

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

DRAFT

The meeting was called to order by S. Pilcher at 7:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Stephen Pilcher (chair), Walter Crandall, Marikate Kelley, John McNerney, Joe Szarejko

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Anthony Delgreco, Joshua's S21 Ultra (on Zoom), Shane Lawrence, Matt Huizenga, Tom Kenyon, Denise Daulton, Susan Randall Davis, Jaime Schulte, Larry Pike, Jim Jewell

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

S. Pilcher said that a notice has been posted and advertised that as of January 21, 2025, there is a vacancy on the Selectboard.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

M. Kelley moved to approve the minutes of January 19, 2024 as amended.

W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

M. Kelley moved to approve the minutes of December 30, 2024 as written.

W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. Szarejko moved to approve AP 41231 in the amount of \$17,296.68. W.

Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. Szarejko moved to approve PR 50113 in the amount of \$13,230.93. W.

Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney moved to approve PR 41230 in the amount of \$19,716.04. M.

Kelley seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

W. Crandall moved to approve AP 41230 in the amount of \$136,175.41. J.

McNerney seconded. S. Pilcher noted the large amount was for the Monkton Volunteer Fire Department for \$120,000. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. Szarejko moved to approve AP 41227 in the amount of \$56,635.87. W.

Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney moved to approve AP 41220 in the amount of \$4,419,746.63. M.

Kelley seconded. It was noted that this was the school payment. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC

The following permit was reviewed and approved:

Stewart's Shops Corporation

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FACILITY USE REQUEST

W. Crandall noted there had been a couple.

PUBLIC COMMENT

none

NEW BUSINESS:

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

S. Lawrence noted that the road crew has been doing a lot of plowing, sanding and salting with all the little storms. They have been keeping the equipment maintained. Nichols Road is having some brush cut. S. Lawrence said he has been working on the budget. He is working with Junior Lewis on upgrading our roller used for compacting while grading the roads. He asked for an update on the right of way issue on Hollow Road. It is a safety issue, he noted. J. McNerney suggested sending the letter he had drafted to the homeowner. S. Lawrence asked about guidance regarding a car parked unsafely in the road. A. Delgreco asked about objects in the right of way damaging the plow or endangering the road crew. T. Kenyon asked about the specifics of the letter to the homeowner with objects in the right of way. J. McNerney explained the letter references 2 state statutes with fines regarding leaving items in the road or right of way. M. Kelley said she would draft a letter for people who have been parking in the travelled portion of the lane.

PERSONNEL POLICY

S. Pilcher expressed an interest in discussing the personnel policy with S. Lawrence in order to come to an agreement. M. Kelley noted that the Selectboard compared the Monkton policy with other towns. It was noted at this time the only full time employees of the town are the road crew. There was discussion about total paid holidays and time off. There was discussion about retaining employees and making Monkton a good place to work. **J. Szarejko moved to approve a total of five additional holidays for the highway department. J. McNerney seconded. The vote passed 3-2-0.** S. Pilcher and M. Kelley voted against. M. Kelley explained her vote against. **W. Crandall moved to adopt the personnel policy as revised. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.**

2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

S. Pilcher noted that last year's budget was \$1,262,000, and this year's budget is for \$1,847,000 for a 48% increase. 2023's highway fund balance had a surplus of \$291,000 which ended up lowering 2024's tax rate. The highway department was busy this year and did a great job and ran a small deficit. There was discussion about grants and FEMA money. S. Pilcher noted that under appropriations, the MVFD is asking for more money for a fire truck. It was noted that health insurance has increased. There was discussion about where to reduce the

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budget. It was agreed that the increase in this year's budget seemed questionable, and a closer look may reveal an error.

MORSE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

no action taken

SELECTBOARD VACANCY AD

As noted in announcements, S. Pilcher said that a notice has been posted and advertised that as of January 21, 2025, there is a vacancy on the Selectboard.

APPOINTMENTS

M. Kelley moved to appoint S. Gulrajani as the 911 coordinator. J. McNerney seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney noted there are seven people on the Town Forest Committee now. They have not been assigned terms. Now that the purchase has been concluded, it was recommended that we establish staggered 4 year terms: P Dufault expiring March 2025, J. McNerney & J. Schulte exp 2026, C. Brynn & M. Parren exp 2027, CJ Buzzy & J. Demeritt exp 2028.

M. Kelley moved to approve the terms as described. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

UPDATE ZONING PERMIT FEES

M. Kelley moved to approve the new zoning permit fee schedule. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

OLD BUSINESS

OLD AIRPORT ROAD

S. Davis read from a statement. She offered to send a copy to J Demeritt for attachment to the minutes. [NOTE: as of the time of this writing, a copy has not been received.] S. Pilcher asked what was the spending on OAR for 2024. T. Kenyon asked if J. Szarejko and W. Crandall are property owners on OAR, is it a conflict of interest? S. Pilcher explained that they have previously recused themselves on this issue and would not be voting. At the request of an audience member, J. Szarejko and W. Crandall left the table and joined the members of the public for the remainder of the discussion. A spreadsheet was distributed by OAR residents which indicated that maintenance costs for OAR were \$5654 for 2024. S. Pilcher noted earlier discussions had been for the town to pay 50% of the cost. J. McNerney asked for clarity on the actual costs. T. Kenyon asked who was W. Crandall representing. W. Crandall explained that he was speaking as a resident of OAR. As he had been involved with the maintenance of the road, the residents had asked him to compile the expenses for the year. **J. McNerney moved to approve 50% of the actual cost of the road maintenance. M. Kelley seconded.** M. Kelley noted that the town has owned the forest lands for

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approximately one month in 2024. J. McNerney explained that the town's interest in purchasing the land drove traffic to OAR prior to the purchase closing. J. Schulte noted that in 2023 at Town Meeting, the selection of this parcel for the town forest was announced, beginning the increase of traffic. Traffic increased substantially through 2024. **The vote passed 3-0-0.** J. Szarejko and W. Crandall did not vote due to recusal. T. Kenyon asked where the money would be sent? S. Pilcher noted that the residents would have to tell the town where to send it. S. Lawrence made a suggestion for the payment.

ITEMS IN THE TOWN RIGHT OF WAY

see above under: highway department update

OTHER BUSINESS

none

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

none

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 7 p.m.

M. Kelley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt