

Town of Sorrento
Board of Selectpersons Minutes
Town Office
7/17/24

Attending. Hilly Crary (chair), Diana Gazis, Rob Wilpan, eight observers in person, and two observers on ZOOM. (Rob Wilpan was a little late to the meeting and asked us to start without him)

Call to order, good news report. The meeting was called to order at 7:01PM. The good news was that the sheriff's deputy is patrolling in town and has issued a number of speeding tickets.

Adjustments to the Agenda. There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of Regular and Special Selectboard Meetings and Approval of Town Meeting Minutes June 25, 2024. A motion was made to approve the 6/14/24, 6/26/24, 7/3/24 and 7/10/24 regular and special selectboard meeting minutes and the minutes of the annual town meeting on 6/24/24. This motion was seconded, passed, Crary aye, Gazis aye, and all minutes were then signed.

Approval of Disbursement and Payroll Warrants. Hilly made and Diana seconded a motion to approve Disbursement Warrant #2 and the associated payroll warrants. The motion passed unanimously, and the warrants were signed.

Speeding Update and Purchase of Batteries for the Speed Sign. As previously decided, police will be making speeding patrols and issuing tickets two shifts a week during July, and the sheriff's office will then meet with the selectboard to discuss the results of the patrols and decide what to do next. We need new batteries for our speed sign (the batteries should be replaced every two years). A proposal from Trafficlogic to supply the batteries was the most economical, and Hilly signed this proposal so that the batteries could be purchased.

Pollinator Meadow Update. Gianna Settin and Ted Preuss have been working hard on the Pollinator Meadow, a particular chore being to dig out the witchgrass. They need volunteers with shovels and strong muscles to help with this effort.

Community Building Update. Step 1 of the grant from the Maine Community Foundation, removal of insulation from the attic of the Back Room, has been completed. If we could find volunteers to take down the ceiling and another group of volunteers to hang the dry wall, we could save money from the Community Building appropriation and use that money for a different Community Building issue (like removing the asbestos flooring). There was some discussion on the possibility of volunteer help for the ceiling in the Community Building Back Room. This is to be continued - - -.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Update. Hilly reported on two itemss;

- 1) She has signed off on the damages we have reported to FEMA for the December 2023 storm.
- 2) FEMA is coming to town for an on-site visit regarding the damage to Ocean Avenue from the January 2024 storms. This visit is scheduled for Friday, August 2, at 10 AM, meeting at the Town Office. This visit will include viewing the storm damage from the water. Hilly will not be there. Diana and Rob will be there. A motion was made, seconded and passed that this visit be designated a special Selectboard Meeting.

Town Pier Lighting Update. Conduit and panel for the lighting has been installed, and Bud Lee has been asked what options we have for the lighting itself.

Town Building Committee. The town owns six buildings (Town Office, Community Building, Fire House, Salt Shed, old Fire House, old Selectboard Office). It would be useful to establish a Town Building Committee to assess the needs for repair of these buildings, what these repairs would cost, and oversee the repairs when they are being done. The Community Building Committee, as now configured, oversees both the use of the Community Building and the repairs needed. The Town Building Committee would take on the “repairs” function of the Community Building Committee, leaving the Community Building Committee with the single function of overseeing the use of the building. Rob proposed and Hilly seconded the motion that a Town Building Committee be established. The motion passed unanimously. How to reconfigure the Community Building Committee will be decided after a historical search for the document establishing this committee and determining its scope has been located and the document examined .

Bunker Road ditching. Water is backing up on Bunker Road because the needed ditching has not been performed. Joey Clarke explained the difficulties of finding contractors that would be able to do this ditching in the near future. He was asked to look into whether having the town buy the equipment necessary to do the ditching was a viable option. Joey said he would look into this.

Ethics Policy. Clay Savage said that faith in our government was very important and enacting a specific ethics policy would increase this trust. He gave the selectpersons three examples of ethics policies enacted by other town governments for them to study. Hilly then read the response of the MMA to her inquiry as to whether or not they thought ethics policies were helpful. The MMA said that ethics policies might be helpful in describing good ethics, but they were not helpful in enforcing good ethics because state government rules for enforcement took precedence. Hilly and Rob both said that they had considered enacting an ethics policy and thought it worth considering, Diana thought the policies she read of other towns were a nightmare of vagueness, overreach, and an invitation to be used for harassment. She would approve only a clear, simple, and succinctly worded policy. The selectpersons agreed to meet individually with Clay to discuss the idea and then bring their insights to a future selectboard meeting.

Public Comments on Agenda Items. There were questions as to why not use the state rules for ethics and as to why those who distrusted the town government didn't come to selectboard meetings or run for selectboard. The possibility of running a citizens literacy class was brought up and Susan Dougherty was willing to run such a class.

Meeting Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 PM.