

New Salem Select Board

Meeting Minutes

November 27, 2023

Select Board members present: Sue Cloutier (SC, chair), Zara Dowling (ZD), Rick Taupier (RT, acting chair)

RT opened the meeting for public comment at 7:00pm. No one commented.

Town Coordinator Kathy Neal reported on the following items:

- She identified a second person to look at the slate roofs of town buildings and is still trying to get in touch with him.
- She is looking for someone to audit the town books, which is due this year.
- DEP has declared that the water emergency at Swift River School has been terminated as of November 21. There is one outstanding bill from the contractor.
- She talked to Cam Dunbar, who said both of the people who do grounds maintenance work part-time, cutting grass and raking at town properties. She has not identified a job description.
- The water system at the town hall has been drained for the winter.
- It is unclear how much money is available for a highway department administrative person. She will ask Town Treasurer Gabe Voelker.

ACTION: KN will have the grounds maintenance crew write up their duties, to be incorporated into a job description.

ACTION: KN will ask Town Treasurer Gabe Voelker about the funding level for the Highway Department administrative person.

The board discussed the Highway Department job descriptions and RT saw no problem with the changes made by ZD and SC.

VOTE: RT moved to approve the Highway Department job descriptions as edited by ZD and SC. ZD seconded.

The Board discussed removing a line stating that the Highway Department would be responsible for managing the Solid Waste program. Jenny Potee of the Board of Health asked whether the Highway Department can continue to help at the Transfer Station with plowing snow, moving heavy objects, and moving roadside detritus to the Transfer Station. RT said it is his understanding the Highway Department would continue to provide these services.

RT amended the motion to remove the original phrase about solid waste management and add a section stating that the Highway Department will assist with Transfer Station maintenance needs in coordination with the Board of Health.

The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: ZD will make edits to the job descriptions and send to Kathy for signature by the Highway Department staff.

The discussion of approving a used car license for New Salem Auto was tabled until the next meeting since the paperwork was not complete.

ZD discussed minor changes to the minutes of 11/13/23.

VOTE: ZD moved to approve the minutes of 11/13/23 as amended. RT seconded. SC abstained. Passed.

ZD suggested adding a longer-term priority to the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION: KN will gather information about job descriptions for town employees for the next meeting. She will check with the Police and Fire Departments, the library, the Town Clerk, and will check on any jobs prescribed by statute.

The board briefly discussed the town bylaws project KN is working on with an intern.

ACTION: RT asked KN to give a full report on this project at the next Select Board meeting.

Jenny Potee of the Board of Health noted that her board has job descriptions for all its positions, which can be shared with the Select Board.

The public hearing on tax classification began at 7:30pm. Adam Hemingway of the Regional Resource Group presented the document titled "Fiscal Year 2024 Tax Classification Hearing."
[ATTACHMENT]

Based on the information in this document, the Assessors recommended the town maintain a single tax rate for all classifications of property.

VOTE: SC motioned that the New Salem Select Board vote in accordance with M.G.L., Ch. 40, Sec. 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2024 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

ZD seconded. No further discussion. Passed unanimously.

SC moved to adjourn. RT seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Maurer
Select Board Clerk