



TOWN OF VINALHAVEN BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

Town Office/Virtual Hybrid
Tuesday, June 6, 2023
5:00 PM

1. **Roll Call** – Selectmen Donald Poole, Pamela Alley, Jake Thompson, Leslie Dyer, and Donald Young; Town Manager Marjorie Stratton, and Deputy Clerk Elizabeth Bunker. Also present: David Kallin and Benjamin Plante via zoom, Pat Lundholm, Banner Moffat, David Brown, and Andrea Hogan.
2. **Approve Agenda** – Add 5b. WCAP Letter. *Motion by Donald Poole to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Pam Alley. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
3. **Approve Minutes – Approve the minutes from the May 23, 2023 Meeting** – *Motion by Pam Alley to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Donald Poole. Vote 4/0/1. Motion carried. Leslie Dyer abstained because she was absent from that meeting.*
4. **Approve and Sign Treasurer’s Warrants #49** – *Motion by Donald Poole to approve and sign Treasurer’s Warrants #49. Seconded by Leslie Dyer. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
5. **Communications**
 - a. **New Hope Midcoast** – The letters from New Hope and WCAP were read by the Board.
 - b. **WCAP Letter**
6. **Speakers from the floor - None**
7. **Committee and Department Reports and Appointments**
 - a. **Committee & Board Appointments – Term expirations** – The Board reviewed the list of those wishing to renew their terms on Town committees and boards. *Motion by Donald Poole to reappoint those wishing to renew their terms. Seconded by Pam Alley. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
 - b. **Woodard & Curran Status Report** – The Board reviewed the Report from Woodard & Curran. The compactors are coming next week. Paving is done. Fencing and electrical work still need to be completed. Easements received have been recorded with the Registry of Deeds. Plans are being finalized to be sent to the EDA.
 - c. **Waste Watchers Report** – Pat Lundholm was present to give a report on behalf of the committee. She restated how even though there are not many members on the committee, they should remain a town committee to have some authority over the team at the Swap Shop. There have been 527 volunteer hours since January 1, including 4 students. There have been over \$250 in donations, and dump fees have only been \$98. Almost 2 tons have been sent to the mainland for donation.

8. **Old Business**

- a. **Award Mowing Contract** – There was discussion references received for Bruce Groening and the budget. *Motion by Jake Thompson to award the Mowing, Trimming, Lawn Care and Maintenance for the Town Cemeteries and Other Town properties Contract to Bruce Groening for the fiscal year July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 pending receipt of proof of liability insurances and workers compensation (or presumption of independent contractors' status.) Seconded by Donald Poole. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*

9. **New Business**

- a. **Review Town Leases** – *Motion by Jake Thompson to authorize Marjorie Stratton to sign all leases on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Don Young. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
- i) **Indian Creek Footbridge**
 - ii) **Rockland Animal Hospital**
 - iii) **Charity Appell**
 - iv) **Thoroughfare**
- b. **Old Fire Hall Painting – Mary Talbot Fund Appropriation** – The Board reviewed the invoices from Elden Services for painting and repairs on the Old Fire Hall. There was discussion on using the remainder of the operating funds for the Old Fire Hall and then using the Mary Talbot Fund. The Board discussed using reserve funds as well. *Motion by Donald Poole to pay Elden Services invoices for work done at the Old Fire Hall totaling \$29,173 from the remaining operating funds in the 2023 budget, \$10,000 from the Old Fire Hall reserve fund, and \$17,000 from the Mary Talbot Trust Fund. Seconded by Donald Young. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
- c. **Hurricane Island Foundation v. Town of Vinalhaven Decision** – Pam Alley started by thanking David and Ben for all their work. Jake asked if this was the ultimate decision. David said yes, they do have a two-week period where they can ask for a reconsideration, but they are rarely sought. They could petition the US Supreme Court if they believe there is a federal claim, but that is unlikely. There are pending appeals for subsequent tax years that were being held until the decision of this case. There could theoretically be a reconsideration on whether they are a scientific organization, but then the decision on whether they own the property and are exempt from property tax would revert to the assessor's decision.
- d. **Ambulance**
- i) **Proposed Billing Rate Increase** – The Board reviewed the rates proposed by MRS. Vinalhaven's prices were much lower than other local communities. This increase would bring rates to an average/consistent level with other towns. *Motion by Jake Thompson to increase the Town of Vinalhaven Ambulance Rates to the following: Miles \$18; BLS Rate \$700; ALR Rate \$1000; ALS2 Rate \$1400; BLS Non \$400; ALS Non \$500. Seconded by Leslie Dyer. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*
 - ii) **Ambulance Billing Write Off** – The Board reviewed Marjorie's memo discussing the amount needed to be written off and why. *Motion by Jake Thompson to write off ambulance billings from 2014 to 2021 deemed uncollectible for the total amount of \$109,563.07 that were originally billed by T. G. Higgins Business Services. Seconded by Leslie Dyer. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*

10. Report of Town Manager – Marjorie discussed cleaning up Transfer Station Accounts that have had a long-standing balance. A notice was previously sent suspending the ability to charge until the balance was paid, and now a letter has been sent stating that the town would proceed to small claims court if the balance was not paid by the end of the month. The Board reviewed a Road Assessment done by Millie and there was discussion on drafting a paving project. Marjorie recommended Millie contact Maine Local Roads for help with average current costs.

11. Report of Members-

Jake Thompson asked if there had ever been any discussion on changing the days of business at the transfer station. There was discussion about rental turnovers being either Friday or Saturday and the transfer station not being open on those days. There was also discussion on being open five 8-hour days versus four 10-hour days. Marjorie will discuss it with the employees.

Don Young proposed forming a postmortem committee to review/assess capital projects when they are completed. He will develop a proposal.

Don Young brought up the discussion of the Town's ability to trim bushes/trees encroaching on the roads. Marjorie has spoken with Maine Municipal Legal, who offers free legal advice to Towns. Donald Poole said it should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and by working with the landowner. If the Town has done their due diligence in contacting the property owner and they are aware of the hazard/line-of-sight issue, it is beyond the Town's authority. The Town can trim back to the ditch line without the permission of the property owner. Don Young spoke with Jason Bird at Penquis and he believes it would be worth the Board's time to speak with him about housing options.

Donald and Jake thanked Marjorie and Andy, Elizabeth, all Boards and Committees, and all who have attended meetings. It was eye-opening to see all the work that goes on behind the scenes. Jake and Donald were also thanked for their time serving on the Board of Selectmen.

12. Adjourn – *Motion by Donald Poole to adjourn at 6:11pm. Seconded by Pam Alley. Vote 5/0/0. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Bunker, Deputy Town Clerk

Upcoming:

Annual Town Meeting: June 21, 2023, Smith Hokanson Memorial Hall @ 5:30pm