



**Norridgewock Select Board
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2024
6:00 PM
Conference Room, Norridgewock Town Office**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matthew Everett, Chair
Lindsey Lynch, Vice Chair
Kelsea Bickford
Ronnie Blodgett
Dylan Wentworth

STAFF PRESENT

Richard LaBelle, Town Manager
Rodney Grant, Public Works Foreman
Willis Libby, Public Works Subforeman
Peter Lyman, Bookkeeper
Todd Pineo, Fire Chief

Also present for all or parts of the meeting were Robbie Bickford, Ruth Keister, Becky Ketchum, Jim Lyman, and Mike Obert.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mr. Everett.

2. Pledge to the Flag

3. Review/Approve Minutes of December 20, 2023

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve the minutes of December 20, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

4. Member Reports

Ms. Lynch expressed thanks to the Public Works Department for their work in repairing the River Road and clearing/removing silt from the roadway.

Mr. Wentworth noted that he had received an email regarding the bridge closure during the recent storm. An explanation of the process was provided by Mr. LaBelle

Ms. Bickford stated that she received a call from Hospice Volunteers thanking her for the Town's recent contribution to their organization.

5. Town Manager's Report

See Attached.

6. Discussion/Action on January 3, 2024 General Warrant

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and sign General Warrant 2023-23 in the amount of \$117,119.59. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

7. Public Comment

Winding Hill Road resident and Road Advisory Committee Member Mike Obert commented on the recent work that Public Works has done on State roads and that the local crew has enough. He inquired as to what leverage the Town may have over DOT to get them to complete timely repairs.

Pine Street resident Ruth Keister inquired as to whether there was damage to the bridge. She also commented that there was a significant amount of new debris under the trestle.

8. Discussion Regarding Emergency Response Purchases

The Board had an initial discussion on the topic and the potential needs of the Town. Ms. Bickford suggested the Town develop a local plan for emergency response that didn't necessarily rely on outside organizations/agencies (i.e., type of response, trigger for shelter opening, etc.). There was also a question as to who has the authority to open the school as a shelter.

Mr. LaBelle will look into both inquiries/suggestions, and will initiate a working group of individuals who can contribute to the conversation.

9. Discussion/Action on Appointment Confirmation

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to confirm the appointment of Rodney Grant as Public Works Foreman. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

10. Discussion/Action on Winslow Community Cupboard Contribution

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to the donation of \$3,000.00 to the Winslow Community Cupboard to support their operations and help with storm-related losses, to be paid from the Community Food Access account. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

11. Discussion/Action on Preferred Vendor Application

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to approve and implement the Preferred Vendor Application. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

12. Discussion/Action on 2024 Budget

Mr. LaBelle noted that there was a cell reference error in the spreadsheet during the previous budget review. As a result, revenues were overstated. The consensus of the Board was to increase anticipated revenues from the Host Community Fees by \$25,000, to a total offset of \$900,000 from that line.

Ward Hill Road resident and Budget Committee Member Jim Lyman shared his perspective on the current budget proposal. He expressed discouragement in the level of spending, noting that in the last two to three years, there has been a large increase in the overall municipal budget. He has concerns over the costs of labor, benefits, and other employee-related costs. He further expresses his desire to see the Select Board develop a clearer direction/process for organizations to seek funding under the Local Philanthropic budget.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to eliminate funding for the Local Philanthropic budget. Seconded by Ms. Bickford. MOTION FAILED, 4-1 (Lynch in favor; Everett, Bickford, Blodgett, Wentworth opposed).

13. Other Business

Ms. Bickford inquired as to how people may be able to fill out a hardcopy survey for the TIF Economic Development Opportunity Survey. Mr. LaBelle said he would develop a form.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to add *Discussion/Action on Appointments* to the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Mr. Blodgett made a MOTION to appoint Fred Marshall as Norridgewock Water District Trustee, effective upon adjournment of the first Trustee meeting in February 2024 and running through April 2026. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to confirm and authorize the Town Manager to appoint Daryl Wyman, Andrew Dexter, and Kyle Mullin as Deputy Fire Wardens under Todd Pineo as Fire Warden. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to add *Discussion/Action on Ashley J. Wing Family Memorial Park Cleanup* to the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Bickford made a MOTION to authorize the contractor to clean up the property as presented. Seconded by Mr. Bickford. MOTION PASSED, 4-0-1 (Everett, Lynch, Bickford, Blodgett in favor; none opposed; Wentworth abstained).

Mr. Wentworth recused himself from consideration of this item as he is a financial stakeholder in the forestry industry.

Ms. Lynch discussed the tree removal as being a matter of safety and asset protection. She further expressed her support for a proper revegetation plan when the project is complete.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to add *Discussion/Action on Ashley J. Wing Family Memorial Park Electrical Project* to the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to authorize the change order in the amount of \$6,291.00 for the contract with N.F. Luce, Inc. for the installation of the power pole and all associated hardware needed. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.

14. Adjournment

Ms. Lynch made a MOTION to adjourn at 7:30 PM. Seconded by Mr. Wentworth. MOTION PASSED.