**Select Board Meeting Minutes**

**March 12, 2024 at 5:00PM**

Board Members Present: Carmen E. Lone, Chair; Robert J. McHatton, Sr. Vice Chair; Paul A. Tworog; Carrye Castleman-Ross; Kenneth J. Murphy

Administration Present: Town Manager Robert Peabody, Jr.; Deputy Town Manager Georgiann Fleck; Executive Assistant Nikki Hodgkins; Interim Town Clerk Veronica LaCascia; Community Development Deputy Director Haley Richardson; Recreation Director Gary Colello; Fire Chief Glen Garland.

1. Call to Order

Chair Lone called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

3. Approval of Minutes: February 27, 2024

Vice Chair McHatton made a **motion** to approve the minutes. Member Murphy **seconded** the motion.

**5 approve/ 0 oppose.**

4. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Paul Goslin, Executive of United Ambulance, presented updated figures to seek further contributions needed to offset the rise in costs the company is experiencing. Another factor in the price increase is the lack of volume Bridgton creates pertaining to emergency calls. The projected lost in revenue that Bridgton would need to alleviate is $233,496. Neighboring towns using United Ambulance include Harrison, Sweden, and Denmark. If Bridgton does not increase the funding United Ambulance would need to reevaluate, which could result in the ambulance service decreasing to a transferring service and Bridgton would be billed for the ride. Vice Chair McHatton expressed great disappointment in the large increase request however, he admitted the service is needed regardless. Member Castleman-Ross made a **motion** to recommend that the Select Board accept the amount of $223,496. Vice Chair McHatton **seconded** the motion. **5 approve/ 0 oppose.**

Town Manager Peabody hoped they could enter another three-year contract with United Ambulance. In the past the contract included fixed rates which reflected yearly cost increases. Mr. Goslin did not see a problem with another three-year contract. Mr. Peabody suggested that for the three years the base amount be $233,496. The Board agrees.

5. Committee/Liaison Reports

6. Correspondence, Presentations, and Other Pertinent Information

A. Nominations for Select Board Vice-Chair

Vice Chair McHatton announced that he will resign from Vice Chair of the Bridgton Select Board.

Chair Lone made a **motion** to accept Vice Chair McHatton’s resignation of Vice Chair of the Bridgton Select Board. Member Murphy **seconded** the motion.

**5 approve/ 0 oppose.**

Member McHatton made a **motion** to nominate Member Tworog, Member Murphy, and Member Castleman-Ross for Vice Chair of the Select Board, to be voted by paper ballot. Chair Lone **Seconded** the motion.

**5 approve / 0 oppose**

***The vote was Member Kenneth J. Murphy for Vice Chair of the Bridgton Select Board.***

6. Correspondence, Presentations, and Other Pertinent Information *continued*

B. Proposed MSAD 61 2024-2025 Budget

Superintendent Al Smith presented the proposed budget for 2024-2025 MSAD 61. He began with the fact that MSAD 61 schools receive less than 8% of their monies from state funding of the Department of Education, which is on the lower end than most areas. There are over 2,000 children enrolled in MSAD 61, including vocational students. Due to increased state mandates for schools, a great deal of the projected spending is out of the school board’s control. The budget that was recommended by the finance committee is currently priced at $36,936,917, which represents a 7.8% increase.

C. Brewfest 2024 – Angie Cook

Ms. Cook would like to use the HAM complex again for Brewfest 2024. This is the 20th year for Brewfest. It will take place the last weekend in September. Member McHatton made a **motion** to allow Brewfest 2024 to use the HAM complex. Member Tworog **seconded** the motion. **5 approve / 0 oppose**

D. Request for Land and Water Fund (LWCF) certification for June warrant 1:17.

Member McHatton **moved** to certify the Request for Land Water Fund for the June warrant. Member Castleman-Ross **seconded** the motion. **Discussion** ensued, with Member Tworog expressing doubt into whether public opinion has been considered. Member Tworog continued with the point of not having a detailed approved plan for the Ham Complex’s $500,000 price tag. Recreation Director Gary Colello stated that more details including specific costs will come as we work through the grant application process. Director Colello expects to host a public hearing in the future about what to do with the funding if awarded.

**4 approve/ 1 oppose (Tworog)**

7. Public Hearing

A. To accept written and oral comments on the Proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2024-2025 Funding Projects.

Chair of the Community Development Advisory Committee, Kevin Raday, presented the recommendation to fully fund the navigator program at the Bridgton Community Center, while any left-over monies would go to the Bridgton Food pantry. During the second year the sidewalks will begin construction, they are projected to cost $323,000.

8. Action Items Following Public Hearing

A. Select Board decision on proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Chair Lone Made a **motion** to approve the Proposed Community Development Block Grant 2024-2025 Funding Projects. Member Castleman- Ross **seconded** the motion. **5 approve/ 0 oppose**

9. New Business

A. Awards and Other Administrative Recommendations

B. Permits/Documents Requiring Board Approval

1. Victualer’s License renewal Wolfie’s Links, LLC Located at 295 Main Street.

Member McHatton made a **motion** to approve the Victualer’s License renewal for Wolfie’s Links.

Vice Chair Murphy **seconded** the motion. **5 approve / 0 oppose**

2. New road name: Trail’s Edge Way

Chair Lone made a **motion** to approve the new road name of Trail’s Edge Way.

Member Castleman- Ross **seconded** the motion. **5 approve/ 0 oppose**

9. New Business *Continued*

C. Select Board Comments

**Vice Chair Ken Murphy** – Thanked the Board for selecting him as Vice Chair

**Member Paul Tworog** – had no comment

**Member Robert McHatton** – Would like discussion for grant writer to be on next agenda for the 2024-2025 budget.

**Chair Carmon Lone** – Would like the heat pump covers be placed on the heat pumps at the town hall. Madame Chair asked for an update on cleaning up the Tucker house tucker. Mr. Peabody explained the cleanup will proceed as soon as the roads aren’t posted.

**Member Castleman-Ross** – Anticipates Commercial Haulers being on next agenda

D. Town Manager’s Report/Deputy Town Manager’s Report

Town Manager Peabody read the following report into record,

“**General Information**

An important reminder that with winter weather upon us, it is important to keep your driveways and private roads cleared and sanded so that, if the need arises, emergency personnel can safely access your property.

Regarding weather events, please be aware that we post information on the Town’s Facebook page and the Town’s website. Additionally, all the local television channels are notified when the Town Office closes.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector’s Office**

A reminder that quarterly real estate taxes are due May 15.The following was written by our new Interim Town Clerk, ‘We had a great Presidential Primary Election last week. Thank you to all Election staff. We are lucky to have Deb Flanigan back in the office to help during this time of transition. We are all working together to get ready for the upcoming State and Local Elections. Thank you to everyone for all the support and encouragement as I navigate being Interim Town Clerk here in Bridgton.’ Reminder nomination papers are available for the following: 2 Select Board Members, 2 MSAD 61 Directors for 3 years, 1 MSAD 61 Director for 2 years, 2 Planning Board members, 1 Planning Board Alternate, 1 Water District Trustee.

**Community Development Department**

Please visit the Community Development page on the Town of Bridgton website to answer the Question of the Month and to learn more about the Comprehensive Planning process.

**Recreation**

Adult programs such as Jumping Janes Senior Fitness, Tai Chi, Pickleball, Archery, Walking, Ping Pong, and Karate take place weekly at the Bridgton Town Hall. The Ice Rink is open. Please see the Bridgton Recreation website for times. There is no charge for skating and there are skates available at no charge as well.

**Police Department**

I am pleased to report that we have hired a new patrol officer: Officer Robert Wright will start on Monday March 25th as our newest patrol officer. He is a certified police officer who comes to us after four years of service with the Topsham Police Department. He is a certified firearms instructor, armorer, ballistic shield instructor, field training officer, drone pilot, and is trauma medic. He is currently serving in the Maine Army National Guard combat engineering unit. We are excited to add Officer Wright to the team.

**Financials**

Before you tonight are the January financials and the Revenue and Expenditure Summary Report. As you will note, the benchmark is 58% for the month. Revenues are at 48.5% and Expenditures at 56.8%.”

10. Old Business

A. Project Status updates

Town Manager Peabody updated the Board on several ongoing projects.

11. Treasurer’s Warrants

Vice Chair Murphy made a **motion** to approve treasurer’s warrants 283, 284, 285, 286, 287 and 288. Member McHatton **seconded** the motion. **5 approve / 0 oppose**

12. Public Comments on Non- Agenda Items

13. Dates for the Next Select Board Meetings

March 26, 2024 @ 5PM (Regular Meeting)

April 9, 2024 @ 5PM (Regular Meeting)

April 9, 2024 @ 5PM Placement of Referendum questions on Secret Ballot

14. Adjourn

Chair lone adjourned the meeting at 7:15pm

Sincerely,

Veronica LaCascia

Interim Town Clerk