

Minutes of the Wilton Select Board Meeting
September 3, 2024

(FULL RECORDING IS AVAILABLE AT www.mtbluetv.org)

Members Present: David Leavitt, Mike Wells, Tiffany Maiuri, Keith Swett, Phil Hilton, Maria Greeley (Town Manager).

Item #1- Pledge of Allegiance

Item #2- Minutes from August 20, 2024 Meeting

Motion by Phil/Second by Mike-Move to amend the Minutes of the Select Board Meeting August 20, 2024.

Amend Item #10-Should not have Keith's name. It should have been David's Motion by David/Second by Phil-Move to Approve as Amended.

Vote: 5-0 Unan.

Item #3- Minutes from the August 26, 2024 Meeting

Motion by David/Second by Keith-Move to Approve the Minutes of the Select Board August 26, 2024.

Vote: 4-1 Abstain (Tiffany)

Item #4- Public to Speak on non-agenda item

Nathan Hiltz, Wilton Resident read a few quotes from some old newspapers. One was from the Wilton Times dated March 10, 1950 covering the municipal elections that year. Another was from April 21, 1950. That edition of the Wilton Times featured a report from a committee assigned to explore the possibility of adopting a town manager form of government. It included a quote from MMA Executive secretary Lee Weber. "The principal argument against the town manager form of government is that it works so well that the towns people lose interest in their local government and do not attend meetings where, of course, the major decisions are made."

For a comparison to 1950, the most recent municipal election did not coincide with the state primary. Our 2023 town election produced 283 votes, which is 9% of the roughly 3,000 names on the voter list. Nathan finished with a few lines that were printed from the Kennebec Journal dated January 8, 1825. “The Constitution of Maine gives to all its citizens a voice in her government. It is necessary, therefore, that all should be capable of judging when the affairs of the state are well managed for the people at the high court of appeals before whom all agents of the government must answer for their conduct and no attempt is necessary to prove that such a court should be competent to decide correctly. When our population has become insensible to national concerns, then will this nation have passed the meridian of her glory. She will be rapidly approaching the second childhood of nations, which is the sure and immediate precursor of their dissolution.”

Kathleen Masterman-Village View Resident-Suggesting moving the electronic sign from 156 to a more heavily traveled area. This would possibly entice more residents to attend meetings.

Item #5-Northstar EMS-Stephen Smith Rebranding Update

Stephen Smith, Director gave a presentation on rebranding its emergency medical services. The rebranding is part of MaineHealth’s broader strategy to unify its identity across the healthcare system. MaineHealth took over Northstar and Franklin Memorial Hospital. The look of the ambulances will change. Stephen gave assurance that nothing else would change as far as personnel finances. There will be three separate licenses and 3 billing processes.

Keith asked if Northstar expanded?

Stephen Smith explained it expanded in name only and ambulances.

Keith asked if the funding formula is the same?

Stephen Smith replied yes.

Mike asked if there are any programs with Mt. Blue Foster Tech program(s)?

Stephen Smith stated yes. You have to be over the age of 17. There are also grant programs along with EMS Responder programs.

We should see changes on the ambulances soon.

Item #6-Legal Services Agreement for Title Work-Waterline Project-Corson & Blaisdell, P.A.

Maria explained that this is required paperwork for the Waterline Project. Same format and purpose as the legal agreement for the financing with Jensen Baird, except this is with Corson & Blaisdell for the title work. This is in line with the agreement that was approved last meeting.

Motion by David/Second by Mike-To Approve and allow the Town Manager to sign the Legal Services Agreement for Title Work for the Waterline Project with Corson & Blaisdell, P.A.

Vote: 5-0

Item #7-Application for a Catering Permit

Tabled

Item #8- Waterline Project-Town's Bond Anticipation Note Closing Documents

- a. General Obligation Bond Anticipation Note**
- b. Signature, Award and No-Litigation Certificate**
- c. Arbitrage and Use of Proceeds Certificate.**
- d. Form 8038-G**

Motion by David/Second by Keith-To Authorize, Approve and sign the Bond Documents.

Vote: 5-0 Unan

Item #9- Cannabis Ordinance

Mike-There has been a lot of work done on the Cannabis Ordinance. We started off with a moratorium over a year ago. We redrafted and actually have a new document. It has been reviewed twice by the Town Attorney. The moratorium is to limit the number of retail stores. Maine State Law Statute has changed since the first ordinance. The State of Maine OCP has put some teeth behind their regulations, their statutes so it will make it more easily easy for the town to regulate fly by night activities. Next step is the Public hearing and then a special town meeting where the Town will vote on said ordinance. There is language that states if State law changes, the ordinance follows state law. The Town will get reimbursed for our legal fees and time spent redrafting this document.

Item #10- Schedule Public Hearing for Special Town Meeting-September 17, 2024 6:00 P.M.

Motion by David/Second by Keith-Move we approve the Public Hearing on the Cannabis Ordinance on September 17, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

This document will be posted on the website. Public Hearing will be held at Town Office.

Vote: 5-0

Item #11- Schedule Special Town Meeting-October 1, 2024 6:00 P.M.

Motion by David/Second by Phil-Move we approve the Special Town Meeting on October 1, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

Location TBD.

Keith Amato suggested posting the information at the Transfer Station.

Vote: 5-0 Unan

Item # 12-Advertisement of Finance and Human Resources Director

This was posted last Thursday and is due September 16, 2024 by the end of the business day.

Item # 13-Discussion on Deputy Treasurer Position

Tiffany-Given that we are hiring a new finance and human resources director, the Deputy Treasurer duties would be included with the bigger position.

David feels the Select Board needs to make a motion to eliminate the Deputy Treasurer position.

Motion by David/Second by Keith-Move to eliminate the Deputy Treasurer position.

Mike is concerned it would be overwhelming in the interim, when the new person is learning the job. Could the position be made temporary?

David- He believes if the former Deputy Treasurer is willing to come in and help, that is temporary help.

Vote: 5-0 Unan

Item # 14-Renewal of Cannabis Licenses

- a. Jackie Jackson Zheng-128 Weld Rd**
- b. Biyan Huang-128 Weld Rd**
- c. Xiong Wei Huang-128 Weld Rd**
- d. Shiang Gardensw-128 Weld Rd**

Motion by David/Second by Phil-Move to Approve all four Cannabis Licenses.

Keith-The current marijuana ordinance states that renewal applications must be submitted prior to the date of expiration and during the time of the moratorium, during the time this ordinance is in effect, no Select Board of the Town of Wilton shall accept, process or act upon any application for any approval. So, the belief is we cannot accept any application. How about the three or four that were permitted back in February? We asked for a legal opinion a little while ago and from that legal opinion, it is assumed we were incorrect and that we shouldn't be renewing them according to the law term.

Mike spoke on the example of John Black. He was looking for an expansion of a building to operate within an existing permit and he was not granted the permit for expansion, because it had to do with cannabis. Even though he had a permit that permitted him to expand.

Maria believes there are two different methods. This issue here is whether or not the renewal can be done. In February we approved the renewals.

Gary Judkins-CEO explained that this is their livelihood. This is not what the moratorium is.

Mike asked Gary in the case of John having a permit to operate so many square feet but not being given a permit to expand the building, even though he was permitted, his permit covered that square footage, but wasn't given a permit. Gary stated that it specifically says building permit, it does not say renewal in the moratorium.

Keith asked if there was a change to get further legal opinion.

Gary-Not without their permits expiring.

Phil asked if we have the option of renewing them pending a legal opinion?

Gary explained that you could put a condition on the permit with a time limit. Just like the same permits had a condition on their air filtration system in the lease agreements for these permits a year ago.

Keith wanted to make it clear he doesn't want to shut them down

Motion by David/Second by Phil-To remove the motion.

Motion by David/Second by Phil-Move to Approve conditionally the renewal of the four Cannabis Licenses with the condition of 30 days pending legal opinion.
Vote: 5-0 Unan

Item #15- EPL

Maria explained that Earned Paid Leave went into law in January of 2021. Maria believes the Town of Wilton tried to calculate earned paid leave for employees who were eligible the best they could but it was not tracked accurately, efficiently, consistently. At this time this has all been updated. Maria doesn't think employees were given accurate information. Maria is asking for approval to allow the rollovers for the current employees that fall under this. You accrue 1 hour for every 40 hours and the policy states that unused accrued EPL up to 40 hours will not be paid out to employee at the time of separation.

Motion by David-Second by Tiffany-To Approve the current employees for approved roll over of Earned Paid Leave.

Vote: 3-2 Opposed (Keith, David) Passes

Item #16-Other

-David would like to get with Mike in regards to the ATV parking along with John Masse, Highway Foreman and the Town Manager (Maria Greeley) and potentially the Rec Director (Jordan Schank). This would be to discuss some of the land we own. What would it take to make a decent parking space for ATV access, trailers and snowmobiles also. It is right beside the railroad bed. It could add to the Town business revenue.

Mike-We own the property and have for decades.

David asked if something could be set up like a workshop to discuss details.

Maria will work on setting this up.

-Mike spoke on his concern on Remote Meeting Access. Some of us are retired and are not always here. He would like the policy reviewed. We do not have a policy that would allow me to attend this meeting by Zoom. Other than Covid policy. Could there be some amendments or accommodations?

Tiffany is open to having the policy reviewed.

A Workshop was suggested before a Select Board Meeting to discuss this. The workshop will be scheduled for ½ hour before the next Select Board Meeting September 17, 2024.

Item #17-Manager's Report

-Maria spoke on the previous Select Board Meeting of 8-20-24 on Nathan Hiltz asking on "What mechanisms will we put in place for all town meetings held by the Town? Maria agrees that the town could do better with getting the agenda and meeting notification to the public and can help compile that information and update it on our website. We also make note to post agendas on our bulletin board upstairs at the Town Office.

-Maria walked the old mill lot on Depot St with John Masse, Highway Foreman. There have been concerns on what the plans are for this lot. The lot has a lot of potential for the right purpose. Maria would like to have a larger discussion around this. Suggested for discussion in the fall/winter months.

-Maria also mentioned that we have received an official resignation letter from Dale Welch, Water Operator for the Water Department. Dale has worked for the Town for 35 years. We are sad to see him leave but we are happy for his retirement and are grateful for the knowledge he's leaving behind with his crew. Thank you, Dale!

Item #18- Adjourn

Motion by David/Second by Keith -Move to Adjourn

Vote: 5-0 Unan 6:48P.M.

