

**Selectmen's Meeting
Agenda for January 31st, 2024**

***Town of Buxton
Agenda January 31st, 2023
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes***

This meeting will be streamed on the Saco River Community Media at <https://www.src-tv.org/>

Recorded by Hunter Cox

Members Present: Chad E. Poitras, Thomas J. Peters, Frank E. Pulsoni, Mark J. Blier

Others in attendance:

Called to Order at 7:04

The Selectmen recited the Pledge.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minute

January 24th, 2024

Approved 4-0-1

Discussion held between 4:00 & 7:00 PM

4:00PM –

4:30PM – Chief Kevin Collins-Police Sharing W/ Hollis

5:00PM –

5:50PM – Executive Session-MRSA 495-6A-Personnel Issue

6:00PM – Ben Plante-Attorney: Brookfield Tax Abatement Mediation Review

6:30PM –

Review of Correspondence

- Email From MMA: Mental Health First Aid Workshop, MMA Magazine
- Email From Kay Mann: Maine Power Options Newsletter
- Email From Maine DHHS: Cybersecurity Alert
- Email From RHR Smith and Company: January Newsletter

Projects and Issues-

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Selectman Peters- Spoke with PW Director about needed snowplow repairs and New Mechanic, Got a call from a logging company about tree removal and roadways.

Selectman Field- Went to Aging in Buxton Meeting, Spoke with PW about repaired truck, and spoke with Fire Chief about his budget.

Selectman Poitras- Spoke with Fire Chief about building maintenance and training meeting, Met with Mark Blier and Treasurer about assessing issues.

Selectman Pulsoni- In the office for general business throughout the week

Selectman Blier- Met with Chad Poitras and Bill Hall about assessing issues, spoke with PW Director about selecting a new mechanic.

Old Business-

New Business-

Mark Blier- I Spoke with a resident today who was concerned about the rise in property taxes and costs at town hall. I understand the frustration of residents who are struggling, especially Over the years we have been a very conservative board, trying to save money where we could. But the current job market is very difficult; even employees at the lower end of the market, in low skilled jobs, are making \$18 an hour. We must meet at least that benchmark. This year we did a salary study using over a dozen municipalities, and we found that some employees were in line, but many were dollars an hour under their colleagues at other similarly sized towns. If we want to keep employees, we must treat them fairly by paying them what they are worth. This year the board has decided to bring all our employees up to where they should be. This is an effort to bring our employees in line with other towns because we want to keep them, and we want to avoid the expensive cost of replacing them, where we would have to pay an incoming employee the higher wage anyway, as well as the time and cost of training them. We understand that this is a burden on taxpayers who are living under inflation as well. We will continue to be conservative stewards of the town's funds. However, after much study and deliberation, we feel that bringing our employees up to market standards is the right thing to do to keep our good employees and save time and money in the long run.

Executive Orders-

E.O. 2425001023- An order to approve an Application for a Veteran Exemption for [Map 7, Lot 61-5].

Approved 4-0-1

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E.O. 2425001024- An order to approve an Application for a Veteran Exemption for [Map 10, Lot 141-2].

Approved 4-0-1

E.O. 2425001025- An order to approve an Application for a Veteran Exemption for [Map 10, Lot 56-1].

Approved 4-0-1

E.O. 2425001026- An order to approve a Liquor License Renewal and Special Amusement Permit for Sundae and Kevin Fallen of The Roost.

Approved 5-0

Executive Orders by Initiative-

Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

E.O. 2425001027- An order approving expenditures as documented in
Accounts Payable Warrant #62
In the Amount of \$65,660.56

Approved 5-0

E.O. 2425001028- An order approving expenditures as documented in Payroll
Warrant #61
In the Amount of \$95,082.81

Approved 5-0

Next Meeting of the Board

The Next Selectmen's Meeting will be Wednesday, February 7th at 7pm

The Next Planning Board Meeting will be held on Monday, February 12th
at 7pm

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The Next Budget Committee Meeting will be held Tuesday, February 6th, at 6pm

Department Head Meeting Wednesday, February 7th, at 4pm

Public Comment and Questions

Dave Harmon- *Did we lose a Mechanic or hire another one.*

Selectman Blier- *We lost our Mechanic, so we are hiring a new one.*

Dave Harmon- *How long does it take to put up a job ad for the Mechanic, and the Toll Booth at Transfer station.*

Selectman Blier- *Both ads are already up and have been for a while.*

Dave Harmon- *Where do they post them.*

Selectman Blier- *Hunter, do you want to answer this?*

Hunter Cox- *It depends on the job. If it's for the transfer station booth, I really try to give local people the opportunity first. I usually post those jobs on our website, and we put flyers out in the local businesses. For a higher skilled position that is going to be harder to fill like a department head, code enforcement officer, or mechanic, then I cast a wider net. I post those on the website, but I also post them on Indeed, as well as on the website for Maine Municipal Association, which all the towns in Maine use for job searches and postings. Those postings are free or low cost. If I am not finding good candidates that way, then I will go for the more expensive options like newspaper listings and headhunters.*

Dave Harmon- *I have the maps for the coverage of the new emergency communications system (ECS). It looks like they show the coverage we have now, and the coverage under the new microwave system. What are the locations of the microwaves.*

Selectman Blier- *The Middle School, The Elementary School, The Central School Offices, and Town Hall. The maps you have are for the coverages if we did the Tower, and the coverage that we are going to have with the microwave system. We don't have the maps for the old coverage.*

Dave Harmon- *Is it less or more money to do the microwave system, than it was to do the tower.*

Selectman Blier- *It is less money to do the microwave system. We didn't know that it was an option when we started out, but through the process of laying out the new system, they discovered that we could use the fiber optics at the schools and get better coverage. We had to get permission from the administration, first. Once we had that, we decided to move in that direction. In addition, there were*

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some complications with buying the land for the Tower. So, it worked out better with going with the microwave system.

Dave Harmon- There are probably more people who install microwave systems, than who put up towers. Should this have gone back out to bid?

Selectman Blier- The bid was for more than just the tower. It was for putting systems at multiple locations, as well as refitting the dispatch center. A lot of work had already been done by RMC, and they discovered a way to save us money. So, we could go through the process of stopping work and putting it out to bid, but we have a good company, and they are already working, so to stop them now to try and save just a little more money doesn't make sense.

Executive Session-

Adjournment

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the Meeting at 7:31pm

Approved 5-0

Thomas J. Peters, Selectman

Francis E. Pulsoni, Selectman

Mark J. Blier, Selectman

*David A. Field,
Selectman*

Chad E. Poitras, Selectman

*Date Signed: _____
Video Taped by David Blais*

This meeting is available to be viewed at <https://livestream.com/accounts/23355>

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