

Town of Readfield

Boards, Committees & Commissions

Approved Meeting Minutes

- Budget Public Meeting & Hearing March 22, 2023
- Cemetery Committee February 27, 2023
- Comprehensive Planning Committee February 15, 2023
- Comprehensive Planning Committee March 15, 2023

Town of Readfield
Fiscal Year 2024 Public Budget & Meeting Hearing
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, March 22, 2023 – *Approved*

Budget Committee Present: Andy Tolman (Chair), Chris Sammons, Marty Hanish, Ed Sims

Select Board Present: Kathryn Woodsum, Sean Keegan, Carol Doorenbos,

Other Attendees: Eric Dyer (Town Manager), Teresa Shaw (Finance Officer), Anjelica Pittman (Board Secretary), Jessica Gorton, Paula Clark (Planning Board Chair), Donald Clark, Sandra Rourke, Rosalie Kimball, Brandon Fike, Via Zoom – Grace, Bill, Mike, Darcy & Henry, Holly Rahmlow

Excused Absent: Dennis Price (Select Board Chair), Steve DeAngelis, Ellen Schneiter

Call to Order

Welcome & Introductions – 5 min.

- The Select Board and Budget Committee introduced themselves.

Review of Budget & Meeting Goals - 5 min.

- Kathryn discussed the budget and meeting goals and explained the responsibilities of each the Select Board and Budget Committee in the budget process.

Presentation & Discussion of Summary Budget Information - 80 min.

- Eric presented the budget draft via slideshow. He also explained the difference between designated and undesignated funds.
- RSU 38 estimated tax increase at 10% but could change as the RSU continues to work on their budget. The County increased taxes 5% overall with only about 1% increase for the town of Readfield because there has been less growth here than other towns.
- The Fire Department sprinkler system is already bonded for \$200K at 1.9% interest. The fire marshal informed Eric that if no one is using the overnight rooms at the Fire Department the need for a sprinkler system could wait. There is an opportunity to use that bond toward the new firetruck to lessen the interest on a large chunk of the fire truck purchase, leaving the remaining amount to be bonded with a higher interest rate as anticipated. The last firetruck bond from 2016 is due to be paid off in FY24.
- 4.4% or about \$46K increase in the municipal budget for FY24. Nearly identical to the tax impact in 2020.
- State of Maine has been increasing tax values of homes about 10% over the last couple of years, Readfield revaluation begins this year in order to keep up with the state so the town can get tax breaks through the state and to keep the mil rate down. Estimated mil rate currently 15.92. The mil rate and the valuation work hand in hand to keep property taxes linear and ensure the town can use the maximum homestead exemption allowance for resident's homes.

Town Meeting Warrant Discussion - 30 min.

Proposed Land Use Ordinance Revisions

- Paula Clark – Planning Board Chair - annual review ongoing of the ordinance and a package with revisions. Planning board revisions will be discussed at their next meeting on March 27, once the board

Town of Readfield
Fiscal Year 2024 Public Budget & Meeting Hearing
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, March 22, 2023 – *Approved*

agrees on the revisions, they will present it to the Select Board for approval. This year there is some clarity and reorganization being done, the board has modified some language to make standards clearer and included pieces from state legislature.

Proposed Beach Ordinance

- The Beach became free to residents in the last few years, due to that transition, and without having formal rules already for the beach; an ordinance is being proposed to give an administrative structure to better care for the beach. The ordinance provides a legal basis to keep things on track for beach use.

Proposed Comprehensive Plan Update

- Jessica Gorton – Comprehensive Plan Committee Chair – started process in 2020, derailed by the pandemic. Most of the draft is on the town website available for review. Nearly 300 responses to the surveys and those responses are also on the website. KVCOG has been a great help with the plan update. Nearing the end of the process, will be voted on in June.

Sean **motioned** to extend the meeting for ten minutes, Carol **seconded**.

- The entire Comprehensive Plan is voted on as a singular vote, if it is voted down it will be relooked at. Now is the time to discuss changes with the committee. The plan does not obligate the town to spend anything.

Kathryn **adjourned** the meeting at 8:40PM.

Minutes submitted by Anjelica Pittman, Board Secretary

Cemetery Committee Meeting Minutes

February 27th, 2023

Present: Brenda Lake, Pam Osborn, Marianne Perry, Warren Norris, Tom Molokie, Karen Peterson, Grace Keene, Lee Livingston, Andy Tolman (Chair), Ben Rodriguez (Sexton) with contributions by Matt and Eric Dyer.

Subject for discussion: Subject for group discussion was the Sexton's recommendation to add a new piece of equipment to the line for use by both Cemetery maintenance and Road maintenance. The item is a chipper/shredder/leaf management. It is a Connecticut assembler manufacturer and supplied by a local equipment company. Although the staff has not seen the machine in operation there is a video on the Union Farm Equipment website. The Sexton and crew feel it will be a great time saver since most of the maintenance centers around leaf management in the fall and sticks, branches and tree limbs in the spring. The cost is \$20,858 and the town would apply capital budgets to the expense. This would be split roughly 50% between the capital budgets of the Road and Cemetery Committees. There is a one-year warranty.

Pam asked if the hiring of manual labor was explored. Ben remarked that this would be a great benefit for saving time and expense. He added that the Budget committee has reviewed the machine and its implications for labor saving time and recommends its acquisition.

Karen explained that leaves have always been a challenge and this machine will be of great use by our town.

Grace asked if the noise is going to be a problem. Ben stated no more than the noise created by the two leaf blowers used now.

Tom was concerned about possible friction between the splitting of time between the two committees' usage and the splitting of costs especially during times when there are overlapping needs. Ben stated that the cost will be shared by the two committees.

Tom added that any decision by the Cemetery Committee would have to include tracking the time the machine is used between the two functions and ensuring the budgets are aligned for that usage. Ben assured the committee that this could be effectively tracked.

Marianne asked about the leaf debris: Could it be used as mulch? Committee members agreed that it could and possibly for trails, as well. Ben mentioned that there might be a call for stockpiling it at the transfer station for use by the citizenry.

Pam suggested that we move to vote. Andy recommended that the motion should frame the question around agreement with the Budget Committee's approval.

Tom moved to recommend the purchase to the Select Committee with the caveat that repairs and usage be closely monitored and the cost both in capital and expense be prorated between the two committees' budgets.

Pam 2nd and the floor was opened for discussion. There being no further comment, vote was called. Vote was unanimous.

Andy asked that the committee table the discussion related to the Wreaths Across America. This request was due to WAA's lack of availability for a Zoom presence for our meeting. They may be available for our March committee meeting. We will meet at the stated 10:30 am time with their (Tara Delong's) presence at 11:00 am.

Andy then requested we move to our regular business.

Meeting Minutes for Prior Meeting: Prior meeting minutes were reviewed. Tom moved to accepted minutes with agreed revisions, Marianne 2nd, no discussion committee voted to unanimously accept the minutes with noted minor changes.

Sexton's Report

Ben reported that maintenance removed a dying tree in Readfield Corner. Stevenson performed the removal. The Case Cemetery sign was damaged during an auto accident. There were no injuries. The town seeks compensation from the driver's **comprehensive insurance policy**. There was an observation by a committee member that there were black metal chains which bled an iron stain on the sign. Ben acknowledged this and said the stain can be easily cleaned. Other durable but compatible materials are being sought for replacement.

New Business

Andy then requested thoughts and comments about the Rules, Regulations and Policy governing the committee and town related to managing our cemeteries.

Tom brought up the cost to the town of righting and repairing stones due to poor design in foundations or poor material choice, further suggesting we needed to dictate minimum standards to protect the town's funding.

Ben noted his authority comes from page 7 of the Readfield Cemetery Handbook, item a. under Grave Markers & Monuments, ". . . The placement of all monuments and grave markers will be set under the direction of the Sexton." Beyond this there is no guidance for either loved ones wanting an interment or for the Sexton who ultimately has the role of maintaining the stones and monuments. Another area of authority is that no burial can be performed without the knowledge of the Sexton, who can then guide the loved ones in the interment process and the monument placement.

An area that needs consideration is that the town assumes default financial responsibility after families of interned are deceased themselves or are gone from the area and have abdicated responsibility. Ben has researched different town ordinances and will provide them for committee members for their consideration.

Pam recommended that we find a geologist to help with the underlying soils to ensure strong base for foundation stones. Lee mentioned that the foundations are inexpensive so design criteria won't affect the cost too much and we can stipulate better specifications. Warren agreed

and suggested that foundation base preparation costs be added into perpetual care charge for the lot. Ben noted that the ARCGIS application can be used to determine soil appropriateness.

Ben let the committee know that there are several documents that govern our cemetery management:

- Cemetery Handbook
- Cemetery Ordinance
- Cemetery Lot Conveyance
- Certificate of Burial
- Cemetery Map

Tom said that tightening up the rules to preserve the budget for future care of the cemeteries. Extending this is giving a stronger job description for the Sexton.

Marianne would like to see more loving language in the handbook for those seeking interment for their loved one and maybe it should be revamped, updated and upgraded. She also asked that we consider the green cemetery as a possible future offering. Brenda reminded the cemetery committee that the committee had investigated this potential several years ago. Ben said that recently Maine Public Television had a segment on the Baldwin Green Cemetery in Fayette. This direction will have to look at land/soil options. The ARCGIS database may have information here also. The cemetery expansion set aside could be looked at for this as a possibility. Marianne also suggested a section of set aside as a pollinator preserve (meadow).

Ben requested that the committee consider using the ordinance Section 4.Item 1. E. "The committee may create subcommittees to work on particular issues..." E. These subcommittees are not required under the town's rules for public advertisement and notice. Their work product would be reviewed and considered in the public meetings. Also, the committee's rules allow rules changes. See Section 4. Item 2. E. "The Committee may adopt additional rules, not inconsistent with this Ordinance, for its operation, as necessary." A point to be considered is that all current lot owners are subject to the most recent requirements and rules (no grandfathering).

Tom pointed out that our meetings must take place in a public building. Ben agreed and pointed out the meeting must be advertised with notice for changes.

Andy polled for additional immediate business in need of discussion. There being none, he requested a motion to adjourn. Lee so moved, Marianne 2nd and with no discussion Andy gave the meeting concluded at 12:10 PM.

Next committee meeting will be the March 20th at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Warren Norris

Secretary

Comprehensive Planning Committee Minutes

February 15, 2023

Present: Chris Cheney, Paula Clark, Jessica Cobb (KVCOG), Greg Durgin, Eric Dyer, Jessica Gorton, Elaine Katz, Greg Leimbach, Matt Nazar

Absent: Jeffrey Carlson, Dennis Price

Jessica G. called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. in person at the Town Office and via Zoom.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Greg D. notified the committee that he's been asked by Trails and Conservation Commission to keep them updated on what is happening with the CPC.

MINUTES

Paula moved to accept minutes from the December meeting. Greg D. seconded. Minutes approved unanimously with Matt abstaining due to his absence in January.

OLD BUSINESS

Public Hearings

Eric thanked everyone for their help with the public hearing on Jan. 28, which he said went really well, was well attended and provided good feedback. The first event was also helpful in planning the next meeting, which will be Feb. 25. There is a transcript and photos of the event, which will be posted on the CPC website.

The four topics for the Feb. 25 meeting will be community vision, land use and growth, village areas and development, and open space. Greg volunteered to lead open space. Paula, Matt, Jessica G. and Elaine will also be available. Eric and Jessica C. will also be there.

Elaine asked about publicizing the event, and avenues for that were discussed. Eric said they are considering putting a digital sign at the Transfer Station to alert residents of events.

Schedule

Eric said he is hoping the committee can wrap up the goals and policies sections tonight so that the individual leaders can finish their chapters. The schedule is very tight and extends right up to town meeting. The committee discussed how the policies will be implemented and reviewed the schedule, which includes an additional meeting in March.

Goals and Policies

Jessica C. began displaying the 45 pages of goals and policies she compiled for the committee to review. She said they include all of the elements required by the state as well as what the committee members provided. Many chapters are mostly complete and those reviews were cursory.

This review was not designed to be specific, but some specifics were raised. Elaine raised questions about amenities, access for disabled persons, and funding for improvements and services, such as EMS. Jessica C. noted that there are plenty of grants available. Greg L. suggested an annual reviewing of financing options.

Greg L. and Elaine offered to write up their ideas. Paula raised some questions about what look to be incorrect assignments of who will implement specific policies. Jessica C. suggested she take the original document and highlight any that are questionable and send them to her to review with Eric. Committee member suggestions were added or Jessica C. asked them to email them to her.

The Future Land Use chapter required more effort, as it is still in progress, and members made several suggestions. Discussion included the growth areas, infrastructure such as water, sewer and sidewalks, the schools, housing, finance and zoning.

Jessica G. moved that once Jessica C. has incorporated the suggestions made tonight for the Goals and Policies that, with the exception of Future Land Use, they be approved as the draft version for public review. Discussion of the motion led the committee to agree that a motion is not yet necessary and can wait until they are further along in the process.

In response to Elaine's comments about EMS, Greg D. mentioned that there is a program for junior and senior high school students at the Capital Area Technical Center. He also noted that the Conservation Commission is already working on the open space plan.

NEW BUSINESS/ NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting will be March 15. There will also be a meeting on March 29.

On Feb. 25 there will be a public hearing. Also, committee members are asked to follow up on tonight's discussion and finish the Goals and Policies for their chapters.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Holly Rahmlow

Comprehensive Planning Committee Minutes

March 15, 2023

Present: Paula Clark, Jessica Cobb (KVCOG), Greg Durgin, Eric Dyer, Jessica Gorton, Elaine Katz

Absent: Jeffrey Carlson, Chris Cheney, Matt Nazar, Greg Leimbach, Dennis Price

Jessica G. called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. in person at the Town Office and via Zoom.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Eric reported that he put together a page on the website to provide an easy access spot for residents to keep up to date on what is happening with the Comp Plan. It includes information from the minutes, public hearings, surveys, the draft mission statement, and other sources into one place. It can be found at <https://www.readfieldmaine.org/comprehensive-plan-committee/pages/2023-comp-plan-update-documents>

The survey will close to new inputs on March 17.

MINUTES

There was not a quorum, so February's minutes were not voted on. Holly will resend the minutes before the next meeting and will include a correction Greg D. offered.

OLD BUSINESS

Public Meeting Review

About 25 people showed up in person for the meeting, along with some on Zoom. A wide variety of opinions were offered. Eric said he thought it was very useful to hear the various views. A compilation of the comments attendees offered are available on the website.

Chapter Policies and Strategies

Jessica C. said she has inputted and combined all of the comments received from the committee members, various committees and other interested parties. Paula noted that some of the things she had originally thought would go in Future Land Use actually are already mentioned in other chapters. She sees the Future Land Use chapter as being primarily about the growth areas and zoning.

The committee discussed the best way to present the goals and strategies, as they are the thing that most residents are interested in. It was agreed that the chapters should be numbered. The Vision Statement will lead the Comp Plan and not be repeated in subsequent chapters.

Jessica C. noted that the Future Land Use chapter is different from the other chapters, which are mostly a statement of the current status and previous accomplishments, whereas the Future Land Use is a plan. Discussion was held about how often the Select Board will review the implementation of the plan. Paula said that Future Land Use needs to be reviewed more frequently than the entire Comp Plan.

The committee completed a final review of all the remaining policies and strategies for all the chapters except Future Land Use. The focus was on fine tuning and clarifying the wording.

Future Land Use Chapter

Paula had a number of changes for this chapter and reviewed them with the committee. Due to technical difficulties, she did not have a computer copy with her today, but said she would send her changes to Jessica C. for inclusion in a final copy.

The committee reviewed the chapter thoroughly, discussing some issues, such as density, economic development and limiting taxes at length.

NEW BUSINESS

Prep for March 22 Budget and Warrant Public Hearing (FY 2024)

The Comp Plan is the last item on the warrant. Eric said the presentation will be brief, with an explanation of what the plan is, why it's important, what has been done so far, and how much effort has been put into the process.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be March 29, with plans to cover the Future Land Use chapter, a full draft plan review with maps and a summary of community survey results.

Paula asked about the maps. Eric said new maps are unlikely to happen this year, but there is an updated parcel map from April 1, 2022, that will be included.

Paula moved for adjournment; Greg D. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Holly Rahmlow