

Town of Northport
Public Hearings and Select Board Meeting
September 25, 2023 @ 6:04 pm

Chair: Jeanine Tucker
Vice Chair: Breanna Pinkham Bebb
Municipal Officer: Molly Schaffler
Town Administrator: James Kossuth

Finance Director: Vicki Eugley
Town Clerk: Amy Eldridge
Road Commissioner: Amon Morse
NVC Representative: Jeffrey Wilt

Present: Jeanine Tucker, Breanna Pinkham Bebb, Molly Schaffler, James Kossuth, Vicki Eugley, Amy Eldridge, Amon Morse, Mark Lynch, Jeffrey Wilt, Angela Bunker, Veronica Stubbs, Jason Stubbs, Riah Trundy, Brandon Trundy, Paul Robie, Karen Young, Andersen Pinckney, Judy Johnson, Tom Dwyer.

Citizen Concerns: Paul Robie and Karen Young, re Upper Bluff Road Boundary– Kossuth reported that he reviewed the county records looking for the original road layout from 1794 and found nothing. He checked with the Massachusetts State Archives, and received another copy of the same road layout that Robie had provided at the previous Select Board meeting, which shows headings and distances for a road from Belfast to Camden, but no widths and no starting point. Kossuth presented an opinion letter he received from Bill Kelly, the Town’s attorney (see Appendix A), which stated that the continuous use of the road in its current location for at least twenty years (based on the survey that Robie had provided at the previous Select Board meeting) would create an easement for that location. Kelly’s letter further stated that the Town’s plan to pave the road in its current location is a permissible improvement to that easement. Kossuth searched the Town’s records for utility pole permits to try to determine when those poles had been installed to see how long the road had been in its current location, but could not find any permits for these particular poles. Robie said that he had had the poles installed when they built their house around 1985. Robie and Young asked that, since the Town will be paving the road, the Town ensures it drains properly. Morse reported that the blasting to improve the ditching and drainage will take a few days, and then the road will be paved and have improved drainage.

Public Hearing: The Scone Goddess, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application – Tucker opened the public hearing at 6:25 pm. V. Stubbs reported that she is applying for the CDBG to help her expand, because she needs more equipment to produce more scones and scone mixes, and more staff to operate the machines, but she cannot afford both without this grant. She is currently collaborating with other businesses to produce mixes, which come in 22 varieties. She is also looking to purchase a van for deliveries and possibly going to local fairs, which generate substantial revenue. Her goal is to process as much as possible at the Northport shop.

One planned facility is being set up by Downeast Packaging Solutions in Machias, and the other one in Connecticut, which will be producing gluten-free mixes.

Schaffler congratulated V. Stubbs on her progress with the Community Development Block Grant and wished her luck with the future growth of the business. Schaffler asked whether the planned expansion will have any impact on traffic on Route 1. V. Stubbs replied that having more space and more equipment on-site will actually result in fewer deliveries, because increased storage on-site will allow her to store more product between deliveries. She expects customer traffic to stay about the same.

V. Stubbs was asked about the effect that additional employees might have on customer parking. V. Stubbs replied that employees currently park at her house (around the corner) and carpool to the store. V. Stubbs was also asked how many employees she expects to eventually have, and she replied that she does not intend to have more than 9 employees because of various regulatory requirements that apply to businesses with 10 or more employees. She

was also asked if she has had any difficulty in finding qualified candidates. She replied that she has had several qualified candidates respond to her most recent ad. Schauffler suggested that she might have also some success if she worked with the Waldo County Technical Center to direct qualified candidates to her. V. Stubbs was asked what sort of skill set was required for a successful candidate, and she replied that most of the skills are learned on the job, so it is most important that a candidate be teachable, and willing and able to learn how to use the equipment and make scones.

Tucker asked if there was any other support that the Town or its residents could provide. V. Stubbs replied that she most appreciates word-of-mouth and people helping spread the word. V. Stubbs also said that she is looking for heated storage for her trailer for the winter, so that she could use it in the winter instead of having to drain it and shut it down completely. Several suggestions were offered for places that she could ask.

Tucker closed the public hearing at 7:01 pm.

Tucker motioned to approve the Community Development Block Grant application for The Scone Goddess, Pinkham Bebb seconded. Board voted 3-0, motion passed.

Public Hearing: New General Assistance maximums for 2023-2024 – Tucker opened the public hearing at 7:02 pm. Kossuth presented the new maximums for General Assistance for Waldo County, effective October 1, 2023.

Tucker closed the public hearing at 7:04 pm.

Pinkham Bebb motioned to approve the new maximums, Schauffler seconded. Board voted 3-0, motion passed.

Northport Village Corporation: Wilt reported that the NVC had not had too much damage from Hurricane Lee. He reported that the floats will come out on Columbus Day weekend. There will be a hearing on the moratorium on new sewer connections on Saturday, September 30, at 10 o'clock. The NVC is close to the maximum number of connections that its wastewater treatment permit allows, and when the Village is busy in the summer and there are heavy rains, it can cause them to exceed their allowance.

Road Commissioner: Morse reported that Hurricane Lee had not caused too much damage around Town. The cemetery on Horse Jockey Lane has a tree down, and Morse will be cleaning that up.

FC Work & Sons, Inc., has started road work. He reported concerns about the underground electrical and telecommunications service on Cliff Road and how both cross above the Town's culvert and neither is properly shielded or marked. FC Work was able to complete ditching on Cliff Road, Flanders Road and Nelson Drive, and they will soon begin blasting and ditching on Upper Bluff Road.

He reported that he will be putting up the "no parking" signs at The Hoot. He reported that he will be ordering another sign. The Board would like The Hoot to do more to encourage their patrons to park on the upper lot and not on the street. The Board agreed that parking on the road is a hazard.

Town Administrator:

Lincolnton Select Board joint meeting recap – Kossuth provided a recap of the meeting to the Board.

Halloween 2021 storm FEMA update – Kossuth reported the Town was approved for the reimbursement of approximately \$70,000.00 for the damage caused by the 2021 Halloween Storm. He still needs to submit a request for reimbursement for his time spent on the project.

Community Resilience Partnership grant update – Kossuth reported the Town was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the State to conduct an engineering survey on parts of Shore Road and in the Village. The State is holding an informational session on October 3 when Kossuth will find out what the next steps are.

Recycling Committee update – Kossuth reported that the Committee met for the first time on September 21 and the meeting went well. Marnie Reeve is the chair, and Tish Gardner is the secretary. The committee will be meeting again in a couple of weeks.

Resilience Committee update - Kossuth reported that he has been able to recruit some members for the committee. He was looking to have the committee come to the Select Board meeting on October 23 so they can meet with the Board and get some direction for their work.

Drinkwater School generator – Lynch reported that the School Board has purchased a new generator and would like to sell the old one, and wanted to give the Town the first option to purchase it. The Board was considering using the generator at the Transfer Station to power a compactor. Pinkham Bebb stated if the Town were going to need a generator within the next year then it would be beneficial to have the generator, but since the Town doesn't have anything in the pipeline that would need a 3-phase generator, there is no need to take it now.

Pinkham Bebb motioned that the Town not take the generator from the School, Schaffler seconded. Board voted 3-0, motion passed.

Town Clerk: Eldridge provided the August 28, 2023, to the Board to review. The Board approved the August 28, 2023, minutes with corrections.

Eldridge also provided a request for an Abatement for Personal Property on account # 63 (US Bank National Association). The personal property was approved to be BETE Exempt but was incorrectly entered in the assessing software as taxable. The Board reviewed and approved the Abatement request.

Finance Director: Eugley provided the Payroll & Accounts Payable warrants to the Board for review and approval. The Board approved the Payroll & Accounts Payable warrants.

The Board also approved the social services donations. Of the \$8800.00 appropriated at Town Meeting, the Board donated: \$500 to the VFW Flag Fund; \$500 to Hospice Volunteers of Waldo County; \$2500 to the Northport Food Pantry; \$600 to Spectrum Generations; \$3500 to Waldo Community Action Partners; \$200 to Waldo County Bounty; and \$1000 to Waldo County Woodshed.

Unfinished Business: Butters Cottage (9 North Ave) update – Kossuth reported Paul Dillon, as attorney for James Butters, sent a listing sheet for the sale of the property. Bill Paige, the Village Agent, told Kossuth that Sandy Butters was going to submit an application to the NVC Overseers for permission for construction vehicles to access the cottage via the NVC property in Merithew Square. Kossuth spoke with Bill Kelly, and Kelly suggested the Town simply make sure that the owners are complying with the deadlines in the Dangerous Building Order.

New Business: Pinkham Bebb provided an update about the Waldo County Woodshed. She reported that Patricia Lojek is the new board member and will be handling the Northport location.

Schaffler is looking for ways to encourage younger residents to volunteer to help with projects in Town. There was some discussion of how and where to recruit volunteers.

Adjourn: *Tucker motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 pm, seconded by Pinkham Bebb. Board voted 3-0, motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Amy Eldridge