

# GREENWOOD SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2023

5:00 pm

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

Roll Call: Chair Amy Chapman, Selectman Norman A. Milliard, Selectman Robert Oickle, and Town Manager, Kim Sparks.

**Item 2:** Pledge of Allegiance

**Item 3:** Review and approve:

**Expenditure Warrant # 18 - \$ 25,120.24**, Covering period Oct. 24 - Oct. 30, 2023

**Expenditure Warrant # 19 - \$ 24,088.01** Covering period Oct. 31, – Nov. 6, 2023

**Expenditure Warrant # 20 - \$ 140,991.58** Covering period Nov. 7 – Nov. 13, 2023  
**Includes Voucher # 564 payable to MSAD 44 in the amount of \$ 104,976.00**

The Board reviewed Warrant # 18, Warrant # 19, and Warrant # 20.

Selectman Milliard motioned and Selectman Oickle seconded to approve Warrant # 18, Warrant # 19, and Warrant # 20. Vote: 3-0. Warrants are approved.

**Item 4:** Review and approve minutes of October 24, 2023

The Board reviewed the minutes of October 24, 2023

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

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

A. Selectmen contacted outside of meeting - No contact

**Item 6:** Discussion with Monica Mann regarding Green Burials

Monica Mann and Emily Ecker from Woodstock attended to give us an update on green burials. Monica asked if Greenwood would consider allowing green burials in our cemeteries and asked if we had any cemetery ordinances. Kim stated that Greenwood doesn't have cemetery ordinances or guidelines. Monica stated that by green burials she meant a burial that would not have a vault, no metal casket, no embalming, and no big monument markers. Monica explained that green burials are coming about because of a movement to be laid to rest simply with a biodegradable wooden or cardboard casket with a simple flagstone as a marker. Monica asked if the Selectmen would allow green burials if there is space. Chair Chapman asked if they had one cemetery in mind or are they just asking in general if we would allow it. Monica stated that wherever there was space available in any of the cemeteries, would you allow green burials.

Chair Chapman asked if they would be asking to use a particular area of a cemetery. Monica explained that the green burial grave is just three feet deep as that is where all of the organic activity takes place. Monica stated that they are still learning about the proximities to neighboring graves. Emily stated that she had some figures but needed to find them.

Selectman Milliard stated that he knew that this topic was discussed recently in the Town of Woodstock and asked if they had made any decisions that green burials needed to be in a certain area of a cemetery or is it open to any public cemetery in Woodstock. Emily explained that Woodstock suggested to set rules when placed adjacent to existing plots and that no decisions were made as they have very strict regulations. Monica stated that Woodstock has a cemetery committee that would have to review their regulations and possibly make an amendment to them if they decide to allow green burials. Selectman Milliard asked if Woodstock's current regulations do not allow for green burials. Emily explained that the regulations do not specifically say that green burials are not allowed but their regulations required a sealed lined box. Monica stated that they looked at a piece of land in Woodstock but she thought it was a bit inhospitable to be used for graves. Chair Chapman asked if Greenwood had any regulations that say what you have to be buried in. Kim stated that we do not have any ordinances or regulations on burials. Monica stated that it is up to the Town to decide what regulations they want in the Town cemeteries. Monica asked if there are requirements that only Town residents can purchase plots in Town. Kim stated that there are no residential requirements to purchase plots in Greenwood. Kim explained that there are only a few lots available to purchase in the Hick's Cemetery. Monica suggested that the Town seek another location for a cemetery site for our residents of Greenwood. Monica explained that they are going to their neighboring towns to see if green burials are allowed.

Emily explained that their group is working to find out as much as they can about green burials. She explained that one in their group just met with Thibault Funeral Home in Rumford and Bob and Lida Isles will be meeting with Chandler Funeral Home to discuss green burials. Selectman Milliard asked if the process of cremation falls under green burials. Chair Chapman stated that she was surprised to hear that cremation is not very energy friendly. Monica stated that cremation causes a huge carbon footprint. Emily stated that there is a water cremation that is more energy efficient but there is only one in the State of Maine, and it is on the coast.

Monica stated that some people ask if animals will dig up the remains. Emily stated that the animals can't smell anything that is three feet underground. Monica explained that the three feet of earth will be placed on the grave and will settle overtime. Monica explained that none of the dirt will be taken away, that whatever is dug out will be put back. Chair Chapman stated that it sounded like a good idea. Selectman Oickle asked Kim if someone purchased a plot in Greenwood and wanted a green burial if that could happen. Kim answered yes. Selectman Oickle stated that he went to the workshop and he has talked with Monica quite a bit on this subject. Selectman Oickle stated that the potential downside for the Town is that we are one of the very few Towns that allow green burials in this area. Selectman Oickle stated that he knows

there are very few cemetery plots available in Greenwood and if the word got out those remaining plots could be purchased for green burials. Selectmen Oickle asked if we should consider putting a restriction on the remaining lots to be for Greenwood residents. Monica asked what the Town will do for the citizens when this cemetery is full.

Monica stated that they have heard this many times that places are almost full and that the Town should try to find some more land for more cemetery plots. Selectman Oickle stated that he did speak with Sue Nusbaum about the Cummings Cemetery and she stated that she would be fine with allowing a few more burials in that cemetery. Selectman Oickle stated that it is now a Town Cemetery so there may be some space there but the issue is that we could very quickly run out of space. Chair Chapman stated that hopefully or area Towns will talk this up and make this available to their residents so Greenwood won't get overrun with requests. Emily stated that is their hope and why they are meeting with area Towns to start this discussion.

Selectman Oickle stated that Greenwood doesn't have a lot of encumbrances around burials in Greenwood and he is ok with that as folks should be allowed to do what they want. Selectman Oickle stated that as a board maybe they need to find more land for a cemetery. Monica stated that they are working at this one step at a time. Monica and Emily thanked the Board for their time.

**Item 7:** Discuss letter from Maine Review Service reminder of Compliance with Maine Tax Laws

Kim stated that she sent a copy of this letter to our Assessor, Paul Binette for his review. Kim stated that Paul assured her that the Town of Greenwood is in compliance with Maine Tax Laws.

**Item 8:** Greenwood Road update

Kim stated that All State has been back to fill the cracks and holes on the paved section and has told Richie to call them if more show up and they will be back. Kim updated the Board that Ben Shaw, from Gorrill Palmer is working with us to determine the condition of the newly paved section of the Greenwood Road. Kim stated that Ron Simbari from All States is going to be dropping of a contract packet to the Town Office that will show what the asphalt mix was that they used on the Greenwood Road. Kim explained that she will send a copy of this packet to Ben Shaw for his review and will be in hopes from a final report from Ben within a few weeks. Kim also stated that Ron is requesting a meeting with the Board to discuss payment for the paving job. Selectman Milliard stated that the Board wouldn't meet with Ron until we received a report from Ben Shaw. Chair Chapman and Selectman Oickle agreed to not have a meeting with All States until we get the third party report from Gorrill Palmer. Kim agreed and said she would get the report to the Selectmen as soon as it came in.

**Item 9:** Update on Mahoosuc Broadband project

Kim updated the Board that Firstlight was successful in their grant application with Maine Connectivity Authority to build out fiber to unserved locations in our Mahoosuc region. Kim explained that Firstlight estimated that they would be working in Greenwood by 2026. Chair Chapman asked when Firstlight was going to be paid our ARPA funds. Kim explained that we will have to sign a contract with Firstlight and would expect that once that is signed, they would expect payment.

**Item 10:** Executive Session per 1 MRSA §405 (6) (A) Personnel Matters

Selectman Milliard motioned and Selectman Oickle seconded to enter into executive session per 1 MRSA §405 (6) (A) Personnel Matters at 5:35pm. Vote: 3-0.

Selectman Milliard motioned and Selectman Oickle seconded to come out of executive session per 1 MRSA §405 (6) (A) Personnel Matters at 5:53pm. Vote: 3-0.

No votes or decisions were made.

**Item 11:** Meetings and Events

Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> – G&W Meeting, after Selectmen’s Meeting, Woodstock Town Office

Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> & Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> – Closed - Thanksgiving

Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> – Selectmen’s Meeting, 5pm GTO – Joelle to give update

Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> – Planning Board Meeting, 5:30 pm GTO

Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> – Conservation Committee Meeting, 10 am GTO

Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> – Selectmen’s Meeting, 5pm GTO

Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Closed - Christmas

**Item 12:** Adjourn - Having no further business, Selectman Milliard motioned and Selectman Oickle seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:05pm. Vote 3-0. Meeting is adjourned.