by the Planning Board.

Selectman Emery said “yes” and went on to talk about the 40 acre piece of property on 202 that has been sold to a resident who plans to open it up to make barrels. He said the Business Development Group is very close to having something ready to go to the Planning Board and before that happens, the Board would like to work with the new landowner and make suggestions as to what the Board is looking for. He said until there is an ordinance in place, the Board would not be able to force them to do something but they would like to think that someone opening a business on that road, knowing that the Board is trying to look to the future, would work with the Board.

Ms. DiCotiis said she was just wondering how that would work.

Selectman Santolucito revisited the discussion about a Town Manager. He said the challenge is to consider the audit report that was glowing for the Town, very little debt except for the Public Works Garage, 60 days in reserve, the good things that are happening including all the work the Fire Department is doing on the ISO rating. He said he understands people want to move to a Town Manager but he wants to caution people and say that he does not think a Town Manager is going to come in the front door and make everything better. He said he does not know what is going to be better; when we look at our tax rate and services we get for the taxes we pay.

Selectman Santolucito said people should certainly explore the idea, and having a discussion about that may be worthwhile, but he does not know that it is the magic that people think it might be. The town is financially solid, the ISO rating is improving and the tax rate is reasonable for the services provided. He said he is certainly open to a discussion about it but thinks people need to look at the other side of this as well and what has been accomplished with the present form of government. Selectman Santolucito thanked Ms. DiCotiis for her input.

There was no more discussion.

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the Meeting at 7:58 PM

Approved 5-0

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