

Special Select Board Meeting Minutes June 13, 2024

Present: Noah Bond, Jeanne Gervais, Heather McElroy, Gregory Manning, Mike Testut, Anne Budrewicz, Jamie Budrewicz, Steve Cotus, Town Counsel, Pierre Gervais, and Teresa DeBonville.

Attending virtually: Mercedes Manning, Joel Cope, and Mike Strait.

Chairperson, Jeanne Gervais called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

All in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Updates to the Agenda: None.

Select board and Town Manager form of government: The town's attorney, Steve Cotus was present to explain the Select Board and Town Manager form of government to the select board. Mr. Cotus explained the difference between the Town Manager's role and the select board's role in this form of government. Mr. Cotus explained that the Town Manager's role was the "CEO of the company". The Town Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations and can administer laws and policies and has the power to hire and fire employees. The Town Manager can function as the purchasing agent for the town, but larger purchases are by board approval, and major purchases (Example: Loader, grader, dump trucks, etc) are by voter approval. Mr. Cotus explained that the select board in this form of government functions as the "Board of Directors of the company". The select board holds the "power of the purse". All purchases and all accounts payable items go before the board for approval. The select board is responsible for the town policies that affect the whole town. Mr. Cotus explained to the select board that it may be helpful to know what the town managers do not have authority to do. These things are as follows:

- Prepare tax bills.
- Call Special Town Meetings.
- Lay out highways.
- Run Elections.
- Serve as a voice at Board of Civil Authority Meetings for appeals.
- Fill board vacancies by appointment without board approval.

Select board members cannot act on behalf of the town individually. Select board members must have a full quorum to act on behalf of the town. This is also in effect even if an employee comes to one board member with an issue. All employees would report to the Town Manager first, and the town manager would bring the issue to the board members for a decision. No board member can individually solve an issue by themselves. Board

members should tell the public that they would be happy to put them in touch with the authority that could assist in a matter but cannot manage the situation individually.

Jamie Budrewicz asked if select board members had a limit on how many boards they could serve on. Mr. Cotus explained that if it were not on the list of conflicting offices held by statute, a board member could be on several boards at the same time.

Gregory Manning mentioned that the town should have a policy in place of thresholds and a policy in place of a procurement policy. The board will investigate adopting these policies.

Noah Bond asked if Mr. Cotus could explain the new open meeting laws to the board. Mr. Cotus told the board that the new law requires that the meetings be recorded and posted for public access for 30 days. After the 30 days, a different retention format can be used. Mr. Cotus said the law is a little unclear, but that each municipality could adopt their own retention policy and Mr. Cotus suggested that we adopt one.

These recordings will not replace the minutes of each meeting, these will still need to be done. The recordings are just in addition to the minutes. Joel Cope asked who would be responsible for keeping track of these records and who would be responsible for following through with the retention schedule. Joel suggested that when adopting a policy that states in the record who would be responsible for doing this.

Public comment: None.

Other business: None.

At 5:22 PM, Heather McElroy motions to go into executive session with all select board members, Town Manager, Noah Bond, and Town Counsel, Steve Cotus to discuss legal matters. Pierre Gervais seconds the motion, all in favor, so carried.

The members of the board, Town Manager and Town Counsel came out of Executive Session at 5:52 PM. No Action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 PM.