

**Town of *New Salem* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2022
Held Virtually via Zoom**

Convened: 7:00 pm

Present: Hugh Mackay, Carl Seppala, Selectboard; Kathy Neal, Town Coordinator; Joe Cuneo, Fire Chief; Stacy Senflug, Town Clerk; Jen Potee, Board of Health; Nancy Slator, *New Salem News*; Marley Ashbourne; Martha Nicoll; Jeanne Clayton

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Payroll & Vendor Warrants

Discussion Items

Update on Fire Station

Joe began by reporting on the bids. We've received 2 bids. The low bid appears to be about \$30,115. Some funds have already been allocated at town meeting, about \$22,000, so we only have to find the difference. The other bid was at \$60,000. Joe then asked for some guidance about the awarding, including elaborating on the proposed boiler noting differences between what's in place now and what is being proposed. The new boiler appears to be a doubling of firing rate and btu output. The new boiler would be physically smaller. But we don't need the capacity. So he intends to ask about that. This prompted the inquiry about if we can ask why they're going for a larger unit. Hugh elaborated that the initial bid we put out specified a boiler, whereas in the second bid we didn't specify. Joe agreed that we'd gone with vaguer language in the second bid. He noted that there are 7 models that could be picked from, and he wondered if this is simply picking the biggest. He just wanted to understand the rational behind the idea. Hugh responded it might require rejecting the bid and restarting the process again. Carl proposed that all questions be asked. But we need to proceed with this. The completion date for the low bidder is within this calendar year versus next calendar year. He was also pleased to see an addition of a circulation pump. Joe conceded that we need to get this done, but at the same time, more capacity means it goes through more fuel in the end. Doubling capacity could double fuel costs. Then again, it may be that this is the right model and keeping in mind that the boiler that was in there wasn't original to the building and was actually taken from another building and placed there. Hugh asked if the bidders had come and seen the boiler that was there. Joe confirmed that both bidders did. They also knew the square footage and the needs. Carl submitted that the existing boiler wasn't picked for this building. We don't need to use it as a benchmark *per se*. Hugh agreed suggesting what's there may be too small. Carl submitted the difference between what's funded and what this is costing is around \$14,115 in total. This could be taken from ARPA funding. Hugh suggested it be \$20,000 with the understanding what isn't expended could be reallocated.

A motion was made by Carl to allocate \$20,000 in ARPA funding to fund the difference in cost for the installation of a boiler for the Fire Station between the actual cost and the funds previously allocated at town meeting, with the provision that any funds not expended within that amount be available for reallocation for other purposes. The motion was seconded by Hugh and it passed by majority vote.

Tighe & Bond Proposal for PFAS Treatment system at Swift River School-vote to accept/discuss funding source

Hugh began by asking some questions about the proposal. First and foremost, whether Wendell has discussed this and made any decisions. Kathy responded that Wendell has not had it's meeting yet, but is expecting to do so on Wednesday. Hugh then brought up a question about the signature, noting that there's only one line for signature and we are splitting this between two towns. Carl recalled in the past it was New Salem that signed as the school building is physically in the town. But the cost is split. Discussion then shifted to what's been spent of what was allocated. Kathy reported the total spent so far is about \$24,000. That leaves give or take about \$10,000 to \$15,000 left in the earmark from the General Court. We also voted last October in a Special Town Meeting to allocate for this project \$20,000. Those funds came from Stabilization. These funds might still be enough considering Wendell has to bear some of the costs as well. Hugh then went over some other matters as to the

procedures and the actual executive of work for the project. Kathy noted that they estimate about \$70,000 for the project with an enduring operating cost of \$7,000 a year. So we may have close to enough funds between what's left from that STM allocation and the earmark. The difference could come from ARPA. Carl expressed some dissatisfaction with the location of the filtration system, but push come to shove we have no choice. We have to adhere to DEP's imposed deadline, and Tighe & Bond will take care of most of this work. So he was in favor of locking this down and getting it resolved. He also reminded the timeline requires that we complete 50 percent of design by November 2022 with further done by December 2022. Hugh outlined the process and the ultimate timeline for completion. Carl understood that, but expressed concern that we ensure we do not fall afoul of DEP's deadline. He noted he will be attending Wendell's Selectboard meeting. Hugh agreed to sign as chair. Carl was okay with the signature pending until after Wendell's Selectboard meeting on Wednesday, October 19. So long as it's not delayed further.

A motion was made by Carl to accept the Tighe & Bond proposal for a PFAS filtration system as estimated as submitted, pending input from Wendell, and to authorize the Selectboard chair to sign it in their official capacity. The motion was seconded by Hugh and passed by majority vote.

Transition Issues Regarding Resignation of Hugh Mackay/new Selectboard members

Hugh noted there are a few issues that have to be addressed as part of the transition. His official date for ending office will be Thursday, October 20. He reminded that the Selectboard chair has the designated power to sign. As such it was agreed for Carl to become the member designated for signing warrants and bills. Hugh then turned over the administration of the towns website. At present he is the site administrator. But that will need to be somebody else going forward. It was agreed that Kathy would take over on a temporary basis. Hugh then went over the proper archiving and storage of his email used for official purposes. Kathy acknowledged that and agreed to ensure that various access points be preserved. Hugh then turned to the towns web domain for its website. It'll need to be renewed in the next 2 years. Stacy offered to take over as site administrator in the short term if Kathy would prefer it. Otherwise, she suggested that the Selectboard consider making this a stipended position. Similar to what we do with other positions in town. Perhaps \$500 to \$1,000 a year could entice someone. This is an ongoing need. Hugh recalled we were paying Tiny Town \$75 a month to host our old website and maintain it. The new website is richer and has more features. But that requires more expertise on administering and maintaining it. Kathy interjected to say she didn't mind administering it on a temporary basis. Kathy then asked what extra duties Hugh holds. He recalled he's a representative for the town on a few regional bodies that want a Selectboard member from the town on them. Mostly FRCOG related. Jen asked about the Personnel Committee and some related records. Hugh reported where the Personnel Committee's records are. They're located in the Fire Station. The committee sadly is defunct as it is in many other towns. It's hard to keep people with the right expertise on these public bodies which are volunteers in essence. Kathy agreed to put out a request for interested parties for the Personnel Committee. Stacy reminded that the Personnel Committee's records are permanent. In the event that a committee isn't functional, such records may be surrendered to the Town Clerk. It was agreed to do so.

A motion was made by Hugh to designate Carl as the member of the Selectboard to sign warrants and bills during the period of time between October 20 and such time a new Selectboard is elected and reorganized. The motion was seconded by Carl and passed by majority vote.

ARPA Funds Discussion

The main items covered by ARPA funding to date are the Fire Stations generator project, one of the 2 new steel platforms for the Transfer Station, and now the \$20,000 for the Fire Station's heating program. No funding has been specified for the PFAS problem, but we have not allocated all of the towns ARPA funds, so there are still funds available to be utilized should it be needed. Hugh asked what the deadline funds must be spent by. Kathy reported that funds must be allocated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. Hugh noted it's important to watch the dates as the Commonwealth expects it must spend all its allocated funds, a state level, by the end of December 2024. Kathy noted we had some other ideas that were on the smaller side. Hugh suggested that the topic be brought up at a later meeting.

Minutes

The Selectboard considered the minutes for October 3, 2022 and October 11, 2022. The Selectboard saw no issues with either minutes and determined to approve them.

A motion was made by Hugh to accept the October 3, 2022 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Carl and passed by majority vote.

A motion was made by Hugh to accept the October 11, 2022, minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Carl and passed by majority vote.

A motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm was made by Hugh. The motion was seconded by Carl and passed by majority vote.

Respectfully Submitted
Jakob K. Voelker, Selectboard Clerk