

**BUCKFIELD SELECT BOARD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020
MEETING MINUTES**

Remote Participation via ZOOM / 6:30 PM

1. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER AND DECLARE QUORUM

6:34 p.m. Roll Call / Declare Quorum

All present: Tina Brooks-Chair, Cheryl Coffman, Martha Catevenis, John Andrews

2. APPROVE MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting

Motion made by C. Coffman and seconded by Chairwoman Brooks to accept the December 1, 2020 meeting minutes.

C. Coffman pointed out that the minutes indicated, under #4 Old Business, that the committee voted to reopen Town Hall on December 15, 2020. It should have stated that Town Hall would be closed through December 15, 2020 and that reopening would be discussed again by the committee at the December 15, 2020 meeting.

Motion withdrawn by C. Coffman. New motion made by C. Coffman and seconded by Chairwoman Brooks to accept the December 1, 2020 meeting minutes with edited language as discussed above.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

B. December 10, 2020 Emergency Meeting

C. Coffman asked that the call to order and adjournment time be noted on future meeting minutes.

Motion made by C. Coffman and seconded by M. Catevenis to accept the December 10, 2020 emergency meeting minutes, and to include call to order and adjournment times on future minutes.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

3. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Dobson Junkyard Permit – still needs to be signed

B. The town attorney has raised their hourly billing rate from \$175 to \$200 effective January 1, 2021.

C. First Storm of the Year / Highway Department

J. Andrews thanked and commended the highway department's job during our first storm of the year, informed the committee that their efforts kept the town safe and operational.

One of our ambulances was hit during the storm causing damage. J. Andrews is in the process of filing an insurance claim to cover costs.

J. Andrews had Town Managers' meeting to discuss mutual aid for plowing in the case of a COVID outbreak. Our highway foreman has discussed this with the highway foremen of both Paris and Hebron.

We are purchasing a 2009 International Workstar plow truck from Liberty Trucks in NH. J. Andrews is working on finalizing the loan details and hopes to set up the purchase in the coming days.

D. Rapid Renewal / Dog Licensing

The system should be up and running this week. M. Wolf will receive training on the system within the next week. Dog license renewals and new purchases will be online this week. J. Andrews will add the link to the website to town social media platforms. Town Hall will also process dog licenses in-person by appointment only.

E. Town Hall Staff / Training

During the week of 12/14, M. Wolf received training from MMA on payroll law, and from NDS on IRS 1099 reporting. She will continue to receive training, in addition to Rapid Renewal she will be taking clerks' training courses through MTCCA / MMA, and security training through Northeast Bank.

Both J. Andrews and M. Wolf are now members of the Maine City and Town Clerks' Association which will provide access to additional training modules.

F. Website - J. Andrews is going to look into updating the town website through our contract with GovOffice as we approach the new year.

G. Various Town Repairs

The door knob at the library has been fixed.

The roof on the trailer at the transfer station has been fixed.

Our loader has been fixed for labor cost only, after wearing out during the first storm.

H. BMV – we have received a check from the Town of Paris for \$10,853.13 in fees.

I. Planning Board – the board is looking for members, anyone interested should contact J. Andrews.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Town Office Closure

The committee discussed the reopening of Town Hall and discussed keeping the office closed to the public, operating on an appointment only schedule for outside business, until December 29, 2020. The committee will revisit reopening at the December 29, 2020 meeting.

Motion made by Chairwoman Brooks and seconded by C. Coffman to authorize the town office to remain closed through December 29, 2020, and to discuss reopening at the December 29, 2020 meeting.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

B. Select Board Meetings

The committee discussed moving the bi-weekly meeting to Mondays instead of Tuesdays beginning in 2021. Chairwoman Brooks asked the committee if everyone had looked at their schedules to determine availability. The committee determined there are no public concerns regarding moving the meeting day.

A motion was made by M. Catevenis and seconded, for additional discussion, by Chairwoman Brooks to move the bi-weekly meeting to Mondays beginning in 2021.

C. Coffman asked if Town Hall will continue to be closed on Mondays to the public, and questioned whether the committee members would still have access to information in the office. J. Andrews replied that the office will continue to be closed on Mondays but that the committee will have access to information as the office will be staffed.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

C. Tax Collector – Settlement and Discharge

The committee discussed the settlement of the former Tax Collector and asked if J. Andrews can look into where to get bonded and insured. The committee needs additional information to proceed.

A motion made by Chairwoman Brooks and seconded by C. Coffman to postpone the discussion of the settlement and discharge of C. Dunn until the December 29, 2020 meeting.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

The committee discussed whether or not the tax collection records are accurate and M. Catevenis noted having discovered blank spaces in some of the tax collection books and other discrepancies. The group discussed a number of questions for C. Dunn prior to the discharge. The committee decided to submit their questions individually to J. Andrews to collect into one questionnaire. J. Andrews will copy the committee members on all correspondence regarding this matter.

Motion made by M. Catevenis and seconded by C. Coffman for the committee members to submit their questions for the outgoing Tax Collector to J. Andrews by December 18, 2020.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Buckfield Village Corp.

The committee discussed the transfer of responsibilities and whether to invite the BVC board to the December 29, 2020 meeting to discuss the details as a group.

A member of the public had concerns about where to send BVC payments after having received the notification not to send the payments to Town Hall going forward. This has not been determined so the committee had no answer to this inquiry as yet.

A motion was made by M. Catevenis and seconded by C. Coffman for J. Andrews to invite the BVC board members to the December 29, 2020 meeting to discuss the transfer of responsibilities and equipment from the Town Office.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

B. Loans for Purchase of Three Plow Trucks

J. Andrews gave the committee an update on the quotes from Northeast Bank, at 2.24% interest and Androscoggin Bank, at 1.87% interest. The group discussed a possible lease-to-buy option. C. Coffman asked if the town had done a lease/purchase option in the past; M. Catevenis said she believed it had been considered for a snow plow in the past but that she doesn't think it's been done. Chairwoman Brooks advised that typically the town would go with Northeast Bank due to the relationship there.

M. Catevenis asked for clarification of the differences between a standard loan and a lease agreement. Chairwoman Brooks is not in favor of leasing. J. Andrews advised that he believes either arrangement will culminate in a \$1 purchase price at the end of the loan/lease period. He will contact both lenders to get additional information for the committee.

The committee discussed how much input they should have in these decisions as not to step on the Town Manager's toes, and that in the past, such decisions were typically made by the Town Manager and Finance Coordinator. M. Catevenis commented that the Select Board should be available to assist the Town Manager in making such decisions and should, as such, be considered a resource. M. Catevenis suggested that J. Andrews provide the committee with the appropriate documentation to review, as quickly as possible, and make a decision at the December 29, 2020 meeting.

C. Switching to Bi-Weekly Payroll

The committee discussed switching the municipal payroll to a bi-weekly, rather than the current weekly, schedule.

Motion made by M. Catevenis and seconded by Chairwoman Brooks, for additional discussion, to switch to bi-weekly payroll as of January 1, 2021. The committee questioned J. Andrews as to whether he thinks there will be employee push back and C. Coffman opined that January 1, 2021 is too soon to implement the new schedule, and that the implementation date should be pushed back to give employees time to plan. J. Andrews suggested implementation begin with the February 3, 2021 payroll.

Motion withdrawn by M. Catevenis. C. Coffman made a point of order – shouldn't the committee vote down the previous motion before making a new one? Chairwoman Brooks agreed and called for a vote on the original motion.

YES = 1, NO = 2, ABSTAINED = 0

Motion made by C. Coffman and seconded by Chairwoman Brooks to begin implementation of bi-weekly payroll for municipal employees beginning with the February 3, 2021 payroll.

YES = 2, NO = 1, ABSTAINED = 0

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Chairwoman Brooks asked J. Andrews if the InforME access will be live this week. J. Andrews advised that he received notification that it will be and once it is, he will notify the public.
- B. M. Catevenis asked that the town website be updated with a municipal calendar to include deadlines for local and state certifications, annual funding renewals, committee reappointments, to name a few examples – perhaps this is something for which MMA can provide a template.
- C. M. Catevenis suggested that the Select Board create the agenda for future meetings, rather than the Town Manager. Chairwoman Brooks advised that she has committed to doing so, with the input of the Town Manager, going forward.
- D. The committee discussed appointing Weldon Lucas to Road Commissioner and Tree Warden at a rate of \$1,200 annually. M. Catevenis asked from which budget the money would come. J. Andrews said he believes it is under the highway department's budget. M. Catevenis suggested that the expenditure be an administration line item for this fiscal year, and perhaps move it to the highway department's budget for FY22.

A motion was made by M. Catevenis and seconded by Chairwoman Brooks to appoint Weldon Lucas to the positions of Road Commissioner and Tree Warden.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

E. Roster of Town Appointments / Swear-In

J. Andrews advised the committee that he is going through the list to gather information, no action for the committee at this time, informational only. M. Catevenis commented that she's not sure who's sworn-in and who isn't, and which roles (i.e ballot clerks, volunteers, etc.) or committees have to be sworn-in.

F. Holiday Light Up Event

J. Andrews advised that a drive-by Christmas tree lighting will be taking place on Saturday, December 19, 2020 at 6:30 for a COVID-friendly community celebration.

G. The committee discussed moving the responsibility of GA oversight from the Town Manager to the Select Board beginning in 2021. It was suggested that J. Andrews and M. Wolf look into the guidelines and deadlines. C. Coffman asked if a member of the committee could do the research instead. M. Catevenis suggested if the committee as a collective doesn't want to approach it, perhaps a volunteer should be selected. Chairwoman Brooks advised that she will do some research and send it to J. Andrews to disseminate.

7. APPROVE & SIGN TREASURER'S WARRANTS

A. Payroll Warrants / Addendums: 22a, 23a-c, and 24

A motion was made by M. Catevenis and seconded by C. Coffman to approve payroll warrants/addendums numbers 22a, 23a-c, and 24.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS - NO

9. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Chairwoman Brooks and seconded by M. Catevenis to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 PM.

YES = 3, NO = 0, ABSTAINED = 0

John Andrews
Town Manager