

Readfield Select Board
Regular Meeting Minutes – Monday, May 16, 2022 – *Approved*

Select Board Members Present: Dennis Price, Kathryn Woodsym, Sean Keegan, Carol Doorenbos

Others Attending: Eric Dyer (Town Manager), Anjelica Pittman (Board Secretary), Bill Starrett, Hannah Flannery (Recreation Board), Brent West, Emily George Beliveau (via Zoom)

Pledge of Allegiance

Regular Meeting Items (5 min):

22-122 – Select Board Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2022 & April 11, 2022

- Kathryn **motion** to accept meeting minutes, **seconded** by Sean, **4-0 vote** in favor

22-123 – Warrants 42-47

- Kathryn **motioned** to approve, **seconded** by Carol, **vote 4-0** in favor

Communications (30 min):

- Select Board communications:
 - Kathryn would like to remind residents that defacing or moving political campaign signs (that are not in the right of way) is not allowed.
 - Dennis remarked that the first Heritage Days meeting May 15, 2022 was a success, the next meeting will be June 12, 2022 at 1p.m., and should be a great year for the event, which will be held August 12, & 13, 2022. Dennis also would like to thank Nunzi Graziano for the graphic design she has done for Heritage Days.
 - Sean would like to thank the town’s maintenance staff, Ben and Matt for the new signs at the Readfield Beach.
- Town Staff Reports:
 - Treasurers Report: April check reconciliation completed, in balance, wrapping up the fiscal year 2021 audit. Final warrant will be June 2, 2022. Revenues and expenses are at 80%, receipts are up; revenue is up, property taxes are being paid on time, expenses are down, there are fewer capital expenses, and everything is on target.
 - Town Managers Report: $\frac{3}{4}$ time maintenance and transfer station employee position is available, there is a town employee meeting scheduled for Thursday May 19, 2022. The office staff is busy with elections; the last public hearing will be June 2, 2022. Absentee ballots are available at the town office, school ballots will be arriving Wednesday and town/state ballots are available now. The town website, readfieldmaine.org, has been heavily updated over the past weekend. Comprehensive Plan Committee is meeting this week. Readfield corner, sidewalk, and traffic safety concerns being addressed, planning to issue an RFP for Church Road sidewalk, still a few years out from completion, federally funded project. Design work in front of the masonic hall is complete, P Ridge Road and Nickerson Hill Road RFP will issue soon, design complete also. New signs have been installed on the South Road; incorrect signs from years past have been corrected. Crosswalk signs have been put up at Kents Hill, and maintenance personnel corrected the visibility of an existing sign there. Central line crosswalk signs have been installed, and were damaged within two weeks of installation, may anchor the bases to keep them in place. The fire station and library projects from bond from last year are currently on hold due to understaffing.

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Road heavy load limit signs were lifted last month, Church Road is next on the paving schedule, the RFP will issue in the next few weeks. Of the attendees from the winter road RFP prebid meeting for the upcoming winter season, only one contractor responded, Horn construction, the contract quote for the first year is at \$385,000. Mowing has begun at the cemeteries, nearly prepared for Memorial Day, Spring Street sweeping for spring has been completed, crack filling and sealing and pavement striping is next. Signs at the beach are up, Kents Hill and Maranacook students have done a fantastic job volunteering and cleaning up town. The Swap and Shop at the transfer station is up and running, to include new shelving, thank you to Kathryn for her hard work with the shelving. The electronic payment system is operational and proving to be beneficial. The damaged concrete curbing in front of the hoppers has been repaired, new rails and gates are in work and will be complete this Wednesday. Audettes and the maintenance crew did a great job. Mike and Karen have been taking care with the organics and compost to make it available to residents.

Kathryn reminded the board of Carol's idea to add a sign that lets residents know to ask for help from attendants to assist in opening the gate for larger items, the board agreed that would be a good idea.

Sean inquired about the transfer station summer hours, Kathryn responded that they will be 8a.m. to noon on Sundays to begin between memorial day and labor day. The next Haz Waste day will be July 10, 2022 8a.m. to noon, and requested that the transfer station update the sign to reflect the summer hours.

- Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Departments:
 - Library minutes of Mar 2, 2022
 - Age Friendly Committee minutes of March 9, 2022
 - Cemetery Committee minutes of March 21, 2022
- Public Communications

Brent West, of 13 Fogg Road since 2016, of the Conservation Commission Committee attended and presented some questions and concerns he had for both the broadband project and fairground project. Brent is concerned that the broadband project may be a one sided view and mentioned that Spectrum could offer a \$167,000 solution to connect more residents to the internet. He would like to see more options available and feels as though the broadband is being marketed before it has been voted upon. He would request that a quote from spectrum be obtained before following through with the broadband project with Axiom. He is concerned with Axiom's customer service and staff capacity; as well he would like to know the number of people who need broadband, if it passes. Brent requested the mailers be stopped.

Brent also discussed the fairgrounds project, specifically, the basketball court location. His concern is that part of the court lies in the wetlands and there may be pavement issues quickly due to the nature of the wetlands, he has noticed at baseball games that the parking lot also can fill with water quickly. Brent also asked why a grant from the Land and Water Conservation fund (up to 50% of cost) has not been applied for; he would be willing to write the request for the grant, as he has background in such work.

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Sean responded to Brent that the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant has been applied for, as well as an Alford grant.

Emily attended the meeting via Zoom to inquire about a liquor license she applied for an event coming up, Eric and Dennis responded that she will be notified when she is on the schedule, and they may do a special meeting on the 25th to fit her in before her event.

Appointments, reappointments, & Resignations (5 min):

22-124 - Consider the resignation of Patrick McCormick from the Broadband Internet Committee

➤ **Motion** to accept made by Kathryn, **seconded** by Carol, **vote 4-0** in favor

Old Business (45 min):

22-062 – Fairgrounds (10 min)

Hannah Flannery from the Recreation Board presented updates to the Fairgrounds project. She believes there is a legitimate need for a basketball court, as 200 children signed up to play last season. Hannah and the Recreation Board created a trifold brochure to inform residents about the Fairgrounds project, which is being printed in color and will be made available at the Town Office, Library and other places in town, electronic copies can also be made available.

Eric responded to concerns about landscape layout and wetland impacts that can be mitigated through the construction process, both for the basketball court and other low lying fields, 70% of the design will be available in the next few days, which will also provide a revised cost estimate. Eric thanked the Recreation board and Conservation Commission Committee for their efforts for the pollinator garden and for working so well together to accomplish the goals of the Fairgrounds project.

Dennis shared his idea that some events for Heritage Days be held at the Fairgrounds, and would be a good opportunity to plant signs and educational material for the proposed layout, give residents a visual of the project.

Carol stated that she is hopeful the organizational grants that are in work will come through. Carol also asked about handicap accessibility, as she had heard in passing that some folks may be finding it difficult to navigate, Eric responded that the trails and fields are already handicap accessible, and Hannah added that the gate can be opened per request for handicap parking closer to the ball field. Kathryn suggested a golf cart for events specifically, to help aid the accessibility during town events. Sean spoke with Bruce from the Conservation Commission Committee to determine the accessibility.

22-068 – Broadband (20 min)

Eric understands concern on economic front, not going to save money for everyone in town, but he believes in the universal goals, service availability to everyone, the project has stayed true to community oriented goals, and the Broadband Board has stayed committed to the recommendation and proposal. Technical issues brought up will be the responsibility of the third party provider, however there will be more involvement from the town

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in other areas, more so than exists now with current internet providers in the area. Dennis believes it would be in the best interest of the town, as well as include some local control, and build equity for the homes of Readfield. Kathryn noted that the price of the broadband will be a fixed amount over 20 years, while she understands satellite communication may be a great resource for remote places that cannot run cables, satellite communication is not secure and agreed that broadband internet would be good for property values. Eric responded that there are telecommunication companies advertising against the broadband project as a defense because they stand to lose a lot of money and control in this area if broadband is voted through. He encourages residents to visit readfieldfiber.org for true information pertaining to the broadband project. Kathryn added that surrounding towns, Fayette, Wayne, Leeds, Mount Vernon, and Vienna are all interested in doing similar for internet access in their towns. Eric also noted that the price of the broadband project is less than the town spends on schools and roads among other things. Carol added that she has heard fiber optics will become obsolete, but Eric responded that is not true, however hardware will need to be updated over the years and that is all being considered and planned for in the project.

22-110 – Final Town Meeting Warrant

The corrected version from last Tuesdays meeting available, nothing has changed since.

- Kathryn made a **motion** to sign the final copy of the warrant, Sean **seconded**, **vote 4-0** in favor

22-119 – Heritage Days

Dennis gave a quick briefing about this year's Heritage Days celebration. There will be events at the Fairgrounds, beach and local businesses. Breakfast will be at the Mason's; there may be a 5K at the high school this year, and possibly a family friendly 60s themed dance party on Friday night. Fireworks Saturday night, the Historical Society may have a wine and cheese party. The next meeting for Heritage Days Committee is June 12th at 1 p.m.

22-125 – Tax Acquired Property

Eric gave the board an update on the one property under foreclosure in the town, the home is in the transitional period now, the niece of the former owner has been involved, and Eric will visit the former owner this Friday. The Conservation Commission Committee has no interest in the property for conservation purposes. Eric added that two things that complicate the property are the road frontage being 100' from the property, and possibly landlocked, also there has been mention of a family burial plot on the property; however he has not seen the plot, or documentation of it. The best case scenario would be if Eric can work with the niece if Mr. Allborne is willing, to sell the property back to him for the amount of taxes owed on it. If they are not interested or cannot do that, the property can be sold but it would require a cash sale. Dennis stated his appreciation to Eric for his efforts in working with the family to make things as right as possible. Kathryn mentioned any costs incurred in selling the property would be included in the sale, she also noted that the town has the least number of foreclosures it has had in years, and reminded residents that the town offers financial help if needed.

22-126 – Purchasing Policy

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Eric added 25% increase to previous standards of cost thresholds for policy because of inflation, to hopefully mitigate suspending the policy and also add flexibility. Eric updated the signatures as well, and removed the requirement that there be a paper copy.

- Kathryn **motion** to approve, Sean **seconds**, **vote 4-0** in favor

22-127 – EMS

A resolution has been created and signed to work with MMA to foster incentives and jobs in EMS. May 2nd Eric received a letter from the MMA Director, Marty Hanish, community leader and personal representative for this resolution and the MMA is interested in helping with this problem. Carol had some concern about the vehicles, if there needed to be more, Eric responded that Winthrop has three, and that short staffing seems to be the problem that needs addressing. July 1st reappointments not considered until June, to give opportunity to others. The legislative policy committee needs another member from Select Board to represent Readfield. June 22nd is the deadline. Meetings are monthly for 1-1.5 hours in the legislative session, and Eric can get more information from there.

Other Business, Upcoming Meetings, and Future Agenda Items (5 min):

Kathryn addressed the internet and Zoom problems that occurred on Candidates Night and suggested there be a number available for people to call in when they are experiencing technical issues; Eric suggested the phones from the Town Hall be forwarded to him or someone attending and available for future meetings.

- **Motion** made by Sean to adjourn at 8:14p.m., **seconded** by Kathryn, **vote 4-0**

Minutes submitted by Anjelica Pittman, Board Secretary