

MINUTES
Town of Bowdoinham
Select Board & Board of Assessors Meeting
July 12, 2016 at 5:30p.m.

1. Call the Meeting to Order & Establish a Quorum

The meeting was called to order and quorum established by Chair Wendy Cunningham at 5:30 p.m. Select Board members Wendy Cunningham, M. Theresa Turgeon, Peter Lewis, Douglas Tourtelotte and Thomas Walling were present. Staff present included Town Manager William Post and Public Works Foreman Chadd Mayo. Also present were Travis Baker of H.P. Fairfield, Skip Skehan of Freightliner, Jay Somers of Comcast, Wendy Rose Will Zell and Steve Bunn of the Community development Advisory Committee.

2. Amendments to the Agenda – None

3. Approve Consent Calendar

A. Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2016

On motion of Tourtelotte, Turgeon, the Board voted 4 – 0 -1 (Cunningham abstained) to approve the Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2016 as presented.

B. Meeting Minutes of June 27, 2016

C. Warrants and Financial Reports:

1. Treasurer's Warrant #75 for \$28,944.32 (FY16)
2. Treasurer's Warrant #76 for \$17,529.24 (FY16)
3. Treasurer's Warrant #2 for \$285,527.18

D. Reports & Communications

1. Sheriff's Office June Incident Report

E. Quit Claim Deed

1. Rodney S. Skipper

On motion of Turgeon/Tourtelotte, the Board voted 5 – 0 to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

4. Action Items

A. Act on Award of Public Works Heavy-Duty Truck Bid

The Manager stated that the Town received 17 bids from four different companies to provide a single-axle heavy-duty cab and chassis equipped with snow plow, wing, sander and associated equipment. All of the bidders submitted trucks with HP Fairfield equipment and Viking-Cives equipment. After reviewing all of the bids, the delivery times and in keeping with the Town's fleet plan, Public Works Foreman Chadd Mayo and the Manager recommend that the bid be awarded to Freightliner of Maine for a 2017 Freightliner with H.P. Fairfield Equipment for a net cost of \$142,381. In addition, they would like to upgrade the dump body from steel to stainless steel at an additional cost of \$1,900, bringing the total net cost to \$144,281. This includes trading in the Town's 2002 International plow truck for \$8,500. The Town Meeting approved funding up to \$150,000.

Board member Tourtelotte asked if the Town wanted a manual transmission. The Manager answered in the affirmative.

Chair Cunningham asked if the last truck purchased was a Freightliner. The Manager answered that the truck purchased last year is a Freightliner with H.P. Fairfield equipment. He stated that he feels that the H.P. Fairfield equipment is better than the Viking-Cives equipment. In addition, he would like to have the same manufacturer for the equipment on all trucks so that spare parts can be on hand and interchangeable and the employees are familiar with the same brand for repairs.

Board member Turgeon asked if this would be the last truck to be purchased in the near future. The Manager replied that the Town is in the process of upgrading the equipment in Public Works. There is one more large truck to replace in the next two years, and then the small truck needs replacement, but it is not in the schedule yet. The Fire Department will replace two trucks with one vehicle in the next two years. In addition, the Town was purchasing used equipment and paying more for maintenance. The new trucks will last the Town 12 to 14 years.

Turgeon asked how large a fleet that the Town owns. The Manager asked if she meant for the Town including the Fire Department or just Public Works. Foreman Mayo stated that there are three front-line large plow trucks, a small plow truck, a grader, back-hoe, front-end loader, two pick-up trucks and a spare heavy duty plow truck.

Chair Cunningham asked if that number of vehicles was appropriate. Mayo stated that it is about right for this size municipality.

Turgeon stated that her impression is that the Town has been purchasing a vehicle every year for either the Fire Department or Public Works. She stated that it should stop at some point. Chair Cunningham stated that the Town is playing catch-up, but the interval will slow down as the trucks are replaced with new ones.

On motion of Turgeon/Tourtelotte, the Board voted 5 – 0 to approve purchasing a 2017 Freightliner with H.P. Fairfield equipment and stainless steel dump body at a net cost of \$144,281, including a trade of the 2002 International.

B. Act on Re-Appointment of Arthur Frizzle as Fire Chief

The Manager stated that the appointment term of the fire chief is three years in the ordinance and the chief is due for re-appointment.

On motion of Tourtelotte/Turgeon, the Board voted 5 – 0 to re-appoint Arthur Frizzle as Fire Chief for a term ending June 30, 2019.

C. Act on Appointment of Robert Curtis and Patricia Melander to ACOA

The Manager stated that both of these current members are willing to be re-appointed.

On motion of Turgeon/Tourtelotte, the Board voted 5 – 0 to appoint Robert Curtis and Patricia Melander to the Advisory Committee on Aging for terms ending on June 30, 2019.

D. Act on Appointment of LaLeah Parker and Brian Smith to the CDAC

The Manager stated that both of these current members are willing to be re-appointed.

On motion of Tourtelotte/Lewis, the Board voted 5 – 0 to appoint LeLeah Parker and Brian Smith to the Community Development Advisory Committee for terms ending June 30, 2019.

E. Act on Appointment of Brent Zachau to the Planning Board

The Manager stated that Brent Zachau’s term is up and he is willing to be re-appointed. This is a 5-year term.

On motion of Lewis/Tourtelotte, the Board voted 5 – 0 to appoint Brent Zachau to the Planning Board for a term ending June 30, 2021.

F. Act on Appointment of Jeffrey Lauder to the Finance Advisory Committee

The Manager stated that Jeff Lauder’s term is up and he is willing to be re-appointed.

On motion of Tourtelotte/Turgeon, the Board voted 5 – 0 to appoint Jeffrey Lauder to the Finance Advisory Committee for a term ending June 30, 2019.

G. Act on MMA’s Legislative Policy Committee ballot

The Manager stated that there are two candidates for the two positions in this senate district for the Legislative Policy Committee including Bath City Manager Bill Giroux and himself.

On motion of Tourtelotte/Walling, the Board voted 5- 0 to vote for William Giroux and William Post for Legislative Policy Committee.

5. Discussion Items

A. Meet with Jay Somers, Comcast

Jay Somers presented a map detailing the roads in town that have Comcast service and those that don’t. He stated that there are currently about 125 homes that don’t have cable service. They don’t have service because the roads don’t meet the density requirement of 20 homes per mile. The cost of constructing cable for those 125 homes is \$300,000 to \$350,000. The roads that are not serviced include River Road from Carding Machine Road east, a section in the middle of Carding Machine Road, a portion of White Road, Pork Point Road, Brown’s Point Road and several side roads. Comcast would pay towards the construction cost to build to these 125 homes, but not all the cost. They would potential work with Connect Maine for a grant. He also wonders if the Board thinks the customers that are not served would make a contribution to the construction cost.

Chair Cunningham asked if those customers that contributed would own any part of the system. Somers stated that they would not. Somers stated that they could also pay the cost over a few years. The subscriber would select whatever package of services and then pay in addition to that an amount that would cover the construction costs.

Board member asked if a new home were built after the construction was completed, would the current customers be provided with a rebate. Somers stated that they would be reimbursed a portion.

Board member Turgeon asked what would happen if not enough customers were willing to pay for the construction. Somers stated that the uncovered costs would be split up by the customers.

Somers asked what internet service the customers have on the unserved areas. The Manager stated that some have Fairpoint and some have satellite. He stated that the bigger concern is broadband internet and not video.

The Manager asked if Somers had looked at the Northwest corner of town and the Dingley Road and Beechnut Ridge where there are about 40 homes in about two miles. He stated that there is a huge demand for internet in that area. The problem in that area is that the connection would need to come up from Ridge Road and over a cross road. Somers stated that he did not look into that area.

Board member Turgeon stated that the franchise agreement expired many years ago. She asked if this project could be done without a new contract. Somers stated that he would like to renew the franchise and the construction project would be in a side letter of agreement.

Board member Lewis stated that the Town was approached last year by a business representative and said that if so many customers in the unserved areas would commit to business class internet, then Comcast would build the infrastructure. The Town has not heard back on this project. Somers stated that there the business side operates separately from the government side. He did not know what was being proposed. When he looked into it, he was told that the project was turned down because of the cost.

Chair Cunningham stated that she does not believe that residents will pay a large amount to help fund construction of cable. She asked what happens then. Somers stated that the project would have to be reviewed in that scenario.

Chair Cunningham asked if Somers could go back to his company and discuss this project and determine what could be done. Somers stated that he would need to find out how much the actual construction would cost, what contribution the company would provide, and whether or not a grant would be applied for through Connect Maine.

Board member Tourtelotte asked how common this issue was in other towns. Somers stated that there are 11 communities in Maine for Comcast that he covers. Bowdoin is in the same situation, and this is not uncommon.

Board member Lewis stated that the citizens of town are fed up with not having cable and not having any way to get broadband internet service.

Board member Turgeon stated that the Town has been trying to work with Comcast and has asked for information on construction and what the company has for plans moving forward. There has been no information provided by Comcast.

Board member Tourtelotte stated that if residents really want internet service, and had to pay \$20 or \$30 per month for three years, they would do that. He stated that internet service isn't a guaranteed right. Comcast is a business and they provide a service and need to make money.

Board member Lewis asked what the construction would be, fiber or copper. Somers stated that Comcast has fiber in town, and then coaxial cable to the home. The town is covered by a fiber backbone on the poles. Any new construction would be fiber.

The Manager asked for information as to where the cable plant stops, with specific addresses so that it can be reviewed with the density requirements. Somers can provide information as to where the cable stops.

There was significant discussion on locations not currently served, how these locations could be served and the costs associated with the construction as well as how it could be funded. There was additional discussion about the Town approaching Time Warner Cable for the parts of town that are not covered, but border Richmond which is served by Time Warner. Time Warner may possibly serve these areas.

The Manager stated that it shouldn't matter who the Town works with as the goal is getting broadband internet service to all residents in town, regardless what company provides it.

The Chair asked if there were questions from the public present.

Will Zell wondered why the business department of Comcast isn't working with the residential side. Somers stated that he represents the company as far as the cable franchise agreement with the Town. The franchise agreement doesn't cover internet service, or any other product. The business side of Comcast is separate from what he represents.

Lewis stated that in the fall of 2015, a business internet representative from Comcast came to the town and said that if there were a certain number of customers that signed up for business internet, cable would be built. The town never heard back from Comcast. Somers stated that he was not a part of the discussion and he inquired about it when he found out about it. The company turned down the construction project. Somers stated that is all he knows about that project. He represents the residential side of Comcast and the franchise agreement with the Town.

Chair Cunningham stated that the different sides of the company should be able to work together to be able to provide service to the residents of Bowdoinham. Somers said he will reach out to the business class side of Comcast.

Turgeon asked if there was some way Somers and Doug Cottis, the business representative, could join and provide a solution to the town. Somers stated that he would rather approach the problem the way he has suggested, with determining the costs of construction and what could be done to solve the problem.

Wendy Rose asked when the Connect Maine grants were provided. The Manager stated that there are two application periods, in the spring and fall of the year.

Chair Cunningham stated that the Board would like to have Somers come back to the Board with construction costs, what Comcast could contribute and what the possibility of a grant would be for Connect Maine. In addition, the Board would like Somers to come back with information on the Dingley Road and Beechnut Ridge section of town to see what construction costs would be, and to reach out to the business side of Comcast and see if they can work together to provide broadband service. Somers stated that he could get the information within a few weeks. He is not familiar with what Connect Maine grant would be or what the criteria are that they use for the grants.

6. Town Manager's Report

The Manager stated that the un-audited amount added to the undesignated fund balance at the end of June is approximately \$193,000. Of this amount, \$86,000 was in more revenue collected than was budgeted, \$48,000 less in expenses spent and \$61,000 in overlay.

7. Select Board Member's Request for Agenda Items for Next Meeting – None

8. Announce Future Select Board Meetings

A. July 26th – Regular Meeting

B. August 16th – Regular Meeting (rescheduled from August 9th)

9. Comments from Select Board Members

Chair Cunningham stated that the challenge that faces Comcast is that they don't have a contract with Richmond, which becomes a challenge for us. The Town should look to Time Warner for potential service.

Turgeon stated that that this discussion should be put off until the CDAC has time to review this. She stated that the Town has reached out to Time Warner without any success.

The Manager stated that Fairpoint will be presenting information to CDAC in September. They don't have franchise agreements and they can construct fiber for less money than the cable companies. Fairpoint has given him a price for connecting Carding Machine Road and White Road to their network in Richmond.

10. Comments from the Public

Steve Bunn stated that comments within the CDAC see internet service as more of a right than a business decision to make. CDAC has talked about the possibility of using TIF funds as a contribution instead of the residents having to pay that amount.

Chair Cunningham stated that using TIF funds can be looked at if it meets the limited requirements.

The Manager stated that he does not recall if funding for internet expansion was included in the CMP TIF program. He will look at it. It could be amended if it is not in the current program.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 6:51 p.m.

Select Board
Town of Bowdoinham, Maine

Wendy Cunningham, Chair

M. Theresa Turgeon, Vice-Chair

Peter Lewis

Douglas Tourtelotte

Thomas Walling

Respectfully Submitted,

William S. Post, Town Manager