

TOWN OF BROWNVILLE
BOARD OF SELECTPERSONS MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 21,2025
American Legion Post #92 67 Railroad Ave. Brownville

1. **Called to order at 6:00 PM by Byron Weymouth, Chairperson**
Selectpersons Present: Bryon Weymouth, Shelly Ekholm, Jimmy Hartin, Kevin Emery, Gary Chapman
Employees Present: Jessica Wyman, Kevin Black, Shawn Mitchell, Phillip Cook & Jessica Seavey
Residents/Others Present: N/A

2. **Action on prior meeting minutes including December 17,2024**

Motion to approve the minutes from 12/17/2024 as presented.

Motion: Kevin Emery Second Jimmy Hartin Vote: Unanimous

3. **Review of the Treasurer's Warrants** – All warrants were reviewed and signed.
4. **Building Permit Applications:** There are none to consider at this time.
5. **Tax Abatements/Supplements:** There are none at this time.

6. **Appointments/New Hires/Open Positions:**

The board needed to sign Carrie Falloon's appointment sheet approved at the prior month's meeting. It is dated for December to reflect when the vote took place.

The Board of Assessment Review has a new vacancy as Dennis Green resigned last month. Since he was a regular member (vs an alternate) Felice recommends Crystal Cail to be moved from an alternate to a regular member and leave an alternate position as the vacancy. Out of the two alternates, Crystal did attend the training, so that makes the most sense. She does not have any recommendations to fill the vacancy currently.

Motion to appoint Crystal Cail as a regular member of the Board of Assessment Review (formerly an alternate)

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevn Emery Vote: Unanimous.

Felice has two recommendations for Hire. The first is Jessica Seavey to fill Jessi's position as Administrative Assistant. The Other is William Hemenway to join the Fire Department.

Motion to hire Jessica Seavey as Administrative Assistant.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevn Emery Vote: Unanimous.

Motion to hire William Hemenway for the Fire Department.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevn Emery Vote: Unanimous.

7. **Contracts and Agreements:**

- They are still working on the Recreation Collaboration agreement with Milo. As of today, that is not ready to be signed yet. Crystal has finished writing the Bi laws for the Recreation Committee.
- As of December 31st, our Fire Protection Agreement with Lake View Plantation has expired. They have been working towards reaching an agreement to renew; however, the time frame the agreement lands in poses a problem for Lake View as

they too vote annually to only spend ¼ of their budget in the following year prior to town meeting, and we have a 50% increase in the price. They are not able to commit to that until approved by their voters and have been recommended by MMA Legal to extend their contract, so that they do not go unprotected. They drafted an extension, and they subsequently agreed to additional e-mailed terms. Felice enclosed copies for the board to review. They are requesting the Brownville Board sign the extension as well.

Motion to sign the Fire Protection Contract Extension for Lake View Plantation through April 1, 2025 with the additional agreed upon terms the Town Manager outlined in the email dated January 9, 2025.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevn Emery Vote: Unanimous.

8. Department/Project Updates:

- **Underpass Project:** They are working through pay requisitions and additional drawdown of HUD funds to get all the work completed to date paid for. As part of that, they also needed those up-to-date numbers for legal to address the claim with surety. The estimated impact to the town is just under \$183,000 including the additional cost for legal, engineering, signage and emergency stabilization. Most of that has been repaid to the town from the project grant.
- **Lakeview Rd Project:** The Nature Conservancy and Wentworth Partners & Assoc (Engineering Firm) has moved forward with putting this project out to bid. They are planning a site walk with potential bidders for January 29th with bids due February 21st. Felice received notification from DOT that one of their awarded applicants for the 2024 Stream Crossing Grant had declined the funds, and the town of Brownville's application was the next highest scoring; therefore \$200,000.00 is available for this project if the Town chooses to accept it. It does require a \$5,000.00 match from the Town. This is a \$1.25M project being funded otherwise through NOAA and The Nature Conservancy. The award letter was reviewed, and we could deal with the matching funds in several ways but it can be decided later.

Motion to authorize the Town Manager to execute the necessary documents to accept the DOT award of \$200,000 to be used for the Lake View Rd. Stream crossing project.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevn Emery Vote: Unanimous.

- **Spencer Rd Project:** Rick, Shawn, and Felice met with Randy from Dirigo Engineering on December 18th to discuss moving forward. They are not required to put this back out to bid with the type of funding they have. They are talking with local contractors to see if they would be willing to work with the town on this project and give them a price on doing the larger scale tasks that the town's equipment can't handle to hopefully keep this project within the budget they have through DOT grant funds.
- **Junction Fire Station Expansion Project:** Shawn, Kevin and Felice met with Randy from Dirigo Engineering on January 3rd to go over proposed project needs and possible design options. Randy will be providing the Town with engineered cost estimate options to go along with our Congressionally

Directed Spending application that will need to be submitted in the coming months.

ADMIN:

- The 2025 budget report was given to the board members. No questions.
- The Auditors will be in the town office from February 4th through the 6th.
- The Server is on order and will likely be installed the week after the auditors are there. The office may have to shut down for a couple of hours due to the changeover, but they will post a notice if that is the case.
- There are two appeals to the Board of Assessment Review that are coming up. One of them is on Jan 22nd and the other is Feb 10th
- Felice has brought copies of the School Referendum Warrant that the board needs to sign for the special election that is needed next month to vote on withdrawal from the AOS. Every town in both districts have to go thru this process.

Motion to sign the School Referendum Warrants for special election regarding MSAD #41 withdrawal from the AOS.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

Public Safety:

- Total of 41 calls in December: 8 Fire and 33 EMS
- We have applied for a grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund for a trailer and skid unit to assist with wildland firefighting. The Appalachian Mountain Club has pledged \$7000.00 towards this project.
- The department was awarded the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant from Maine State Forestry. It's a 50/50 grant, and they will be using the funds towards some foam, forestry hose, and nozzles. The match is within the Fire budget.
- Engine 3 hit a deer going to a call. There was minimum damage. The mud flaps were broken.
- Shawn is asking the board if they would agree to get into an agreement with Central Maine Highlands Fire/EMS District #1 for backup ambulance coverage. Howland will only come to Brownville if requested by the department when no other ambulances are available. This is not for primary coverage as Three Rivers is our primary and they are not always staffed, or they could be out on another call. If Northern Light is also busy, and dispatch has gone through all their options, that would be when CMHFED is called. Shawn does recommend getting into an agreement with them, he is just unsure of how to budget for this. Northern Light has been talking about possibly charging towns a per capita rate. Brownville's would be \$17/pp. Shawn would just like an okay from the board to call CMHFED if there are no other Ambulances available, while we work on a possible agreement. The Board agreed to allow it at this time knowing that we could receive bills from CMHFED if collections from patient insurance etc are exhausted after 90 days.

Code and Health

- While working through an inquiry about classification of land in a shoreland zoning area, Shawn discovered that the town's newly updated shoreland zoning map is incorrect. When reviewing the draft, there were errors that were not picked up on and will need to be corrected. This is going to have to go through a public hearing with the Planning Board and get updated from there.
- While working through drafting of some new ordinances that likely include land use, we discovered that the land use ordinances need to be in line with the

Comprehensive Plan (under state statute), which is 20 years old, out of compliance and requires an update. The town has carried forward a small amount of funds for many years with the hope that they could work on the plan themselves with some assistance from Lorna; however, she has not had available time to contribute to that, and neither has anyone else. Many municipalities contract with outside entities such as Eastern Maine Development Corporation to complete/update their plans. Felice reached out with them to get a quote, and it came back at \$38,500. They stated that they do provide technical assistance for free (resources etc) if we do all the writing. Felice asked if it was possible for us to have some assistance from EMDC while we do other parts, and they said they really don't piece it out that way, but we could take the lead now and get as much done as possible and bring it to them in the fall for review, refine and complete under a contract/agreement. We'd like to explore some other options for consultants. Monson had theirs done for \$8,000 recently.

Animal Control: Nothing new to report.

Public Works: The crew have been quiet with the normal maintenance, plowing, and minor breakdowns.

Parks and Rec: The joint Recreation Director position was filled at the first of the year by Crystal Cail. The Milo Manager, Crystal, and Jason Mills, The Athletic Director for MSAD 41, and Felice met last week to move forward on building the Penquis Recreation Committee. Crystal plans to create notices soliciting community members interested in serving on that Committee. They are hoping to have some recommendations for both Boards at the February monthly meeting.

Water/Sewer: Phil had an appointment to take the new truck to Messer in Westbrook on Monday to get the crane looked at. While coming home from that appointment he was in a minor traffic accident. There is minor damage to the front of the truck. It is still drivable, but the bumper and the grill were damaged.

- Felice and Phil met with Bob from Whitten's 2-way last week about requirements for updating the PC at the treatment plant. This is the last one in the fleet to be replaced because of the customized system monitoring software that is needed on it. Currently they are running off two programs, one monitors and the other generates urgent notifications when the system needs immediate attention. Both programs are believed to not be compatible with Windows 11 without an upgrade as well. There is a different program that performs both functions and seems to be slightly more user-friendly. The upfront costs are a bit higher, but with minimal annual maintenance fees of \$800, the cost of upgrades in the future would be covered going forward. Either program requires many additional hours of work being set up by a programmer. As a rough idea, to upgrade the old systems to be compatible with Windows 11, they would be looking at a cost of \$5-7k for the programs with an additional \$7-8k for customized programming. To upgrade to a single system that has annual fees that covers upgrades would be about \$8K for the program and an additional \$7-8k for customized programming for a total difference of \$1-3k. With option 1 they would likely repeat the need to invest greater amounts years down the road when yet another upgrade is needed. They feel that it only makes sense to save themselves the hassle and larger fees going forward and switch to one system with annual maintenance fees and spend the extra \$1-3k now. With that being said, it is not in the budget to have this done, and the PC functions just fine as it is today; however it is not under any warranty at this time and if it goes down, they would be scrambling

to install the backed-up version of their program onto an older machine that isn't running Windows 11. This is all feasible, but obviously not ideal. At the same time, the radio unit that works with this system is like 20+ years old. Again it works fine but could be upgraded at the same time as the rest of the system to one that can be worked on remotely but the technicians (saving travel costs going forward), Another piece of this is that Whitten's 2 Way is about 3-6 months out before they can start on this project if they get the go ahead from the town. It will likely take them a couple months to customize the programs for the systems. Something is going to have to be upgraded at some point when they don't want to support it anymore, so we are just trying to plan ahead so we are not in an emergent situation down the road. Felice and Phil are proposing to see where the audit leaves us in the reserves and to monitor the annual budget well and possibly come back to the board to take from Water/Sewer reserves if needed. At this point we just want them to be aware of the need and what they are doing to address it. They can also look for possible Grant opportunities that might help with the cost.

Penquis Solid Waste: There have been some changes to the disposal fees at the transfer station. Last month it was voted to charge \$20 for any mattress or boxspring regardless of whether it has been stripped or not. They see more foam mattresses now, and it costs just as much money to get rid of those as any other mattress. They have also updated the stuffed furniture fees to be by section. So, if there is a couch in multiple pieces you will be charged \$5 per section. If the couch has a sleeper, you will be charged for the mattress and for a piece of stuffed furniture.

9. Open Session: Randy McMahon would like to know if "no trespassing" could be posted along the snowmobile trail that runs on our property off High Street, where it abuts his land. He has been having issues with snowmobilers stopping on the trail and walking across to his property and disturbing the deer.

The board does not want to be involved and does not want to post that land.

10. Set Next Meeting – Next regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

11. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 7:44PM

Motion: Shelly Ekholm

Second: Kevn Emery

Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Wyman, Board Secretary


Byron Weymouth, Selectboard Chair


Shelly Ekholm


Kevin Emery

James Hartin


Gary Chapman

