

**Town of Pownal  
Select Board Minutes  
Monday, February 12, 2024  
5:45 & 6:00 pm Executive Sessions, 6:30 pm Regular Meeting**

**I. Call to Order**

Members Present: Jon Moris, Andy O'Brien, Kate Day

Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase

Road Commissioner: Matt Nielsen

Fire Chief: Jesse Peters

Budget Committee: Bo Chesney, Donna Watson, Gennifer Giuliano, Matt Roy

**II. Enter Executive Session per 1 M.R.S.A 406 (6)(A) Personnel Matters**

Chair Morris motioned to enter the Executive Session per 1 M.R.S A. 406 (6)(A) Personnel Matters. Selectperson O'Brien seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**III. Exit Executive Session**

Chair Morris motioned to exit the Executive Session at 6:28 pm. Selectperson O'Brien seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**IV. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Morris moved to the Drink Water Grant Endorsement Letter. He motioned to sign the Drink Water Grant Endorsement Letter. Selectperson O'Brien seconded the motion.

Discussion: Chair Morris stated our Town Planner is working on a grant to address water.

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**V. Accounts Payable Warrant & Payroll Journal**

- FY24 AP Warrant #18 in the amount of \$399,546.82.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve FY24 AP Warrant #18 in the amount of \$399,546.82.

Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- Payroll Journal #309 in the amount of \$9,478.51.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve Payroll Journal #309 in the amount of \$9,478.51.

Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**VI. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- December 18, 2023 Public Hearing Minutes

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2023 Public Hearing as written. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting as written. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- January 22, 2024 Special Town Meeting Minutes

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2024 Special Town Meeting as written. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

**VII. Public Comment – Non- Agenda Items**

None

**VIII. Department Head Reports**

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

- ~~Select Board~~
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Nothing new to report.

**IX. New Business**

- **Budget Presentations: General Government, Mallett Hall, Human Services, Planning Board, Cemetery**

Becky Taylor-Chase began the annual budget process with the following planned presentations. Both the Budget Committee and the Select Board received budget spreadsheets in advance of the meeting to review. The spreadsheet was on screen for attendees to view and follow. This year, the spreadsheet also includes a notes function that provides supporting details by line where needed. Budget discussion portion of the recorded meeting began at approximately 6:41 pm.

Becky Taylor-Chase presented each line of the budget by category and explained in detail any variances – positive or negative – for the 2025 requested budget compared to 2024.

## General Government

- Professional Services – Slight increase in Audit expense is anticipated. Chair Chesney asked for clarification on tax map expenses. Ms. Taylor-Chase explained that most of the expense was for maps the Town is required to make available at the town hall. *No changes were recommended.*
- General Government – Anticipating a small increase in normal Property and Casualty cost. *No changes were recommended.*
- Professional Services – Expense request is higher than prior year due to anticipated increase in cost to renew and maintain various technology programs. Chair Chesney asked for confirmation that the new computers purchased with ARPA funds were not included under this line item. Ms. Taylor-Chase confirmed they are not included. *No changes recommended.*
- Supplies – Slight increase in cost anticipated. *No changes were recommended.*
- Town Expenses – Postage cost reflects new 64 cent metered mail rate. Dues and Membership increase is to cover professional association membership requested by Town Planner. CEO Cell Phone cost is reduced to reflect actual. *No changes were recommended.*
- Utilities – Telephone cost increased to cover new line for Town Planner. Cable reflects anticipated increase in monthly fees. *No changes were recommended.*
- ACO – Dues and Membership line increase reflects cost of shelter services. *No changes were recommended.*
- Planning Board – Net decrease in expense of 52%, \$25,500.
  - Subdivision Review and Ordinance Review – combined \$39,000 is expense eliminated with the hiring of the Town Planner.
  - Town Expense – increase reflects a buffer for expense the Town Planner may require for maps and other resources needed for work on planned and future projects.
  - Consultant – expense line added to cover any professional services needed by the Planning Board. Chair Chesney asked if this expense line was intended to cover the Planning Board exclusively. Ms. Taylor-Chase confirmed, yes.
  - *No changes were recommended*

Chair Chesney summarized that overall General Government expense is reduced by 11%, \$19,913 over prior year.

## Mallet Hall

- Maintenance and Professional Services –
  - Mallett Hall Painting expense is an estimate for the long-side of the building facing the parking lot – and may be revised prior to the warrant if the official estimate is received.

- General Maintenance expense is increased to enable the Town to appoint a Mallett Hall “sexton” – a professional with the skills needed to help preserve a historical building. Chair Morris explained that a “sexton” is a traditional historical role for a person responsible for the upkeep of a church or other important building. In recent years the Town is grateful to have been able to rely on the Public Works crew to do maintenance work when needed. However, that type of work is outside of their role. This will allow the Town to establish a relationship with a skilled professional who can be on-call, make repairs and help anticipated work needed to best preserve Mallett Hall. Chair Chesney ask if this person would be an employee of the town. Ms. Taylor-Chase clarified that they would not be an employee.
- *No changes were recommended.*
- Life Safety and Professional Services – Decrease over prior year expense which had included installation of a cell tower.
- Utilities – Slight increase based on anticipated rate increases. Chair Chesney asked about the gap between planned and actual expense that appears to reoccur each year. Ms. Taylor-Chase explained that that may occur when bills for services arrive after the close of the fiscal year and the official closing of the accounting program which does not allow for retroactive adjustments. She added that those end of year expenses are accounted for in proper year in the audit. *No changes were recommended.*

Ms. Taylor-Chase summarized that the overall Mallett Hall expense request is up by 21%, \$8570 mostly related to painting costs.

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### Human Services.

- Town Expense – flat to prior year.

#### **Cemetery**

- Cemetery – expense reflects anticipated increase in labor cost.

Budget discussion portion of the recorded meeting ended at approximately 7:16 pm.

- **June Town Meeting Date – FEMA Flood Ordinance Adoption**

The Town Administrator stated we had set town meeting for June 24, but we have since received some correspondence from FEMA that we needed to readopt the flood maps by June 20<sup>th</sup>. We did a couple of reach out to FEMA to see if there was some wiggle room. We got a couple of different answers. One was absolutely not, and the other was maybe. We can move town meeting a week earlier to June 17<sup>th</sup> and just be in compliance with their deadline. The change works fine with the office schedule and calendar. Chair Morris stated we will need to vote on changing the date. Selectperson O’Brien motioned we move the annual town meeting from June 24<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

This will be updated on the town's website and sent in the quarterly newsletter and monthly emails.

Marcia Bowen stated she had been in communication with FEMA and they didn't seem to think it was a big deal. They stated that anyone that had FEMA flood insurance would not be covered for that one week. It's at the top of the Planning Board's priority to get that ordinance enacted. They provided a draft ordinance tailored to Pownal.

- **Volunteer Form for Recreation Committee – Kevin Luey**

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to appoint Kevin Luey of 672 Hodsdon Road to the Recreation Committee. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

Town Administrator stated Robin Hodsdon Morin submitted a volunteer form for the Recreation Committee.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to appoint Robin Hodsdon Morin of 252 Hodsdon Road to the Recreation Committee. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- **Mallett Hall Maintenance Position**

The Town Administrator stated in this current year's budget there is \$1000 set aside for the carpenter labor but that position is null so wanted to use that money for the maintenance position. We have a great candidate in mind, Mr. Dick Hogue. Jan Pieter Van Voorst Van Beest feels this will work better as the carpenter had a full time position and never had time. He has confidence in the candidate and change of positions. Selectperson O'Brien motioned we appoint Dick Hogue as the Mallet Hall temporary Sexton until the new budget year. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- **CIP Spreadsheet Request**

The Chair of the CIP committee sent an email, there is a printed copy for the Select Board. When an item is added to the asset schedule the request is approved by the Select Board. They are requesting a Flail Mower attachment be added. The current cost is \$30,000 and would be acquired in FY2027. Matt Nielsen, Road Commissioner, gave a summary of the unit and its use. Jan Pieter commented that they questioned the Road Commissioner endlessly and felt confident this was a necessary piece of equipment. Selectperson O'Brien motioned to include the Flail Mower on the Capital Improvement Projects list. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

- **Conservation Commission: Sweetser Road Survey**

Matt Welch, Chair of the Conservation Commission, gave a summary of the previous year's work using impact fee money to survey town owned parcels of land. The committee is currently working on conservation easements with Royal River Conservation Trust (RRCT) and have come to realize the Sweetser Road does not have a current survey. RRCT offered to pay but the Conservation Commission declined to accept the offer. They would like to have an article on the annual town meeting warrant to use open space impact fees to survey this parcel. It's for 93 acres on Sweetser Road and cost to survey is quoted at \$12,560 by John Mann. Selectperson O'Brien motioned to include the survey of the Sweetser Road property on the June warrant. Chair Morris added it would be an article in the June Town Meeting to be taken from open space impact fees. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

**Yes: 3; No 0**

Chair Morris brought up the clipping party. The Town Administrator gave a summary of the clipping event being held on March 2 from 9am to 1 pm. Refreshments will be served and the 5<sup>th</sup> PES class will be on site to be the experts on all things Brown Tail Moth and answer questions.

- **Drink Water Grant Endorsement Letter**

Addressed earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Welch gave a summary of the work on the easement and it's in the final stages and will be ready for attorney review soon.

**X. Old Business**

None

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**XI. Correspondence**

None

**XII. Any Other Business**

Chair Morris had a meeting with the North Pownal Community Club. They are willing to discuss the transfer of property from the North Pownal Community Club to the Town. They want to transfer ownership of the building. He is proposing at the next meeting we discuss the Town taking ownership for \$1. It's a historic building and valuable to the historical society. Selectperson O'Brien agrees to put it on the next agenda.

**XIII. Adjournment**

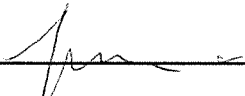
Selectperson O'Brien motioned to adjourn the meeting. Selectperson Day seconded the motion.


Discussion: None

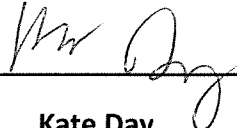
**Vote: Yes 3; No 0**

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Becky Taylor-Chase  
Town Administrator

  
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**Jon Morris**

  
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**Andy O'Brien**

  
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**Kate Day**

