

TOWN OF ROME, MAINE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
March 1, 2021

Chairman Monica McCarthy called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:05 PM. Selectman McCarthy, Stratton, and Archer were present. Also present for all or parts of the meeting were, Barbara Brickett, Tammy Lyons, Andy Marble, Cori Holt, Larry DiPietro Jr., Paul Anderson, Jodi Knight, and Dr. Andrew Cook

Pledge of Allegiance

McCarthy updated on the upcoming Town Meeting which will be held at the Belgrade Central School to accommodate a large gathering and still comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Gwen Bishop will be able to help us with more info regarding handicap parking etc.

Public Comment

- None at this time in the meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of February 17th, 2021 meeting was made by Stratton with amendments and seconded by McCarthy approved by all 3-0

Amendments were on the Agenda Policy, about the day and time for process to be approved and posted, along with 2 out of the 3 Select Board members (not just the 1st selectman) to make decisions about any emergency agenda items that may need to be added. A final copy of this policy will be available for the next selectmen's meeting.

A motion to approve the new Agenda Policy as amended was made by McCarthy and seconded by Stratton and approved by all.

New Business:

- The Board considered some sample images for a Town Seal. There will be a display for the town residents to offer their preference on which image should be used at the election and at town meeting. This image would be used on town letterhead, website, and other areas that would be appropriate.
- Discussion of possibly attaching a photo of two images to be “voted” on by Rome residents at Town Meeting or on Election Day

Road Commissioner Report - Carroll Bubar

- Bubar came in earlier and reported that all the town roads have been posted for Heavy Road Limit.

Town Clerk Report - Julie Morrison:

- See attached Report

RSU# 18 Budget Committee Report - Dr, Andrew Cook

- The RSU #18 Budget process has a new option this year with consideration of COVID 19 issues. Because of the State of Emergency in Maine the Governor has allowed a new option to the Budget process for school. Option 1: remains the same or Option 2 Allow the School Board members from RSU 18 represent their towns and vote on a proposed budget that would then be brought to the towns to vote on. This does not mean that residents will not be able to participate in the budget process. Dr. Cook explained that residents would still be able to come to the school board budget meetings and that ideas/concerns could be discussed before a draft budget is adopted.
- Cook provided a report on the coming year’s school budget, he believes there will be approx. 2-2.5% increase mostly due to salaries and building updates along with the new driveway. 80% of students are in-school learning. There was a concern from last year around remote learning and if there would be a backslide in retention. This does not seem to be the case he was happy to say. The RSU 18 had received a large COVID-19 grant which assisted improvements with remote learning, internet upgrades, etc.

C.E.O Report - Andy Marble:

- Marble reported that last Monday's Public Hearing on the proposed ordinances and amendments went well. Most of the discussion was on the Food Sovereignty ordinance regarding selling milk products. Marble stated that under the current proposed article residents would be allowed to sell milk products at their home.
- Marble suggests revisiting the ordinance and possible making an amendment later.
- Next planning board meeting will be held on Monday March 8th at 6PM.

Tax Collector and Treasurer Report Tammy Lyons:

- Lyons has a treasurer's travel reimbursement policy for the Board to consider and sign.

A motion to close out a dormant bank account at Camden and move to TD Bank was made by Stratton seconded by McCarthy and all approved. 3-0

Other/unfinished Business:

- The self-evaluation requests sent to the appointed employees last week were asked to be returned by March 4th. This request was sent after hours on Thursday therefore was not received until the following Monday. These requests are now asked to be returned by Monday March 8th. Archer asked McCarthy how these forms were to be handled with and stored. Archer said such form would be normally kept in an employee folder and would be considered confidential. The Board agreed that the files would be kept in safe.
- McCarthy brought up a policy from 2015 concerning computer use at the town office. There was a mention of not using social media in that policy and a request to suspend the Town's Facebook was made. There were

concerns with the Town's Facebook page. is that there was some confusion about certain comments being shown and others hidden.

The Town Clerk when starting the current Town's Facebook page was asked for it to be a read-only type site. Town Clerk had the site settings on read-only. When Facebook updated their site, this setting was changed. The Town Clerk then had to put filters in place to secure the site as read only again.

However, even with those filters if one of the administrators on the site read any comments and then responded directly to those questions, that would then allow the comment and answer to be seen publicly. This then caused complaints that some people could comment, and others were not.

A motion was made to suspend the Town's Facebook page until an update to the current computer use policy is made by McCarthy and seconded by Stratton approved by all 3-0

- Stratton reported that she had two complaints from individuals who are concerned about the integrity of the upcoming election. The persons were concerned that one of the town's mailpersons was too friendly with the Town office staff and that there may be a chance of some absentee ballots not being handled properly.
- Stratton reported that she had heard that the Town FB page was being used to bash selectmen and said we should not have it. Jodi Knight replied that the Town FB Page was not being used to bash anyone and the only reason comments were being shown was because you commented on it. And as far as residents' personal FB page they could put whatever they wanted on it.
- Public comment arose stating that they do not believe said mailman would ever compromise the election or the absentee process.
- Archer suggested that the Town Clerk prepare a statement to be posted on website and on building explaining the absentee process. Understanding how the absentee process works would eliminate such concerns. There are

many steps that are followed so that any resident can see how their absentee ballot is handled.

- The Town reports are due by this Thursday.
- A every door mailing is to be done on this Wednesday letting all town residents know about the upcoming election and annual town meeting.
- Public Comment was made by Paul Anderson concerning the last Budget Committee meeting with the Board of Selectmen. Anderson had heard that accusations were made about a letter that may have been sent to Waste Management regarding the DiPietro consent order and disposal of tires. Richard Labelle had brought in papers from Waste Management showing the slips where the DiPietro's had brought tires in to be disposed of. LaBelle then said that the only way this number of tires could be disposed of was if the Town sent a letter to the facility allowing this. Lois Stratton and Kelly Archer were asked if they had voted on such a letter to be sent, which they both responded no. It was then implied that Anderson, and possibly Archer, sent a letter without Board approval to the facility allowing this to happen. Stratton explained that the reason this came up was because of a previous budget committee meeting where a discussion concerning why the amount of the money to raise for the Landfill was much lower than the spent amount for the year. Anderson requested that such business should be brought up at the selectmen's meeting, duly posted, and not at a Budget Committee meeting. McCarthy commented that she felt no one now believes that such a letter exists. Archer requested that as a matter of record that this should be cleared up. Archer reported that the morning following that budget committee meeting she made a phone call to the Waste management facility asking about the letter that they said had been sent. Archer was told that if Richard LaBelle had said that there was a letter that he must have misspoken or misunderstood, there was no letter. What the Waste management representative said was that every time the DiPietro's came to dispose of tires they had a "permission slip" which they asked to be signed and took with them. These "permission slips" were in fact signed receipts. The DiPietro's had to show proof of disposal of tires

every month as part of the consent agreement. These slips were turned into the town's CEO monthly. Andy Marble has all receipts on file. Archer wanted to make this information was clear and that no letter or permission was given to the DiPietros allowing any tires to be disposed of over the allowed amount per resident.

- Barbara Brickett wanted to share information concerning smoking on the Town Office premises. By law a person must be 20 feet from the building.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:42 PM by Stratton and seconded by McCarthy and approved by all 3-0

Respectfully yours,

Barbara Brickett

Selectmen Assistant/Deputy Clerk

selectmenassistant@romemaine.com

Next Regularly scheduled Selectmen Meeting will be on

Monday March 15th, 2021 6PM