

**Readfield Select Board**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2023 – *unapproved***

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**Select Board Members Present:** Dennis Price (Chair), Kathryn Woodsum, Sean Keegan, Steve DeAngelis, Carol Doorenbos

**Excused Absent:**

**Others Attending:** Eric Dyer (Town Manager), Greg Durgin

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Regular Meeting Items - 5 min.**

23-078 – Minutes: Select Board meeting minutes of January 24, 2023

- Kathryn **motioned** to approve, Sean **seconded**, **5-0 vote** in favor

23-079 – Warrants: #31-32

- Warrant #31 & 32 – Carol **motioned** to approve, Sean **seconded**, **-0 vote** in favor

**Communications - 20 min.**

Select Board Communications – 5 min.

- Kathryn discussed a letter received by Joe Pietroski, Kennebec County District 2 Commissioner, offering to attend a Select Board meeting; Kathryn would like to ask Joe to come, possibly the second meeting in February, on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Eric will reach out to him to invite him to the Select Board meeting February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- Carol asked about the sand at the Transfer Station if it can be made more accessible for patrons when the Transfer Station is closed. Board members discussed looking into making that an option but Eric reminded the public that the sand is residential only, not for commercial sanding.
- Carol asked to reopen the vote to appoint Bob Bittar for the Age Friendly Committee. Carol also asked if the restraining order was still in place because she was told the charges were dropped at court. Eric addressed the question that the restraining order was replaced with Bob's bail conditions (from 3 arrests) which still restrict Bob from direct or indirect contact with Eric or his family. Bob Bittar currently has an ongoing criminal case the District Attorney's office as well as an ongoing Civil Case the Dyers are bringing against him. Carol **motioned** to reopen the vote to appoint Bob Bittar to the Age Friendly Committee, there was no second.

Staff Reports – 5 min.

- Town Manager Report
- Treasurers Report - January

Boards, Committees, Commissions & Departments – 5 min.

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➤ Board and Committee Minutes

- Sean asked for clarification on the Budget Committee minutes if the heating assistance was for wood heat only or if it was for other sources as well, Eric responded that yes, heating assistance is for all sources of heat in a home.

Public Communication – Members of the Public may address the Select Board – 5 min.

- Greg Durgin was pleased with the action of the previous motion. Greg is asking the Select Board to communicate with the School Board to request use of school facilities, namely, the new bathrooms built last summer by the track. When the school was initially built it was designed to be used by the community, when it opened the school was actually open 24 hours a day to be available for the community. Due to the amount of money that residents pay into the RSU every year, he believes the bathrooms should be made available to all of our residents. The board discussed when and how they will bring that to the attention of the School Board, Steve mentioned discussing with other RSU towns Select Boards, Eric confirmed that as an option, and the board agreed to have Steve be the contact for that discussion.

**Old Business – 40 min.**

23-076 – Discuss Draft Select Board procedures – 10 min.

- Kathryn is working on adopting a Select Board procedures manual from the Town of Saco that she and Eric have been adapting to fit Readfield. Currently, this is a working document subject to periodic revisions and updates as needed. Kathryn also removed any offices in the Saco document that are not relevant to Readfield. Kathryn would like to add a statement or an index as to where to locate things on the website. Also included in Appendix A- Resolution to adopt Select Board Rules of Conduct as well as Voting and the Select Board Orientation list developed by Sue Reay and Val Pomerleau from years prior, striking only the last few lines that were personal to the Select Board at that time. Dennis suggested doing a narrated slideshow as a recording so residents who wish to become a Select Board member can go over the presentation and get familiar with Select Board policies. Readfield has a Conflict of Interest Ordinance that was not already in the Saco version, so that should be included. Standards of Conduct for public meetings poster that hangs on the wall in Giles Hall should also be included. Appendix A will include: Select Board members take notes and keep them, use Roberts Rules as a basis, and Robert's Rules would be the only thing in the appendix that is not a Readfield specific document, and approving the Select Board procedures manual would also approve Robert's Rules. The current Vision Statement, has not been updated to Readfield, and

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may not apply to Readfield; it will be removed until the Board creates one specific to Readfield.

Dennis also mentioned adding a glossary. Kathryn **motioned** to approve the Select Board Rules and Order of Business for the town of Readfield with the addition of a glossary; appendices not included but noted where to find them on the website, and removal of the vision statement, Sean asked where this document will be found and Kathryn answered that it will be public information on the website, as well as sent out to new Select Board members when elected. Sean **motioned** to amend Kathryn's motion to ensure the document is in an accessible format before moving forward, Kathryn **seconded**, **vote 5-0**. The **motion** made by Kathryn as amended was **seconded** by Sean, **vote 5-0** in favor.

23-077– Consider the Town Meeting Budget and Warrant (second draft budget) – 30 min.

- Eric discussed the draft budget summary, some inclusions like the school and county budgets are speculative at this time. He explained that there will be some increases due to inflation; he is predicting a possible 10% increase for the RSU budget. County tax increases by \$28K. The largest expense is the proposal for a new firetruck, a \$600K expense. Just those three items are over a million dollar increase. Additional items to consider are a \$50K increase to the roads operating budget due to wage increases and material costs and an increase in maintenance (10% increase/\$16K) and administration. In aggregate, the budget has been put together carefully to balance out as much as possible, and there is revenue coming including revenue from reserves to help with taxes as they grow. The town increase is about \$100K-\$150K increase, municipal budget increase is only 1-2%. Expecting a 6-7% increase to taxpayers with the draft budget, but could be less depending on RSU and county, etc.
- Sean inquired about the possible interest rate for the fire truck; Eric responded that the Fire Chief will be attending the next budget meeting with some additional information regarding a revised cost quote for the new fire truck. We should have some real numbers by the end of the month.
- Kathryn asked for some clarification in the Roads capital budget increase by \$50K to adjust for planned expense added \$25k to use as fb (fund balance). Eric responded that the costs increase is due to things that were planned for this year that were moved forward, and in order to do so, had to budget the expense and the revenue, and he expects a cost increase on completing those projects.
- Carol stated her concern with the budget increase. Carol asked if the town has been saving towards the new fire truck and Eric explained that the town has been making payments on the last new fire truck and that will be finalized this year (this loan was paid off in 7 years) just as we will need to borrow for the new fire truck this year. The only impact this year to tax payers would be one interest

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payment (roughly \$12K), and then another 7 years of payments thereafter. \$75K is being pulled from reserves to help the impact which will leave a potential \$525K needed to borrow. Interest rates are lower for municipal borrowing. Chief Mank is looking to replace the older smaller truck with a new truck that has a greater capacity.

- Carol asked about the increase in administration costs, and specifically a \$32K office equipment for FY24. Kathryn responded that it was due to a category change. Carol also asked about an increase in CEO wages and Kathryn explained that that was due to the position being previously part time, and mentioned that we share that with Wayne so there is offsetting revenue there.
- Carol mentioned an increase of \$53K in general maintenance in the last few years. Eric explained that is due to added staff time due to needs with on the roads, in the cemeteries and with building maintenance.
- Carol also inquired about the Conservation Commission increase of \$10k and Eric responded that they did a town forest harvest and in order to get in to cut the wood they had to improve the access road, the money from the harvest will offset that cost.
- Carol asked why the Transfer Station up \$30K in the last few years and Eric responded that the increase is due to higher costs from haulers and vendors, wage increases and fuel and inflation costs. Also, Wayne and Fayette revenue offsets that as well.
- An unclassified contingency of \$25K is available to the Select Board for anything that comes up that was not budgeted for, or unknown circumstances.
- Carol would like the capital improvement warrant to be itemized more and would also like to see the Open Space budget lowered.
- Eric summarized that with these projected numbers, the average homeowner tax increase will be roughly \$20 per month

**New Business – 20 min.**

23-080 – Consider agreements with Casco Bay Advisors for consulting services related to a potential Franchise Agreement Renewal with Charter (Spectrum) – 5 min.

- Kathryn **motioned** to authorize the town manager to spend up to \$3K for work with Casco Bay Advisors pertaining to renegotiations with Charter Spectrum franchise agreement and to take those monies from the contingency account. Sean **seconded, vote 5-0** in favor.

23-081 – Consider a contract amendment with the Kennebec Valley Council for Governments for Comprehensive Planning Services – 5 min.

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- Kathryn **motioned** to approve the amended contract for services for the Kennebec Valley Council for Governments as presented and authorize the town manager to sign, **seconded** by Sean, **5-0 vote** in favor. Kathryn amended her **motion** to add that the money will be taken from the contingency line as well. Sean **seconded, vote 4-1** with Carol opposed.

23-082 – Assigning negotiators for the AFSCME 93 contract negotiation – 5 min.

- Kathryn made a **motion** to appoint Eric and Dennis to be our negotiators and also have the Union notified that Anna Carl is no longer here so she should not be carbon copied on this. **Seconded** by Steve, **5-0 vote** in favor.

23-083 – Consider approval of Commercial Hauler permits for the Transfer Station – 5 min.

- **Motion** to approve Simmonds Trucking Commercial Hauler Permit by Steve, **seconded** by Kathryn, **vote 5-0** in favor.
- **Other Business, Upcoming Meetings, and Future Agenda Items - 5 min.**

**Motion** to adjourn made by Kathryn at 8:30 PM **vote 5-0** in favor

**Adjournment**

*Minutes submitted by Anjelica Pittman, Board Secretary*