

Town of Pownal
Select Board Agenda
Monday, December 13, 2021
6:30 Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order-In Person Meeting by Chair Morris @ 6:35 pm

Select Board: Jon Morris, Andy O'Brien, Heidi Cushman Curry

Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase

Road Commissioner: Dick Clarke

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrant

AP Warrant #38 for \$75,683.09

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve A/P Warrant #38 in the amount of \$75,683.09.

Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

Payroll Warrant #37 for \$18,130.36

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve Payroll Warrant #37 in the amount of \$18,130.36.

Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

III. Minutes of Previous Meetings

• **Minutes of November 22, 2021 Regular Meeting**

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approved the November 22, 2021 minutes as written.

Selectperson Curry seconded with the following amendments: Under police protection add the name after "selectperson". Under Survey Town Land add the name after "selectperson" and after Correspondence add the name after "selectperson".

Selectperson O'Brien amended the motion to approve the November 22, 2021 with the edits.

Selectperson Curry seconded.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

IV. Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items.

Bert Kendall: guest from MTCCA passed out ambassador contact sheets. Explained that MTCCA offers services at no cost and MMA offers free legal advice. He mentioned the listserv which is a tool available to the town administrator to collaborate with other clerks and managers around the state. The ambassadors are here to help and if we need anything to reach out to him and he will assist in any way he can.

V. Department Head Reports – Submitted Electronically

(Department head reports can be viewed on their respective website page(s))

• **Select Board**

Selectperson O'Brien stated we suffered a blown fuse at the pump house. One of the booster pumps did not run. He purchased a fuse and replaced it. Everything is running okay.

Selectperson Curry had nothing new to report.

Chair Morris had nothing new to report.

VI. New Business

• **Town Office Telephone – Ian Silberman Consolidated Communications & Brian MacDonald Ion Networking**

The Town Administrator stated that she had been looking at different options to improve the town office phone system. Chair Morris asked what the overall goal was with this project. She stated better way for us to communicate with residents. Our current phone system does not have dedicated lines and voicemail. If we are busy at the counter or on the other line people do not have a means to leave a voicemail so they just keep calling until we answer. Also, with line 1 being dedicated to the Code Enforcement Officer and line 2 for the Office staff people often call the wrong line so by having a phone system with extensions and voicemail this would better serve the residents. She introduced Ian Silberman from Consolidated Communications to give a description of the VoIP (Voice over IP) phone system. He summarized how the system would work along with what happens if the power goes out. Brian MacDonald from Ion Networking was also in attendance and briefly explained their system which is very similar to Consolidated's along with their back up should the power go out. He also stated an advantage to their system is since they already run our network installation and troubleshooting would be easier. The Town Administrator stated she was not looking for a decision tonight but to revisit this topic at the next Selectboard meeting. She also mentioned that under our current plan we are still paying long distance and moving to this system would eliminate that. Selectperson O'Brien stated he would want some time to review and to add to the December 27th meeting.

- **FCS – Sarah Lundin**

Sarah Lundin first thanked the Town of Pownal for supporting FCS (Freeport Community Services). The mission is enriching lives and helping neighbors. There are a host of resources available from heating assistance to summer camp programs, backpack program and helping families with holiday gifts. They now have 12 volunteers helping. In Pownal they have helped 11 families with holiday assistance, 6 households for fuel assistance, 5 households with summer camps and given 8 scholarships to attend a camp. They recently adopted Age Friendly Freeport/Pownal. Chair Morris stated he has always appreciated the relationship with FCS and Sarah replied that Pownal has been very supportive. They just purchased a van to help with services. Liza Moore stated FCS is volunteer run and has 14 staff members but there is always room for more. It's a great opportunity to give back. Chair Morris mentioned the conversations with North Pownal Methodist Church and somehow creating a community space. Would want to collaborate with FCS.

- **Payroll Service/Direct Deposit**

The Town Administrator stated that she is always looking for ways to improve and streamline processes so she reached out to TD Bank to discuss direct deposit. She also reached out to two other payroll services to see what that would look like for the town. Doing a quick calculation, she figured the town was paying her approximately \$3500 per year to process payroll. Bangor Payroll would be approximately \$2800 and ADP would be approximately \$3300. Having a payroll service would free up time for her to work on other items. They would also process all the quarterly reports, end of year reports, W-2's and W-9's. If there is a mistake the liability is completely on them. Chair Morris asked for feedback from the other board members. Selectperson O'Brien felt it was time we had direct deposit and would need time to look over all the quotes and information. The Town Administrator stated she was not looking for a decision tonight but wanted to introduce the topic to revisit at the next meeting. She also mentioned the advantage to Bangor Payroll was if we ever wanted to consider moving our bank accounts to a local bank, we could do that and they also open a checking account and deposit \$25 for each employee on the payroll. Selectperson Curry stated that a payroll service is a benefit to the town. They take care of everything and the liability is on them if there is a mistake on reporting. Employees would have an online portal where they could see their paystubs, print copies if they needed them, see their accrual of PTO and retirement contributions. The ability for them to be able to access paystubs is a huge time savor for the town office when an

employee needs them for a loan. They have the ability to get them through the portal. The Town Administrator said that with Bangor Payroll there is a document that is imported into TRIO so the budget is debited and credited properly. She is not sure if ADP has that ability. She would still oversee the hours and approve them before sending them to the service for distribution. She would also have a portal to access all information should she need to run reports. The Select Board will review and discuss at the December 27th meeting.

- **Application Process for Planning Board**

Selectperson O'Brien suggested we table until the December 27 meeting as Christine Watson was not present. Chair Morris asked for a refresh on the topic. The Town Administrator said it was to clarify the application process for the Planning Board with North Star now involved. Chair Morris said basically it was an information flow chart, there is trouble communicating inter department. Will add this to the December 27th meeting.

- **Remote Participation in Public Meetings LD 32**

The Town Administrator summarized LD32 which is the remote participation legislation passed in June 2021. She also printed off MMA's guidance and a sample policy. She reached out to MMA legal to get more clarification. She was advised that towns can adopt within their policy certain guidelines that are specific to Pownal to allow members of boards and committees meet remotely. One example she gave is if COVID cases were above 500 for 7 days the members of the board or committee could meet remotely and if they dropped below 500 for x number of days then the members meet in person. Once drafted the town needs to have a public hearing to accept. Selectperson Curry asked about paragraph 4 of the sample policy to make sure the public always has the ability to attend remotely. She was answered with yes. Chair Morris asked Bert Kendall if we were accurate in our determination. He stated yes. Chair Morris said we need to consider perimeters as we move forward. Alan Curry asked if the remote access would be via ZOOM because improvements need to be made. It was very hard to hear what was being said and we need technology to improve this. Selectperson Curry mentioned previous conversations regarding the sound issues. The reason we have not adopted a policy is because we need to make improvements, we understand the issue. A policy may have to come into play before the improvements. Chair Morris stated we have applied for an ARPA grant to pay for improvements to the acoustics, purchase technology etc. Initial feedback seems positive to our pre-application. We understand the problem. Selectperson O'Brien suggested having Susan Briggs Peters offer edits. Selectperson Curry would like to see other town's policies to help with editing ours. Chair Morris stated he does not see any executive order coming from the Governor, the town may need to have their own. He asked the Town Administrator to reach out to surrounding towns to get a copy of their policy if they have adopted one and to reach out to ION for technical help. Will revisit this topic at the December 27th meeting.

- **County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Selectperson O'Brien motions to table this until the December 27th meeting as Chief Peters is not present. It was agreed to table until December 27th.

- **ZBA Forms/Applications/Procedures Updated**

Dick Hogue stated the forms needed to be updated. Both he and Kathy worked on them. Kathy Hogue looked at the application and did some research and found she could combine applications. She added in procedures to help the office staff. Tried to add cohesiveness and is hoping to help streamline the process. Wanted to make the documents be as complete as possible. Selectperson Curry asked about item #4 of the procedures. Is it meant that the office staff is just confirming there is a list of abutters with the application or confirming the addresses? Kathy Hogue said the office staff will direct the applicant on the list of abutters.

Dick Hogue stated the office staff is to confirm there is a list with the application. Selectperson Curry stated she did not want to put undue burden on the office staff so wanted the clarification. Kathy Hogue created a Certificate of Variance form and would like to make sure it is correct. The Town Administrator will send it to Bert Kendal for MMA legal to review. Chair Morris asked if there was any legal procedure the board needs to do to adopt the new forms. The Town Administrator and Selectperson Curry suggested sending the forms to MMA legal for review. Bert Kendall stated the zoning ordinance will dictate the process. Chair Morris asked the Town Administrator to send the forms to Mr. Kendall to have them looked at. Selectperson O'Brien stated we will have to update the fee schedule if adopted.

- **Brown Tail Moth Population**

Chair Morris was contacted by the Maine Department of Forestry and Agriculture. Pownal has a high brown tail moth population. He asked the board if they will allow control. They estimate next year will be a more severe infestation and canopies and older oaks are in peril. Kathy Hogue stated they were inundated at their house and has organic gardens. Is concerned about pesticides. Chair Morris said we would need to have a public hearing. Does the board want to get more information? The Department may do the spraying anyway. Selectperson O'Brien asked if we could set up a "no spray zone"? We should proceed with getting more information. Selectperson Curry agrees with getting more information. Ginny Giddinge asked the board to inquire about the impact on the honey bee population. Selectperson Curry needs a lot more information on the subject.

- **Closing Documents Map 6 Lot 17**

There are 2 more documents that need to be signed to complete the closing. Chair Morris reads the documents for a motion. He motions to check box "A" on the underground storage acknowledgement. Selectperson O'Brien seconds. Both documents were signed. The Town Administrator stated the closing is Wednesday, December 15. Chair Morris asked if any of the Select Board needed to be present. She answered with no.

VII. Old Business

- **Police Protection**

Selectperson O'Brien mentioned there is a workshop on January 6, 2022 with North Yarmouth at 6 pm regarding County coverage. It is open to the public but at this workshop there will not be an opportunity for public comment. Chair Morris asked the Town Administrator to send out a reminder email. The Town Administrator noted it had been added to the town calendar on the website.

- **Audit- review auditor notes**

The Town Administrator stated that all the adjustments approved at the last Select Board meeting had been completed and we have received the final copy of the audit.

- **Ordinance Review Committee Charge**

The charge was adopted and has been updated on the website.

VIII. Correspondence

At the request of Chief Peters, the Town Administrator read a note from a resident to the fire department thanking them for their service.

Selectperson O'Brien reached out to Sheriff Joyce about attending the workshop but has not heard back.

Chair Morris stated he and the Town Administrator attended the RSU5 meeting with the other two towns, the RSU5 director, Dr. Foley and heads of the other boards to discuss the upcoming

budget cycle. He spoke with Freeport regarding shared police coverage and they are still open to the idea. The budget will revisit the cost sharing formula but they can't find a consultant to evaluate.

IX. Any Other Business

Jennifer Elgaaen started a citizen's petition and if anyone would like to sign, she lives at 299 Merrill Road. She has a petition out in front of her house. The goal is not to stop development but to slow it down so the volunteers of the town can put the town in a better position. Chair Morris asked the Town Administrator to summarize the process. She stated that the petition wording should be written as what is wanted for the warrant article. The circulator(s) need to sign an oath in front of a Notary stating they witnessed each signature. This is different from nominations papers which can be left for signatures at Short Stop and other public places. The number of signatures collected needs to be equal to or greater than 10% of the voter participation in the last gubernatorial election. The deadline to make the February 14, 2022 Special Town Meeting is December 16th at 4:30 pm. The petitions should be submitted to the Town Clerk for certification. Once received she will certify the signatures and present to the Select Board for the next steps in the process. Chair Morris stated that if they did not make this deadline, they could still submit for consideration for the annual June town meeting.

XI. Adjournment

Selectperson O'Brien motions to adjourn the meeting. Selectperson Curry seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 3; No 0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm


Respectfully Submitted,

Becky Taylor-Chase

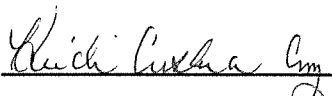
Town Administrator



Jon Morris



Andy O'Brien



Heidi Cushman Curry