



**Selectmen's Meeting
MINUTES
Bristol Town Office, May 6th, 2020**

Selectmen Present: Chad Hanna, Kristine Poland, Paul Yates

Also Present: Chris Hall (Town Administrator); Jessica Westhaver (Treasurer); Candy Congdon (Lincoln County News); Seth Hagar (Hagar Enterprises); Pat Porter; David Kolodin (Chair, Bristol School Board) (from 8 pm).

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Chad Hanna, at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Yates, seconded by Poland, to accept the minutes from the April 29th meeting. Motion passed 3 - 0.

Bid Opening:

The Chair announced that two bids had been received for grading four gravel roads. The bids were as follows:

- New Harbor Marine Construction:
\$3,506.25.
- Hagar Enterprises, Inc.:
\$ 4,250.00.

Concern was expressed as to what equipment New Harbor Marine has. The Board did not want to think simple York raking would suffice. Hall was asked to verify what equipment Tucker Phinney, the principal of New Harbor Marine, proposed to use.

Tax Acquired Property:

Jason Masters, the winning bidder at the tax sale on April 29, 2020, presented certified checks for \$70,100, being the balance of the amount due after his down payment, for a total sale price of \$96,100.

The Town Administrator asked Mr. Masters to confirm his understanding that the Town makes no warranty regarding the title nor the condition of the property, to which he agreed.

It was moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to sign the Municipal Quitclaim Deed Without Covenants to Jason George Masters. Motion carried, 3 - 0.

The Board signed three copies of the Deed (for the buyer, the Registry of Deeds and the Town) and congratulated Jason Masters.

Snow Removal Contract

The Board took up the bid from Hagar, tabled on April 29. Hall indicated that, since the bid price was prominently published in the newspaper, he had heard from two parties asking if the bids could be re-opened. He also indicated that, although it would be a risk and a source of considerable management time and grief, that the Town could manage the plowing itself through subcontracts to local plow drivers and save considerable money.

After a brief discussion of the options, Poland urged that Hagar's standing as the only bidder be honored and asked that Hanna as Road Commissioner and the Administrator meet with Seth Hagar to discuss the details of how Hagar would execute the contract. It was agreed that they would do so and report back. The item was tabled to May 13th.

Poole-Greenlaw Cemetery:

The Board had asked the Town Administrator to research the legal implications of the request from Dan Purdy, Esq., to allow the future burial of a family member's cremated remains in a vacant plot in this cemetery. Hall found no impediment to such burial but suggested that an affirmative vote of the Board should be taken. It was therefore moved by Poland, seconded by Yates, to permit the burial of Eileen Purdy after her decease. Motion carried, 3 – 0.

Office Assistant Position:

Hall reported that the open position is now being advertised. The Board approved his proposal to start the position at a \$15/hour rate for 24 hours, with no health care benefits and paid time off being accrued after the first six months at the rate of two weeks (part-time equivalent, i.e. 48 hours) per year.

LED Street Lights:

Bristol, Damariscotta, and Newcastle Town administrators had chosen RealTerm as the winning bidder to recommend to their Boards. Hall asked for approval to negotiate a contract with Real Term, for the expenditure to be funded from the 2020 roads budget. The Board agreed, subject to a discussion at a future early Board meeting of Roads expenditures for the year.

COVID-19 update:

The Plexiglass screens have now been installed. Before the expected June 1 reopening of Town offices to the public, Hall will ask the Board to approve further safety measures.

This week's warrant contains the purchase of prepaid grocery cards, funded by donations to the Worthy Poor Fund, which will be distributed by the New Harbor Food Pantry. Hall asked the Board to approve a request for \$246.70 from the Fund for fuel oil for a welfare case referred by the Parks Department. The

Treasurer asked that this payment be made directly to the individual's credit card company and not the individual as this would count as income. Hall will put the payment in the next Warrant.

Financial Review:

The Treasurer had prepared the four months' expenditure and revenue reports. The chair of the School Board, David Kolodin, joined the Board for discussion of the likely need for spending cuts if revenue is reduced as Administrator Hall suggested.

He outlined three areas of concern. The state's revenue sharing, and other state funds such as the Homestead reimbursement, are likely to be cut once the Legislature comes back into session to deal with the ballooning budget deficit. Second, excise tax revenues are down, reflecting a drop off in new vehicle and boat purchases. It is not clear whether this will continue, but we might see up to 10% less revenue from this source which primarily funds the roads budget. Third, property taxes are likely to be much slower than usual in collection. Although Hall does not expect a major spike in defaults, he suggested many more taxpayers may delay payment until they are liened and such revenues could be pushed back into the next fiscal year. He expressed concern that we could see a shortfall of up to 10% overall this year; many inland towns are expecting far worse.

Property taxes are allocated, roughly, 65% to the school; 20% to the county tax for policing and courts; and 15% to the Town, primarily for the Transfer Station; Fire and Rescue; the Town Office; and non-profit requests (including CLC Ambulance). Given this distribution, Hall has appealed to the School Board to consider such steps as a hiring freeze. Kolodin described the needs the school is finding as it conducts an audit of the school building's physical state, including urgent HVAC and security work amounting to over \$100,000, and as-yet unpriced work on the building's trim and siding. Hall asked that the Select Board be prepared to consider a future bond issue or bank loan to cover all these needs once fully identified and budgeted, perhaps as part of a larger infrastructure bond to cover multiple projects.

The Board invited the School Board to meet with them, on May 27th if possible.

Hall presented worksheets prepared by the Treasurer showing the range of statutorily permissible mill rates and overlays, ranging from slightly less than 7 mills to a maximum of 7.31 mills. It appears that the number which has been quoted in the past, 7.25 mills (an increase from 6.75) is the most likely but some further detail adjustments to exemption categories are needed before setting the rate. This will be tabled until May 13th.

Regular Business:

There were no Building Permit applications.

Selectmen reviewed and approved Warrants for accounts payable and payroll for the Town Office, Fire Department, Parks and Recreation, Bristol Consolidated School and the Bristol/South Bristol Transfer Station.

There was no correspondence to report.

There were no public comments.

Public Meetings: The Chair gave notice of forthcoming meetings as follows:

- Selectmen: Wednesday, May 13th, 7 pm at the Town Office
- Parks and Recreation Commission: Tuesday, May 19th, 6 pm at the Ellingwood Information Center
- Selectmen: Wednesday, May 20th, 7 pm at the Town Office

There being no further business before the Board, it was moved to adjourn at 8.29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Hall, Town Administrator