

MINUTES  
TOWN OF TOPSHAM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
July 20, 2017 - 7:00 p.m.

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MEMBERS PRESENT: David Douglass  
Marie Brilliant  
Ruth Lyons  
William Thompson  
Roland Tufts

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: All present

STAFF PRESENT: Richard Roedner, Town Manager

A meeting of the Topsham Board of Selectmen was held on Thursday, July 20, 2017 in the Donald A. Russell Meeting Room, at the Municipal Building, 100 Main Street, Topsham, Maine.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Douglass called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL**

All present were invited to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. The recording secretary took the roll call and noted that all Selectmen were present.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

As most of you are no doubt aware, this is the last full week that we can call Brian Stockdale our Fire Chief. His last day with us will be next Wednesday, the 26th. He starts as Lewiston's Fire Chief on Thursday the 27th. I have had the pleasure of working with Brian for seven years, first as a co-worker, and then as Town Manager. He has been a great asset to the community, to the Fire Department, and to me. I think Lewiston has made a great decision to offer the position to Brian, and I think Brian has made an absolute awful decision in accepting! Brian, you will be missed, and congratulations.

The summer reading program at the Topsham Library is underway. Make sure you stop by to find out how you can participate.

If you find yourself driving, or walking, on Main Street, you will notice a new feature at the Wilson St. intersection. A pedestrian actuated walk signal is now installed and operational. This illuminating device will provide warning to drivers that pedestrians are crossing. They have proven effective across the country, and the other one's we have in Topsham have been shown to help make crossing easier and safer. Thank you Public Works for securing this device from DOT, and working on the installation.

Speaking of pedestrian and bicyclists, there will be a public forum in Topsham during September to discuss hazardous crossings, or problems with pedestrian/bicyclist access around Town. The details are still being worked out, so stay tuned.

There have been a lot questions about road striping. No, the budget was not cut. No, we have not given up on painting the stripes. Our problem this year has been weather, which has caused delays as our contractor has had to jump around the state to find places to stripe that are dry enough. The contractor is back in the area and is working at finishing up the striping as soon as possible.

Mark your calendars! October 19-23 will be our kick-off public spectacle for the Comprehensive Plan. There will be five days of events, meetings and time for residents to stop by the old fire station and give their input into the future of Topsham. Details are being developed now, so stay tuned and start thinking about your community, its present and its future – “Find, Meet, Plan....Your Topsham”

Resident Ruth Bean will be presented the Boston Post Cane as Topsham’s oldest citizen. Ms. Bean is 100 years of age. It was noted there is a plaque in the town office lobby listing former recipients.

### **Fire Chief Stockdale Honored**

Chairman Douglass called Chief Stockdale to the podium and presented him with a plaque honoring him for his tenure as Topsham’s Fire Chief. Chief Stockdale received a standing ovation from those in attendance.

## **BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Update From the History Committee** – Ralph Williams, Chairman of the History Committee and Town Historian presented an update of the inventory being done to protect precious artifacts of the past. The committee is responsible for the displays in the town office lobby. The group currently meets every Thursday at 1:30 p.m. at the town office and would welcome any interested citizens participation. Mr. Williams said there is a link to the History Committee through the library site.

Selectman Lyons inquired what was happening to protect the parts of the old fire truck engine currently located in Bath. Mr. Williams said the parts have been moved inside along with an old buckboard seat and hoses.

**Update from the Brunswick-Topsham Water District** Yvette Meunier and Stu Kay gave the Water District’s annual review before the Board. The district currently serves approximately 7,100 customers. Mr. Kay said work is in progress researching the most economical way to build a much needed new treatment plant, administration offices and a maintenance area. The current building housing the operation was built in 1971 and more space is needed. Two engineering firms are looking at the best options for the project.

**Update From the Topsham Sewer District** Mark Ponziani and Chris LeClerc presented an update of work accomplished and ongoing at the Sewer District.

Mr. Ponziani said he has been with the District for 35 years as serves as Trustee. The District has worked with several businesses this year including:

- Hancock Lobster
- Buffalo Wild Wings
- The Highlands – Mountain Road
- Tucker Ford
- SAD 75

Mr. Ponziani noted that Paul Rossignol has resigned and will be missed. He expressed appreciation for the work Kevin Obery, an engineer with Wright-Pierce, does with the District and introduced Chris LeClerc, saying Mr. LeClerc is a great trustee and a valuable asset to the District.

Mr. LeClerc presented some financial figures, saying the rate has increased from \$57.20 to \$63.00 per thousand cubic feet. The treatment contract with Brunswick will expire in 2023 and the District is working with Brunswick in consideration of the renewal contract.

**Update from the Planning Department on the Paper Street Inventory in Preparation for the September 2017 Disposition Deadline** - Town Planner, Rod Melanson, included information regarding paper streets in the Board package. The Board of Selectmen considered the paper streets in 1997 and accepted 36 paper streets, not having to take any action on doing anything with them for the next 20 years. The term expires this year and the Planning Department is seeking advice from the Board as to which streets to keep and which to let go.

It was noted that in 1997 the State required all municipalities to take action on their paper streets (the right-of-ways outlined in subdivision plans that were never constructed but are still owned by the Town. Topsham chose to extend their rights on most of the paper streets [36 of them] for a 20-year time period.) A report was issued showing each street mapped using GIS. The length of each street was calculated and rough estimates made as to whether there might be existing water or sewer infrastructure in the street area, and streets bordering open spaces were recorded. The 36 streets range from paved roadways, private driveways, unofficial trails, and completely undeveloped land.

The Planner's memo dated July 10, 2017, and filed with these minutes, states that the Planning Office and Assessing Office recommends a short-term and long-term process to comply with Maine Statute MRS Title 23, Section 3032 for the Town to decide upon extending the "unknown paper street rights."

#### Short-Term (Pre-September 2017)

1. Selectboard reviews inventory report of paper street prior to September 2017
  - a. Confirm 1997 Paper Street Inventory List
    - i. Attach report (research conducted by Bowdoin College Fellow with guidance from Assessing and Planning Office).

#### Long-Term

1. Develop a process to review each unknown paper street
  - a. Map each paper street and create digital parcel (Done)
  - b. Review by Conservation Committee/Planning Board/Staff/Town Attorney (when necessary)

- c. Public Engagement Plan (through Board reviews)
- 2. Create a final recommendation report
  - a. Include all recommendations for retainage
  - b. Include all recommendations for disposal

Chairman Douglass asked if the Board wanted to push this down the road for another 20 years and do nothing or undertake a long process and look at the streets to determine which are valuable and which are not.

The Town Manager explained the process the State set up to clear the title of all the old paper streets. He said after consideration he would like to suggest the Board hang onto the streets with a plan attached to look at on an annual basis and come to an agreement whether we should maintain whatever rights we may have through legal research or decided to let certain streets go. The street abandonment process would have to be looked into. Under the law, if the Town abandons a road, it would go to the abutters. Questions arose regarding how to tax, and how to handle if not paid and the street comes back to the Town. Selectman Lyons said she would like to see a public hearing on these streets identified for abandonment so abutters would be aware of what the Town is planning to do. She added that people have certain rights to the land, i.e., they have used it for 20 years with no objections from anyone, so who owns it? Selectmen Tufts suggested that the Town not spend money on research until we know how much it will cost. He said perhaps we need to do research on one street to determine the cost, and/or check what other towns are doing. Mr. Melanson, Town Planner, agreed to gather information and come back before the Board at a future meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Chairman Douglass recognized the fact that Mt. Ararat won the State of Maine Cal Ripken Baseball Tournament. 10-year olds from Topsham, Harpswell, Bowdoin, Bowdoinham and Richmond. Three of the players: Stan Spooner, Aaron Paul and Dash Farrell played for Topsham.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Letter of resignation from Paul Rossignol.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** – Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Thompson, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To add Item 17-64 **CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION TO APPOINT MIKE LABBE AS ACTING HEALTH OFFICER AND FIRE WARDEN**

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Selectmen’s Meeting of June 15, 2017**

Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Thompson, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To approve the minutes of the regular Selectmen’s meeting of June 15, 2017 as written.

**2. Approval of the minutes of the Special Selectmen's Meeting of June 26, 2017**

Motion was made by Selectman Thompson, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To approve the minutes of the Special Selectmen's Meeting of June 26, 2017.

**PUBLIC HEARING** – None noted.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** – None noted.

**OLD BUSINESS** - None noted.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**17-60 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN A LAND FOR MAINES FUTURE PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR THE "DIRENZO" PARCEL AT HEAD OF TIDE PARK**

The Town Planner referenced his memo dated July 11, 2017 explaining the process of the acquisition of the Direnzo property from Topsham Development, Inc. (filed with these minutes) This was discussed at the June Board meeting. He stated the paperwork is now completed.

Following discuss, motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Lyons, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

That the Town Manager be authorized to sign the Land for Maine's Future Fund Project Agreement for the Direnzo Property for the Head of Tide Park.

**17-61 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION ON POLICE DEPARTMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF BIDS FOR THE PURCHASE OF THREE CRUISERS**

Police Lt. Fred Dunn reviewed the bids received for the purchase of three police cruisers from Yankee Ford, Casco Bay Ford and Wiscasset Ford.

Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Tufts, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To accept the bid from Yankee Ford not to exceed \$85,828.

**17-62 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION ON THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SUBMITTING A GRANT REQUEST FOR A BALLISTIC VEST FOR K-9 JOBE**

Police Chief Chris Lewis explained that the Police Department would like to submit a grant request for a ballistic vest for K-9 Jobe. The grant does not require any matching funds.

Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Tufts, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To authorize the Police Department to submit a Grant Request for a ballistic vest for K-9 Jobe.

**17-64 CONSIDERATION AND ANY APPROPRIATE ACTION TO APPOINT MIKE LABBE AS ACTING HEALTH OFFICER AND FIRE WARDEN**

Motion was made by Chairman Douglass, seconded by Selectman Thompson, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To appoint EMS Director Mike Labbe as Acting Health Officer and Fire Warden.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – None to consider

**ADJOURN**

Motion was made, seconded, and it was unanimously

**VOTED**

To adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Patty Williams, Recording Secretary