

TOWN OF ACTON SELECT BOARD MEETING

January 15, 2025

6:00pm

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. WARRANTS/BILLS

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Norwood made a motion to approve the agenda for January 15, 2025; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - Tabled

5. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE

A. The Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, January 20, 2025 for the holiday.

B. Spoke with the EMA Director several times today and he wanted to share the following:

- He met with the Red Cross and the school has turned the town office as an independent shelter. This put us back to where they'll help cover the costs and will oversee it.
- The outstanding FEMA project has been completed.
- The RAVE program will be advertised; flyers will be placed on the website, distributed around town and handed out at the counter. The process is easy to use, either scan the bar code or go to the website and sign up with your cell phone number and address, and this will put you on the call list for emergencies only. The link is already on the EMA page.
- Currently there are two Warrant & Finance Alternate member positions open. There will be an interview next week for a potential new member next week.
- Zoning Board of Appeals – there will be a case coming forward soon, so members have been contacted for interest in being renewed on the Board. About half of them will be returning plus one new member will be appointed further down on the agenda.

6. LIASION UPDATE

McGurty: Municipal Finance, Warrant & Finance Committee, APAT – no update

Walsh: Transfer Station, Mary Grant Committee, Animal Control Officer – no update

Norwood: Fire Department, Recreation Committee, Conservation Forest Committee

- Fire Department – No update
- Rec Director - Met with the Rec Director and the basketball schedules should be out. The Rec Director also found out that there was a meeting for all area Rec Directors and is excited to start those and is in communication with Sanford regarding baseball season. The next Rec Committee meeting is January 27 th at 6 pm.
- Conservation Forest Committee had their meeting last night; the Town Administrator is working on responding to an email received from them.

Denekamp: School Department, Planning Board/Land Use, Cemetery Committee

- Attended the School Department's monthly meeting and the following budget meeting last Thursday. Budget process has been started. The next budget meeting will be January 23rd.
- The Planning Board has a site walk tomorrow (Jan 16th) on 34th street for an expansion. The Code office has contacted the individuals being fined and the fine letters have been mailed.
- Cemetery – Meeting on January 24th.

Winchell Jr.: Roads & Road Committee, Municipal Grounds

- Met with Road Commissioner and went over some of his budget. He will be readjusting some stuff. There will be another meeting to review changes.
- Talked with Mr. Ward as he is working on the Road Association's Article 43 and the the readjusted process; there were a couple small concerns.; Winchell agreed to go to their Road Association meeting to answer any questions. Town Administrator reminded Winchell that Article 43 funds would needed to be added to the budget. Winchell indicated that yes that too was discussed.

7. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

- A. Leslie Berlan, W & F Chair approached the Board to report that they had had their first budget meeting to go over Municipal Government on Monday the 13th; next meeting is scheduled for January 28th. Ms. Berlan asked the Town Administrator if the Social Services requests were available to review. Response: Received email requests was working with Mark Roy all day today but will get the information to Ms. Berlan by the end of the week.

Winchell asked if the Social Services will be coming before the Board. The Town Administrator replied that per McGurty's request and the Board's approval, letters were sent out requestion financials and cover letters. These have all been received and a spreadsheet has been produced to review but there was no decision from the Board as of yet whether they will need to appear in person.

The Town Administrator indicated it will be on next week's agenda regarding a decision on the matter.

8. OLD BUSINESS - None

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Appointments

Zoning Board appointments were presented; Bernard Broder for a 5-year term, Brandy Senecal for a 5-year term, Yoli Gallagher for a 4-year term and Lois Michaud for a 3-year term.

Winchell made a motion to approve the appointments as read; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Foreclosure / Quit Claim Deed

The Town of Acton started with 18 properties going into foreclosure that received impending 45 day foreclosure notices with a deadline of January 14th at 4:30 pm. As of yesterday, all but three properties were paid for and two were paid for during the day. The account remaining has a very small balance but the Town needs to treat all accounts the same as the town doesn't have any authority to decide when these loans mature; they just mature based on the date stamp at the registry. This individual inadvertently sent in a check which was stated as a no no because you have to pay via certified check, money order or cash. But, it was early enough in the process to take and adjust it if it didn't clear. Unfortunately, it was payable to the State of Maine. Out of the Town's control: no telephone number and a non-resident. Check was immediately returned priority, certified mail and they had it back by December 25th which gave them 14 days to make payment. Payment never came. Staff tried hard to find a way to contact but it was a non-resident the account is an estate of someone who passed away. Long story short, as of today the Town of Acton owns the property.

This item was originally on the agenda to get the Board's approval on a right to redemption which allows 60 days for the property owner to buy it back. The buy back would require 22, 23, 24, and 25 taxes plus administration fees to be paid and then a quick claim deed back to the property owner is done.

Note, around 10:30 am today, the property owner called. One of the many messages left by staff was received and it was just an oversight. The property owner called back late in the day and has since paid all three years plus the admin fees but a quick claim deed still needs to be signed. There was no time to get the quick claim deed through legal for this meeting, so Walsh made a recommendation that the Select Board make a motion to sign the Quick Claim Deed, deeding it back and then over the next day or two I'll have members of the Board come in and sign it.

Walsh made a motion that the Select Board sign the Quick Claim Deed to turn the property back when available for the assigned property; Norwood seconded. All in favor. Motion carried..

C. Transfer Station Hauling Bids

The Town Administrator and Walsh worked on two different bids to be released tomorrow for the Transfer Station.

- The transportation of a Municipal Solid Waste Receiver Box to the greater Portland/Westbrook area.
- The transportation of two demo containers to the greater Portland/Westbrook area.

Bids will be received sealed by February 5, 2025 at 4 pm. Bids will be placed on the website, advertised, and sent to a list of possible bidders.

Demo costs will be put on a following agenda when the Transfer Station budget is addressed. Hopefully the Transfer Station budget will be finished up on Friday. Discussion ensued regarding item to be considered for that budget.

10. PENDING

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Dennis Long approached the Board regarding a question he had from last week. The three fines that were sent out for having no permits, where does that money go? Response: The regular general revenue account. How are they dollar amounts set? Response: The Board of Selectmen had a conversation based on how severe it was and if whether the Code Officer had conversations with the individual. The Code Officer met with the Board and told them that he had seen this person face to face, the property owner knew the permit was expired and continued to proceed. The Select Board reviewed the ordinance.

Mr. Long indicated in the ordinance that the fees varied anywhere from \$100 to \$2500 .

Town Administrator responded that two of the property owners clearly knew they were in violation and were told to stop and chose not to. The Code Officer met with the Select Board to discuss. Mr. Long asked if it was in Executive Session. Response was that it was done at 5 pm during the Select Boards Workkshop time where everybody is welcome to observe; it is all public information just like foreclosures but the Board doesn't like to state names if it can be helped. Discussion ensued regarding the violations and why the Board chose the fines they did. The timeline for another fine will be revisited regarding individual circumstances to comply.

12. MEMBERS PRESENT - David Winchell, Jr., Chair, Dan Norwood, Ed Walsh, Jon Denekamp and Jennifer Roux, Town Administrator. Tom McGurty was absent.

13. ATTENDANCE

Leslie Berlin, Phil Caruso, Dennis Long

Norwood made a motion to adjourn at 6:29 pm; Walsh seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.