

# GREENWOOD SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES

June 4, 2024 – 5:00 pm

**Item 1:** Call Meeting to Order - Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Roll Call: Chair Amy Chapman, Selectman Norman A. Milliard, Selectman Robert Oickle, Fire Chief Ken Cole, Planning Board member John Kwoka, and Town Manager Kim Sparks.

**Item 2:** Pledge of Allegiance

**Item 3:** Review and approve:

**Expenditure Warrant # 49 - \$ 16,913.71**, Covering period May 22 – May 28, 2024

**Expenditure Warrant # 50 - \$ 39,451.56**, Covering period May 29 – June 4, 2024

The Board reviewed the warrants.

Selectman Milliard motioned and Selectman Oickle seconded to approve Warrant # 49 and Warrant # 50 as presented. Vote: 3-0. Motion passes and Warrants are approved.

**Item 4:** Review and approve minutes of May 21, 2024

The Board reviewed the minutes of May 21, 2024.

Selectman Oickle motioned and Selectman Milliard seconded to approve the minutes as read. Vote: 3-0. Minutes of May 21, 2024 are approved.

**Item 5:** Comments from the Public - None

A. Selectmen contacted outside of meeting – No contact

**Item 6:** Update from Fire Chief Ken Cole on proposed OSHA Fire Brigade regulations

Ken thanked the Board for having him tonight. Ken asked when the new Impact Fee Ordinance will go into effect. Kim stated that it goes into effect July 1, 2024.

Kim asked Ken if he had any information on how these proposed OSHA regulations would impact our Department. Ken stated that what OSHA is proposing is with these unfunded mandates, with this new Fire Brigade law, no one in the industry isn't arguing that it is safety minded or oriented. Ken stated that these safety measures that they are proposing are all very welcome in the industry. Ken stated with that being said, it is not realistic or reality, and it appears that their study doesn't include the scope of impact that it will have financially on our departments. Ken explained that over 90% of the fire departments nationwide are volunteer departments and these regulations would have a great impact. Ken stated that they are thinking just the larger communities in Maine would be able to implement these regulations. Ken stated his concerns with our Town being able to fund these proposed changes and we would simply have to close the Fire Department. Ken explained that if the smaller departments are forced to shut down, there would be more work for the larger departments, and our property owners would see an increase in their homeowner's insurance costs.

Ken stated they understand that this proposal is geared to making things better and safer. Ken stated that in reality it is not possible to have us implement them. Ken explained that at their last NOMA (Northern Oxford Mutual Aid – 11 Towns) meeting we all went over the proposal. Ken explained that they drafted a letter in response to this to the OSHA Standards Division to let them know how this would impact them. Ken stated that the people at home do not understand that they are at risk of losing their local fire and rescue services and their homeowners insurance will be increasing.

Ken stated he had several quick points that he would like to make on how this would impact us. Ken stated he was going to bring a copy of the proposal to the board but the document was over 600 pages. Kim stated that she was going to print it out as well and opted to not print it as it was over 600 pages.

#### Program Impacts:

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) needs to be replaced every 10 years at a cost of \$ 3,000 per set. Ken stated that Joelle just received a set that was \$5,600;

Maintenance of Items, we currently clean the proposal has us throwing it away;

Separate but adjoining room for cleaning apparatus – a decontamination room to maintain and store PPE from other living quarters;

EMS – required more PPE than currently using;

Fire apparatus would need to be placed every 20 years regardless of its working condition; (Ken stated that none of our current 4 trucks would meet this requirement)

Firefighters with Firefighter 1 or Firefighter 2 certificates would only be allowed to do what they are currently certified to do according to BLS however anyone in a Fire Officer role would need to have Firefighter 1 or Firefighter 2 plus Chief Officer Level 1, 2, 3, and 4 would be required. Training would entail over 200 hours to complete level 1-4.; (Ken stated that would be like going back to college)

Yearly ERP Emergency Response Plans would be required to be completed yearly at an estimated cost of \$ 5,000 per year;

Annual physical based on level of response at a cost of \$ 500 per firefighter. SCBA level firefighters require a stricter medical evaluation; (Ken stated that this would make him ineligible to be a firefighter)

All Firefighters would need to have health and fitness programs available to them along with a fitness room.

#### Financial Impacts:

Ken stated that the president of the State of Maine Federation of Firefighters, Ken Desmond worked on listing out the financial impacts this proposal would have.

*From Ken Desmond: Maine firefighters will not be able to continue, based on currently salary and benefit rates in this proposal , it would cost a small town at least \$ 700,000 annually for a fire chief, six firefighters, and 1 administrative operator with full-time employment. It is estimated that it would cost \$ 600,000 to add onto existing buildings to meet the proposal.*

*Some firefighters will physically be unable to continue being firefighters. Some firefighters will not be able to complete the required training due to time constraints. Some firefighters would simply retire from the service. This proposal would significantly change the fire service as we know it. Many small fire departments will be forced to close their doors. Not all of the proposed regulations will be implemented immediately. Please keep your municipal officials updated on this proposal as it will impact your Fire Departments, Municipal Budgets and citizens.*

Ken stated that there is no way that our tax-payers could afford this or even would vote for it. Ken stated that the department works really hard to meet all of the State Department of Labor and OSHA standards every year as they all understand the importance of these regulations for everyone's safety.

Selectman Milliard stated that they have extended their public comment to June 21<sup>st</sup> and asked if we have any indication as to when OSHA is going to implement this new plan. Ken answered no, that they have until the 21<sup>st</sup> and they are hoping for another extension. Chair Chapman stated that OSHA has a laser focus on employee safety and the health of the firefighters. Chair Chapman stated that there should be studies done to see how many people will die in these small towns if there isn't a fire department. Ken stated that he agrees that he wants his firefighters to be safe. Selectman Oickle asked if OSHA cares what it will cost as that is not their role. Selectman Oickle stated that everything that they are suggesting does make sense but it might not make sense financially. Selectman Oickle stated that if it doesn't get funded at the federal level then it is not going to happen. Ken stated that even if the funding was there, he isn't sure that small towns could still make it work. Selectman Oickle stated that the availability of staffing is an obvious issue. Ken stated that he has no idea what the timeline is for them to implement this. Selectman Oickle stated that he saw a newsclip about this and thought they said it would be 10 years but even 20 years wouldn't work if we don't have the money to do it. Chair Chapman stated that we would have to replace our entire fleet as everything we currently own is over 20 years old. Ken stated that the cost would be \$ 750,000 times four. Selectman Oickle stated that would be great if the federal government paid for that. Selectman Oickle stated that we have 10 years to do it, they are going to give us the money, and Ken could manage that. Chair Chapman answered yes and if they give us the money. Selectman Oickle stated that this is not realistic with how it is put out there but he doesn't think that OSHA cares. Selectman Oickle explained that OSHA puts out the regulations and if no one funds it then it isn't going to happen. Selectman Oickle stated that they are not going to shut down fire departments as that doesn't make any sense. Selectman Milliard stated that the Board could draft a response and have it submitted by the 21<sup>st</sup> of June. Selectman Milliard stated that if we do not have an implementation date of when this proposal will be mandated then he would say that OSHA and all of their bureaucrats are waiting to see what kind of pushback they get. Ken stated that each department must contribute to the public comment with the understanding that all of these proposed regulations are for the health and safety of our firefighters but the proposed regulations are drastic and unrealistic within a 24-month timeframe.

Selectman Oickle asked if there was someone at the State level that is responding to this. Ken explained that Ken Desmond of the State of Maine, Federation of Firefighters has submitted a letter. Ken stated that Susan Collins, Jared Golden, and Angus King are all aware of this proposal. The Board asked Ken to keep them updated on any new information.

**Item 7:** Review and discuss proposal from Ben Bruno, of Innovative Graphics Design regarding maintaining Town website. <https://www.innovativegraphicsdesign.com/>

The Board reviewed the proposal and agreed to the next step. Kim stated that she would let Ben know and would expect that he would have a contract for them to review at their next meeting.

**Item 8:** Review and discuss draft Quit Claim Deed for Isaac Zaworski

The Board reviewed the draft deed and asked to have the last sentence removed. Kim stated that she would have that done and send it to Mr. Zaworski for his review.

**Item 9:** Review and discuss MMA Proposed Slate of Nominees for 2025 Executive Committee

The ballot that was submitted with the packet appears to be only for one candidate. The Board asked if Kim could contact MMA to get the missing ballots. Kim will contact MMA and bring this back to the Board.

**Item 10:** Review and discuss MMA Guidance on Public Comment at Board Meetings

Kim gave the Board a draft copy of the MMA Guidance on Public Comment at Board Meetings. It was agreed that the Board would review this and we will table discussion until their next meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Item 11:** Discuss appointments of 2 General Assembly members for AVCOG

Kim stated that she had reached out to Marie Bartlett as the Board had suggested. Marie stated that she would love to be a member with AVCOG but could only do it if the meetings were zoomed as she is not able to travel to Auburn. Kim stated that she would reach out to AVCOG to find out if the meetings are zoomed and will let the Board know at their next meeting.

**Item 12:** Richard Fahey is asking if the Town is interested in purchasing his property on Howe Hill Road. Map U07-004 Property is near Dunham Park and at the base of Howe Hill.

Kim explained that Mr. Fahey reached out to her to ask the Board if they would be interested in purchasing his property on Howe Hill Road. Mr. Fahey thought maybe the Town would be interested in purchasing this to install a retaining pond to catch all of the water that comes down Howe Hill Road. Kim stated that the property doesn't abut the Town owned Dunham Park but it is one lot up from the property line. The Board reviewed the tax map and all agreed that they were not interested in purchasing this property. They Board thanked Mr. Fahey for thinking of the Town.

**Item 13:** Comments from the Public

Planning Board member, John Kwoka attended. John explained that they had two after the fact Shoreland Zone applications to review at the Planning Board meeting last night. John stated that they found out from Joelle that people are allowed to install a foundation before getting a building permit. John stated that the property owner had a good contractor who installed the foundation the same size as what was there in the same location. John stated his concerns if this had not been the case. John stated if a foundation had been installed that was too large, the Planning Board would have not allowed that and ordered it to be removed.

John stated that the Planning Board would like to propose that our codes require a permit for all foundations. Kim stated that she will discuss this with Joelle and get the wording amended for a future Town Meeting vote.

John stated that he feels that we need to have a permit process for installing wells. He explained that a resident in the shoreland zone needed to have a well installed. He stated that the well company needed a small road to be installed so they could access the location of where the well could go. He explained that the road was installed along with a retaining wall all without any permits. He stated that if the person was required to get a permit for the well, then all of this would have been explained and avoided. Chair Chapman agreed that this would have saved a lot of work if a permit was required. Kim stated that she would be glad to research this and bring some options to the Board.

**Item 14: Meetings and Events**

June 6<sup>th</sup> – Annual Fire Hose Testing, Legion Hall 9am till completed  
June 11<sup>th</sup> – Election Day, 8 am – 8 pm, GTO  
June 17<sup>th</sup> – Planning Board Meeting, 5:30 pm GTO  
June 18<sup>th</sup> – Selectmen’s Meeting, 5:00 pm GTO  
June 19<sup>th</sup> – Juneteenth – Town Office is closed  
July 1<sup>st</sup> – Planning Board Meeting, 5:30pm GTO  
July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Conservation Committee Meeting, 10:00 am GTO  
July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Selectmen’s Meeting, 5:00pm GTO  
July 15<sup>th</sup> – Planning Board Meeting, 5:30pm GTO  
July 16<sup>th</sup> – Selectmen’s Meeting, 5:00pm GTO

**Item 15:** Adjourn - Having no further business, Selectman Oickle motioned and Selectman Milliard seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 pm. Vote: 3-0. Meeting is adjourned.