

Town of Greenville

Select Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 4th, 2023, 6:30pm, Greenville Town Hall Meeting Room

Minutes for Meeting of the Select Board

Board members/Staff present at meeting:

Selectman Geno Murray (Chair) Selectman Bonnie DuBien Police Chief Jim Carr
 Selectman Newton Pierce (Vice Chair) Selectman Burt Whitman Fire Chief Sawyer Murray
 Selectman Richard Peat Town Manager Mike Roy Town Clerk Tammy Firman

Others attending: John Contreni (Chair, Planning Board), Margarita Contreni (Moosehead Lake Economic Development Corporation), Esther Ireland, Brent Ireland, Steve Mason

Via Zoom: Sheila Grant (Piscataquis Observer)

6:30 pm Meeting opened by Chair, Geno Murray

1. Pledge of Allegiance recited.

2. Introductions. Each person introduced themselves.

3. Opening of Meeting & Declaration of Conflicts of Interest: The Chair asked all members of the Select Board to review the meeting agenda and declare any potential conflicts of interest which members may have with any of the items listed. None were declared.

4. Minutes for 09-11-2023 and 09-20-2023

A motion was made by Richard and seconded by Burt to accept the minutes of both meetings. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Addition or Deletions to the Agenda

None

6. Grant Resolution – Grant funding from the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC)

Town Manager, Mike Roy, is requesting permission to move grant funds forward for the Spruce Street Housing project. This funding is for infrastructure only. There is an agreement which Mike will sign. A motion was made by Bonnie and seconded by Richard to authorize Mike Roy to apply for, accept and expend grant funding from the NBRC. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Greenville Comprehensive Plan

Mike shared that it is time for the town to update its comprehensive plan. It was last updated on August 27th, 2013. The plan is good for ten years and needs to be reviewed after five years. We need to review it and see where we are. Many things from the 2013 plan have been implemented. We will need to partner with the Moosehead Lake Economic Development Corporation (MLEDC) to work on the plan. The Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) oversees the comprehensive plan. We cannot apply for grants without a current comprehensive plan in place. An updated plan typically takes 12-18 months. It could possibly be expedited. The contact person at the EMDC sent a copy of what needs to be done. The town's 2013 plan was

guided with a consultant. Gwen Hilton helped to develop the 2013 plan. The next steps will be for us to consider whether we want to hire a consultant or to work with the EMDC. They have sent an outline of what charges will be if they help us to develop. This may have to be approved in June at the Annual Town Meeting. Mike needs to have the authority from the Select Board to move this forward to prevent delays. The Select Board agreed by consensus to authorize Mike to move forward. Geno requested that this be an on-going agenda item in order to keep the Board apprised of developments.

8. John Contreni – Short-term Rentals

John Contreni indicated that there are two additional members of the Planning Board (PB) present at this meeting – David Case and Brent Ireland. Short-term rentals (STR) are by definition those that are less than 28 days in length. The PB has been discussing STR for at least a year. Thus far, they have only anecdotal information rather than actual facts. The stories that have been shared are both good and bad. We don't know how many STR are owned by our neighbors versus those owned by investors. This issue is complex and is going to require significant research. The Land Use Ordinance has no information regarding STR. The words "rent" or "rentals" appear 13 times in the ordinance. The rental of residential units is not considered a business in Greenville. The issue of STR is being considered all across our nation. The Bangor Daily News had a front-page article about STR in Bangor. Regulations are forthcoming from them with many things being defined. The city planner for Belfast (Jonathan Boynton) has ties to Greenville. He was invited and came to our PB meeting on September 6th. This was the evening before Belfast passed an ordinance regarding STR in their town. At present, the PB has no authority over STR. The charge to the PB is to determine the use of the land, not actually what takes place on that land. If the PB is to move forward, the Select Board would have to grant them authority over STR. In addition, the PB would need to know specifically what the Select Board wants them to do. The PB has no expertise in this area nor any financial resources. We may need to hire a city planner to help consult with us on this issue. It appears through very information research that we have about 220 STR at this time in Greenville. We do not know the location nor the owners of these rentals. In Belfast, their ordinance requires that all homeowners identify if they have any type of STR. A questionnaire was sent out with their tax bills. They require an annual license to be purchased at a cost of \$50 if purchased by the deadline date. If purchased after that date, the fee doubles to \$100. The additional cost is added as an incentive to respond in timely manner. PB member, David Case, indicated that we must anticipate future problems while remaining open-minded about this issue. PB member, Brent Ireland, stated that he feels that in order to move forward, we must know how many STR there are in Greenville and their location. Mike Roy indicated that he has received a few calls about STR. Many want to know what the end-game is for the future of STR. Is the goal to collect a fee or is it to police STR? There are many unanswered questions. The town gets a few complaints about STR. Margarita Contreni stated that the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC), is planning to gather data as well. Steve Mason indicated that he is the owner of a short-term rental in Greenville and goes through the VRBO where he pays a 9% tax. He also suggested that those who are against short-term rentals due to the lack of affordable workforce housing. Steve feels that lakefront housing will never be the site of affordable workforce housing. Selectman, Burt Whitman, says that he feels that there should not be any sort of governmental control over what a person can do with his own home or property. A suggestion was made that Mike check with Rangeley as to their STR plan as they are similar to Greenville. Mike will reach out to Rangeley, to the EMDC and to the Maine State Office of Planning.

9. Town Manager's Report

The Public Safety Building has some of the flooring going down. There will be paving next week if the weather is cooperative. The plan is still for the fire trucks to be under cover in the new building by November 1st. It's possible that the PD and FD could move into the building by December.

We need to think about a sign for the building. A copy of the artist's rendition of what Sheridan will provide on the side of the building is available. It's very basic.

Public Works has the sand and salt mixed and covered for winter usage. They are busy screening the gravel from Birch Street. They are using the good gravel on other roads. This recycling of gravel represents a huge cost saving to the town.

Mike Roy and Sally Tournquist (Recreation Department Director) will be meeting soon to finalized job descriptions for the Four-Year-Olds Club employees.

One of the town's deputy clerks has resigned due to personal reasons. We will be advertising soon for this position.

One of the Planning Board members has resigned. This means that Brent Ireland moves up to full member and there are now two vacant positions for alternate members.

The restrooms at the Junction will close for the season on October 14th. There has been a problem with a lot of household trash being dumped in the building all summer. The docks will stay in place for now as weather permits.

The Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) was here yesterday to do a safety inspection. Sawyer Murray, Fire Chief, spent most of the day with the MDOL officer. Sawyer's excellent record-keeping and in-house training was a huge asset to the town for this inspection. The officer will be coming tomorrow to see the Transfer Station and the Airport. This was a routine visit. His report will likely indicate an opportunity for improvement.

The 2024 State Valuation (attached) indicates a much higher valuation rate for Greenville. This will likely result in an increased tax. Mike will be attending his first Piscataquis County Budget Committee meeting tomorrow night.

Property tax payments are steadily coming in.

Absentee ballots arrived yesterday. Many citizens already taking advantage of this early voting.

Mike received an email regarding the FEMA FY-22 Brick Grant. The grant is for the Eveleth Street culvert system. It is a 75/25% match. The grant is for \$1.3 million dollars. The town's portion is \$325,000. This will help to mitigate stormwater run-off and will help to protect the town.

10. Public Comment

Margarita Contreni reports that damage from the broken pipe at the visitor's center has been repaired. The Executive Director position is still open. Misty Leask is the chair of the search committee.

11. What's on your Mind?

Burt Whitman reports that the blinking lights at the school are now working.

12. Executive Session

Executive session was entered at 7:37 pm as motioned by Burt and seconded by Newt. Motion carried 5-0. Following discussion, executive session was exited at 8:25 pm as motioned by Newt and seconded by Burt. The motion carried 5-0. There being no further business, it was motioned by Bonnie and seconded by Burt to adjourn at 8:26 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Tammy Firman
Town Clerk