

Readfield Select Board
Regular Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, August 3, 2022 – *Approved*

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

Excused Absent:

Others Attending: Eric Dyer (Town Manager)

Pledge of Allegiance

Executive Session - 50 min

The Select Board will hold an Executive Session meeting to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to 1 MRSA, Section 405, subsection 6(A).

New Business

- 22-014 – Select Board Statement:

When an individual enters public service, especially at the municipal level, there is an unspoken understanding that comes with the job. This understanding states that, as a public official, you are opening yourself up to the feedback and criticism of the public. A large portion of the work you must do is in the eye of the taxpayers that you also serve.

Interacting with the public, be they happy or disgruntled, is simply a part of the municipal job landscape, especially if you are the Town Manager.

Eric Dyer has served as Town Manager of Readfield for seven years. He has worked diligently to ensure that the Town of Readfield operates smoothly, efficiently, and with its best interests always at the forefront.

In his time, he has also dealt with the unhappy, the upset, and the angry. He has always kept his composure, a level head, and has never allowed a work-related conflict to permeate his personal life.

However, over the last few years, Eric has become the singular focus and obsession of Robert Bittar.

The source of this compulsion is Mr. Bittar's ongoing dispute about his property on Mill Stream Rd.

As options are running out, Mr. Bittar has become increasingly unable to contain his contempt for Eric Dyer, and now it has expanded to Eric's wife and two young children.

Based on Mr. Bittar's recent purchase of an adjacent home to the Dyer family and his behavior, a Protection from Harassment Order was issued by the court on Wednesday, July 20th.

Despite the Protection from Harassment order brought by Eric, Mr. Bittar escalated his behavior and was recently arrested after defying the order. We hope this will be a deterrent.

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We find the behavior of Mr. Bittar reprehensible and it is our duty to protect the town manager, as we would any employee, from undergoing this type of harassment.

The Readfield Select Board supports Eric Dyer, and we vehemently reject the engagement of Eric's wife, children, and home in this unusual vendetta.

It is our intention to protect and defend Eric while this behavior seeps from the public sector and into the private life of the Town Manager.

Mr. Bittar is still free to engage in Town business at Gile Hall and is in no way restricted from the rights and privileges of a Readfield citizen.

This situation has caused great anxiety and stress, not just for Eric and his family, but for all of Readfield.

The Select Board will continue to stand by the rules and ordinances of our town, and in doing so, we will continue to support and protect our employees.

We remain hopeful that a resolution to this situation will be swift.

- Sean **motioned** to enable the Town Manager to submit expenses for job related legal fees to be reimbursed from the legal services fund from the town budget. Steve **seconded**, **vote 5-0** in favor
- Sean **motioned** to enable the Town Manager to submit expenses for all other necessary security and privacy measures to be reimbursed from Select Board Contingency Funds. **Seconded** by Kathryn, **vote 5-0** in favor.
- **Motion** to adjourn the meeting at 7:11pm made by Sean, **seconded** by Kathryn, **vote 5-0** in favor

Adjournment

Minutes submitted by Anjelica Pittman, Board Secretary