

# New Salem Select Board

## Meeting Minutes

### October 30, 2023

Select Board members present: Sue Cloutier (SC, chair), Zara Dowling (ZD)

Select Board members absent: Rick Taupier (RT)

**ZD called the meeting to order at 7:06.**

**During the public comment period,** Nancy Slator asked why the previous Select Board meeting was not available on Zoom. ZD responded that because of the meeting's anticipated brevity and because it occurred outside the normal every-other-week meeting schedule, the Board did not see a need to go to the trouble of broadcasting it on Zoom. Amy Fagen informed the Select Board that the Cultural Council is attempting to bring back Old Home Day, asking for funds from the town. Town Treasurer Gabe Voelker noted there is \$1350 allotted for Old Home Day in this year's budget.

**ZD asked Wayne Hachey about when he will be able to submit a plan for "Phase 2" of the highway barn project.** Hachey said he is finishing another project and can submit the plan soon. He mentioned ideas for an electric heating system using solar panels on the roof. The board and Hachey discussed this briefly, and Hachey agreed to attend a future meeting to discuss the plan in detail.

**Town Coordinator Kathy Neal (KN) gave her report**

- She reported on a listening session held by Lt. Gov. Driscoll, and that it was interesting to hear other towns and cities talk about their needs.
- She reported on a Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts meeting she attended in Westhampton, which included a presentation by someone from the state Division of Local Services, who outlined ways in which the department can assist towns. She also noted that a representative from KP Law gave a presentation about what towns can do under campaign finance laws.

**ZD discussed the latest version of the 1794 Meetinghouse lease.** Brad Foster of the 1794 Meetinghouse suggested that the 2nd floor should be off limits for public use. The board agreed and also confirmed that Foster is comfortable with the lease's distinction between capital and maintenance projects.

**VOTE:** ZD moved to accept the lease as amended and move forward with the signing. SC seconded. No further discussion. Passed.

**ACTION:** ZD, SC, and Foster will sign the lease.

**Foster shared pictures of new signage for the Meetinghouse**, as the lease stipulates he will do any time signage is changed. The board approved of the new signage.

**VOTE:** ZD motioned to allow the 1794 Meetinghouse to display its new vertical green banners during this lease term and into the future. SC seconded. No further discussion. Passed.

**The board decided to table its planned discussion of the Highway Department until its next meeting.**

**The board discussed the slate roof of the town hall.** SC stated that of the work needing to be done on the town hall, the roof is the highest priority because water damage is the main threat to the building. KN noted that more than half of the ARPA funds remain. ZD said she'd like to have someone else come out to look at the roof and give a second opinion. SC agreed and said she'd like to wait to vote until RT is present. SC said she'd like to line up grant funding options before presenting a request to the town. ZD said she'd like to make sure the board is thinking holistically about the project and considering a big picture for how all town buildings are to be used. SC and ZD agreed that the board wants to be careful to identify which buildings to focus on repairing. ZD said she wants to have a public forum about the project and inform the public about the project ahead of time.

Wayne Hachey stated he has done slate roof repair and warned the board that more damage can be caused by repair work itself as slates are broken loose by walking on the roof. He suggested having the whole town hall evaluated and noted that at one point a report was done by New Haven architect Kaestle Boos who determined it was going to cost \$2.5 million to bring the building up to code, and that this report should be in the town files for the Select Board's reference. Amy Fagin noted that multiple committees have evaluated the town hall over the years, while in the meantime the building has been deteriorating. She speculated it may be condemned if inspected today and is concerned about putting money into it for that reason. The board agreed to continue this discussion at a future meeting.

**ACTION: KN will contact another person to look at the Town Hall Slate Roof.**

**The board reviewed the minutes of 10/2/23.**

**VOTE:** ZD motioned to approve the minutes of 10/2/23 as written. SC seconded. No further discussion. Passed.

**The board reviewed the minutes of 10/16/23.**

**VOTE:** ZD motioned to approve the minutes of 10/16/23 as amended. SC seconded. No further discussion. Passed.

**VOTE:** SC moved to close the meeting at 7:56pm. ZD seconded. Passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Maurer  
Select Board Clerk