



MINUTES HARRISON SELECT BOARD MEETING Thursday, December 14, 2023 – 6:00PM

All regular select board meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of each month. Meetings are recorded and posted on the Town Website and on Lake Region Television usually in 2 days.

Please practice social distancing. Reminder to the attending public: Select Board meetings are open to the public, but the public may not speak unless recognized by the Chair or Vice Chair only during Public Participation. Comment time is limited to 2 minutes per speaker. Matters related to personnel will not be heard or discussed.

Present: Chairman Matthew Frank, Vice Chair Philip Devlin, Select Person Frederick Ross, Select Person Nathan Sessions, Select Person Colleen Densmore, Town Manager Cass Newell, Secretary Denise Dumont, Public Services Director Dennis Michaud, Finance Officer Mauren McAllister, James Fahey Assistant Code Enforcement Officer

Absent: None

Public: LRTV, attendance sheet attached GoTo Meeting participants: Kalle Maggio, Heather Harmon, & Jeff Harmon

- I. Call the Meeting to Order
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Public Participation (Non-Agenda Items) None
- IV. Adjustments to the Agenda
 - A. Update for MSAD17 Schools – Heather Manchester, Superintendent of Schools
MSAD17 (New Business)
 - B. Approval of CMP Pole Permit Dawes Hill & Pound Rd (Consent Agenda)
- V. Consent Agenda
 - A. Approval of Unsigned Warrants #26- #31 - Approved by signature **Informational**
 - B. Approval of Select Board Minutes – November 09, 2023

Motion to Approve the Select Board Minutes for November 09, 2023 made by S. Densmore, 2nd S. Devlin Approved 5-0

- C. Approval of CMP Pole Permit Dawes Hill Rd & Pound Rd

Motion to Approve the CMP Pole Permit on Dawes Hill Rd & Pound Road made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Ross Approved 5-0

- VI. New Business
 - A. Update for MSAD17 Schools – Heather Manchester, Superintendent of Schools
MSAD17

Superintendent Heather Manchester gave a presentation about the Strategic Plan – Engaging the Students of Oxford Hills 2023 – 2026

Our Mission: Engaging the Students: The Oxford Hills School District, in partnership with families and communities, engages and supports all students in diverse and challenging learning opportunities to prepare them to graduate as healthy, responsible, and productive citizens, ready to succeed in our global societies.

She then expounded on these four areas and answered questions.

#1 Healthy & Resilient Students

#3 Maximize Facilities to Support Learning

#3 Recruit, Retain and Grow Talent

#4 Rigorous, Relevant, and Responsive Learning

B. Downtown Revitalization Presentation – Jeff Preble & Kallie Maggio/Wright-Pierce,
Darryl Sterling, Harrison Grant Writer

There was a presentation given as an update to the Downtown Revitalization. Phase I completed with sidewalks and Front Street being paved. Now working on what the Town would like to see for the next Phase.

“It is evident that the residents of Harrison want to keep the rural character of the downtown while making improvements aimed at enhancing the rural and historic character of the area. Space is generally not available in the downtown area to support large retail developments. While enhancements are welcome, the town wishes to maintain its distinctive character and nature compared to the adjacent communities. The area lends itself to small family businesses that would support the recreational opportunities in Harrison.”

There will be another Community Discussion/Conversation with a date in February or March to be determined, announced, and advertised.

C. Code Violations that need permission to proceed to Legal for non-compliance.

James Fahey, Assistant Code Enforcement Officer, communicated that the Code Enforcement Office does not go looking for violations, they are much too busy for that. They do however have an obligation and responsibility to investigate once something comes to their attention, whether it is from a citizen, neighbor etc. There were complaints brought to our attention and we investigated and were unable to get compliance and that is why we are before you today. Mr. Fahey then spoke about the first 2 violations being similar in that they had complaints, trash going onto others properties and illegal cars. Code Enforcement investigated these properties 13 Forest Ave also had so much trash that there was a complaint by neighbors of rats. It has been over a year since these violations, and I have been trying to get them to respond with a written plan to correct the problem.

Maple Ridge Road contacted Mr. Fahey by phone only today to say he cleaned up the bags of trash.

Mr. Harmon of Maple Ridge Road was on GoTo Meeting and spoke that he had in fact spoken to Mr. Fahey this afternoon and did not have a car for a while because it got stolen so the trash did pile up. They have since been cleaned up. There were not any rats at his property. He has chickens and racing/working pigeons. He does have 2 sinks that he is going to bird baths for his pigeons. He also had pallets that he was going to use for coops for his chickens but could not get a building permit. Code Enforcement wouldn't give him one until he cleaned up his yard. Heather Harmon also spoke and said that they do still have 2 sinks and they had been in touch with Mr. Fahey. They have started to clean up their yard: the trash and wood are gone.

- Illegal Junkyard: 13 Forest Ave M39 L2-12 (James Fahey)

Motion to allow Code Enforcement to proceed and contact Legal Counsel as needed for 13 Forest Ave was made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Frank Approved 4-0 (S. Densmore recused herself)

- Illegal Junkyard: 304 Maple Ridge M35 L4-C (James Fahey)

Motion to allow Code Enforcement to proceed and contact Legal Counsel as needed for 304 Maple Ridge was made by S. Densmore, 2nd S. Frank Approved 5-0

- Structure Removal Kimball Rd Ext M51 L3 (James Fahey)

James Fahey, Assistant Code Enforcement Officer, spoke about this property being 1st illegally built building with no permits of any kind, 2nd within Shoreland Zoning. It was brought to our attention by a concerned citizen once it was built. They were told to remove it by the Planning Board and Appeals Board refused to hear the case due to wrong forms and it is not a hardship or variance case as they have 13 acres that they could move the building to another area on the property to be legal. We need legal to help with paperwork and wording.

Motion to allow Code Enforcement to proceed and contact Legal as needed for Kimball Rd Ext was made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Devlin Approved 5-0

- D. Appoint & fill available vacancy on the Planning Board

Alternate Dr. Larry Farmer was present. Unfortunately, Alternate Mr. Brian Spaulding was unable to attend.

Motion to Appoint Dr. Larry Farmer to the available vacant seat on the Planning Board made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Sessions Approved 5-0

- E. Appoint permanent alternate to the Planning Board

Motion to Appoint Brian Spaulding as Alternate to Planning Board made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Ross Approved 5-0

- F. Texas Hold 'Em Letter (Lions Club) (Phil/Cass)

The Lions Club holds Texas Hold 'Em games the third Saturday of the month and they need a letter annually from the Select Board stating that they approve allowing them to hold the games. The Lions Club then must send the letter to the State.

Motion to Approve the Annual Texas Hold 'Em Letter for the Lions Club made by S. Ross, 2nd by S. Densmore Approved 4-0 (Chairman Frank recused himself)

VII. Old Business

- A. Financial Policy (Cass)
 - Capital & Reserve Fund Policy

Town Manager Cass Newell: This is the next part of the Financial Policy. I have no formal changes or recommendations for changes to this policy. This is for you to look over and see if you would like any changes.

Chairman Matthew Frank said he has been suggesting investing some of our money in the bank to get a return on our money. He suggests T-bills.

Town Manager Cass Newell stated that our Androscoggin Bank representatives stopped by to check in and wish Happy Holidays and they were asked to check schedules to set up a meeting with Cass Newell the Town Manager, and Chairman Matthew Frank to talk about T-bills per the Chairman's request. The Chair suggested putting some of our money into T-bills ladder account which is secured by the government and yields 5% interest right now which is better than what we are receiving from the bank right now. The balance would be kept in the bank to pay bills etc. The T-bills are fully guaranteed by the Federal Government and safer than the FDIC used by the Bank. We will also be asking the bank if they have any suggestions and/or restrictions due to the building loan etc.

Questions: S. Devlin asking for an estimate on where we are now. What amounts we would put in? Section 1.3.1 - Where did the 6.4% amount come from? Amount used to pay bills until taxes paid. Any plans to create a Capital Plan? Minimum balance of \$500,000? Does that need to be changed? There is nothing in the policy that requires a Capital Plan, correct? Are we planning on doing one? Can I ask that we look into it and see if the State requires one?

Town Manager Cass Newell: She does not know where that 6.4% came from. I looked at past iterations of this policy and it just appeared. We can look and see if we can find the reasoning behind it. We may change it to reflect this time frame and not years ago if that is what you are looking for. The minimum balance of \$500,000 Wording can also be changed to reflect this time in history, not 25 years ago.

Chairman Frank: Our balance for reserves is much higher than that at this time. They were being conservative about the Town's Money at the time. So, this percentage is a much smaller percentage than we have currently. We cannot use Capital Reserves for other things and then replace it. That would result in higher taxes. Figuring out Capital Reserves and Capital Funds is part of the Budget Process. I believe if we move money into T-bills, it is still part of Capital Reserves. Cass, do you have anything to add or suggestions for this Policy?

Town Manager Cass Newell: I don't have any suggestions currently. I was just looking for input and wanted us to be aware of the Policy and change any needed verbiage before we move forward into the budget season. I would like to ask our Finance Officer, Maureen, without putting her on the spot, if she has anything to add or something we should be adding?

Maureen McAllister, Finance Officer, suggested that we pull the warrant articles to see the wording in the policy follows them.

S. Densmore: One of our challenges as part of our planning for Capital Funds is putting a way money for example Fire Truck is there a way to see if things are earmarked and then track it.

Chairman Frank: At Town meeting, it is voting on what we would like to put into Capital Funds and how much money. The money is then ear marked for that purpose. What happens to the Capital Funds that are in the warrant articles that comply with these numbers earmarked out of Capital for certain amounts that it is for that purpose only – Fire Trucks etc. We did make what we are using it for more generic like a fire truck not a specific fire truck.

S. Ross: Can you ear mark for fire truck then use it for something else. How about if you pay it back?

Chairman Frank: No, we must use it for what it is meant for but the more specific you are, the more your hands are tied. We do have a plan that the Town Manager Cass Newell has put together with help from the Staff on all the equipment we have, how long it should last, and when it should need to be replaced.

Town Manager Cass Newell – If you as a Board through the budget process earmark specifically for fire apparatus for the reserve specifically. We can't turn around and use it for something else. If something else came up that we needed to replace it would have to come out of a different account. We would have to find different funds to use. I just want to be clear that we are not pulling from a fire truck reserve if we need a public works truck.

S. Sessions: We have been talking about a Capital Plan for 2, 3 or 5 years now. If we had a Capital Plan on paper, we could see what we need and what is coming up and plan better to fund our Capital Reserve to finance our Capital Plan.

Chairman Frank: We do have that in the computer. Cass Newell the Town Manager & Dennis Michaud, Public Services Director have spent a lot of time working on what equipment we have and what is the estimated life expectancy of the equipment. So that we know when we might need to replace equipment.

Town Manager Cass Newell: There are no formal plans to create a Capital Plan, we do have an informal plan and know approximately when things need replacing such as tanks for the Fire Department, Fire Trucks and Dump Trucks which already are in the works. We have had these things in the works for years just like road maintenance.

We do have a Capital Plan. It is sitting on a shelf in the Vault. Why it is sitting on a shelf is because it was rejected by the State. When you do one of these Municipal Capital plans you need to get input and guidance from the State first (every Municipality does), and we did not do that part, so the State rejected it. No judgement it just is. Would it be possible to dust off the old one and use it as a somewhat go by? Yes. The desire is absolutely there from my office to do this. I know it is the Board's desire as well. I just want the Board and the citizens to understand that we have been slowing doing inventory and creating an asset list. It has been made easier with the Public Works garage being torn down and being rebuilt to see exactly what we have. Especially now that we are putting everything into the new building. It was easier for the Public Works guys to make an inventory list. It is something I asked Dennis and his guys to do, and they have done it. We are also slowly going through the Fire Department as well as the other departments.

The overall layout of the plan is going to take another me or another person to work on that or facilitate creating a plan. I just don't have the time right now; I am already here 7 days a week. I want to but I just don't know where to get the time and it will take direction from the state. Then taking the inventory list and putting it into a formalized plan, which sounds simple in theory, but it is quite complicated in its construct. I have spoken to the State about this several times. If you have seen or heard about other towns going through this, it takes months or even up to a year to get them ready to send to the State. I want us to have a Capital Plan. I want the Town to have one. It is a personal goal of mine. It enables us to receive more monies from the State, more Federal and more grants. I need another person. I need help to be able to work on these projects. This is not a ploy to get more help it is a reality because of all the projects going on right now. It is my hope that with all the lists and inventory we are gathering that we can use it as a guide to do exactly what you are saying for planning for Capital Reserves. Also, to use them to see what we will need for each department and if things are needed at the same time so we can stagger them more. We are getting close to completing that aspect of inventory.

B. ARPA Funds

S. Ross said that he still thinks we should use some of the ARPA funds for a UTV for the Fire Department and then it would be less to ask for from taxes. They came back to it after the executive session.

Motion made to use ARPA Funds for Employee Incentives made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Densmore Approved 5-0

VIII. Other Business - Informational - None

IX. Town Manager's Report

Town Manager's Report – December 14, 2023

1) ADMINISTRATION-

- a) Interaction with Harrison Citizens and Employees - visits/calls/emails
- b) Worked on Day-to-Day Administration
- c) New Public Works Facility.

2) TOWN CLERK – I have been busy finishing up the last election, yes still! The State does not let us scan our voter participation history until every town has finished updating all of their new voter registrations from election day and rejected any absentees that were not returned by election day. I am hoping to be able to complete that this week. In the meantime, I am now receiving paperwork and deadlines from them for the March Presidential Primary. It is going to be a very busy year for elections with one in March, June and November, along with Town Meeting.

We are looking for a Boston Post Cane recipient. If you know someone who might be eligible, please nominate them. We have a couple of names but no contact information.

3) PUBLIC SERVICES (PUBLIC WORKS/PARKS) – During the month of November, the Public Works Dept. have been out and about doing roadside clearing in certain parts of town. repairing the shoulders on the sides of roadways to allow water to shed off properly. Blow downs and dead trees are still an issue we have been removing from roadways. All our front-line plow trucks have been through the shop with no major repairs needed.

We are transferring more and more tools and miscellaneous items into the new garage for our grand opening.

As always, we appreciate the support of our citizens.

Respectively submitted Dennis Michaud

TRANSFER STATION: The month of September had 3332 visits. The transfer station had 2729 visits in November. The day after Veterans Day we had 289 customers. The weekend after Thanksgiving we had over 500 visits in those 2 days.

In November we shipped:

- 8 loads of municipal solid waste to Eco Maine
- 5 loads of recycling to Eco Maine
- 3 loads of demo to Riverside
- 48 batteries to Call/2/recycle
- 68 bulbs to Veolia
- 30 propane tanks to Western Maine metal recycling
- We had the freon removed from 72 freon items.

We have been struggling with the backhoe with 3 breakdowns this month including an alternator, the fuel tank and hydraulic issues.

We have sand available now and the new stickers are in.

4) CODE ENFORCEMENT – During the month of November: 7 new building permits were issued. YTD 153 building permits have been issued. A total of 2 new single-family homes were permitted during the month of November bringing the year-to-date total of 29.

A total of 10 plumbing permits were issued during the month. YTD 102 plumbing permits have been issued.

41 inspections were conducted for the month of November for a YTD total of 377.

Since we began tracking walk -in customers in April, there have been 538 people who have ventured into the Code Department for some form of assistance. 44 people alone came into the office during the month of November. Walk-ins include Realtors, contractors, and citizens.

Currently there are over 14 open complaints/violations that are active. 3 of those are on the agenda for the Select Board for legal action.

The revaluation continues with many calls and questions taking up considerable time.

- 5) RECREATION** - Our November senior lunch was another success! Looking forward to this month which will be on December 19th, with chicken soup on the menu!

We decided to move Santa's sleigh this year, it is down by the tea house, and if you look, Santa is stuck in the chimney! The tree lighting went great, despite the fire call, leading to Santa's late arrival! Santa did a magnificent job at playing the part!

Sign-ups for the ski program are in full swing! We are doing the registrations a little differently this year. They will sign up on the active website, but finish registration and payment on the mountains site. This is to facilitate all the information that is needed by the mountain. It makes sure that they have all information completed.

In my spare time I have been working on Summer Rec. behavior policies, camper agreements, and an activity schedule! I am ready to start planning the winter fest, which I think I will have at Crystal Lake Park this year in hopes that we will be more visible, and more people will stop by.

- 6) FIRE DEPARTMENT** – Total Incidents in November: 27 (see attached). Incident Total year-to-date: 312

Monthly Events/Details/Meetings: November 04 – Public Relations – Truck or Treat

November 07 – Apparatus Checks

November 14 – Training – Chimney Fires

November 21 – EMS Checks

November 28– Department Meeting

- 7) PUBLIC SAFETY-**

Cumberland County Sheriff's Office – Cumberland County Sheriff's Office – Report for 10/01/23 to 10/31/23. 201 total incidents. 6 Traffic Citations, 43 Traffic Warnings, Cases Assigned to Detective Division: 4 Domestic Violence Investigation (4 cleared)

*some clearances involve an incident reported in the previous month.

Update: Our Primary Deputy (Deputy #1) Jared Smith left officially in November. We still have 7 day/week coverage, between our 2nd Deputy, Deputy T. Meslin, and former Deputy Smith's hours are currently being covered by other Deputies who will continue to fill shifts until it is assigned.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

- Downtown Revitalization –
- Public Works Garage –
- Reminder of Holiday Hours: The Town Office & The Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, December 25, 2023, and Monday, January 1, 2024, for the Holidays.
The Transfer Station will close at 12:00 pm on Sat, Dec. 24th for Christmas and Sat,

X. Select Board Items

S. Ross had several things: 1) Scribners Mills Bridge any update?

2) Dam Project Update – Fencing still needing to be completed? Cameras in?

3) Painting Lines on some of the roads after paving. Very important. It is very hard to see with new pavement and dark roads.

4) Christmas in Harrison: They did a marvelous job but having the Craft Fair at the School it was too far away and too expensive as they charged \$45 per vendor. Why couldn't they have it at the Community Room or in the Bays of the Fire Station should have been made available.

Town Manager Cass Newell answered 1) No update on Scribners Mills Bridge. It will remain closed per Maine DOT as unsafe. It will take a while until it can be looked at and assessed. 2) Fencing is there, we may add more. We have game cameras up as there is no internet for other types of cameras. We still urge citizens to stay away as the pull of water towards the dam is extreme and dangerous for anyone should they fall in or get pulled in even for experienced personnel. 4) The Town is not in charge of Christmas in Harrison; it is its own nonprofit. I do not know what they charge or where money goes. They were going to have it at the Community Room but they had to many vendors sign up, so they chose moved it to the Elementary School. I was not asked at any time about using the bays of the Fire Department.

XI. Next Regular Meeting: **01/11/24**

**Motion to go into Executive Session at 9:08pm made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Densmore
Approved 5-0**

XII. Executive Session – 1 MRSA §405(6)(A) Personnel Matter

**Motion to come out of Executive Session at 10:10pm made by S. Ross, 2nd S. Sessions
Approved 5-0**

**Motion made to use ARPA Funds for Employee Incentives made by S. Devlin, 2nd S.
Densmore Approved 5-0**

XIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 10:12pm made by S. Devlin, 2nd S. Densmore Approved 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Frank, Chairman

Denise Dumont, Secretary