

Kingfield Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 19th, 2024; 6:00 PM Webster Hall 38 School Street

Attendance

Municipal Officers: Wade Browne, Hunter Lander, Chris Rushton, Morgan Dunham, Kim Jordan

Municipal Staff: Leanna Targett (Town Manager). Travis Targett (Wastewater Superintendent)

Public: Tom Wiencek, Barbara Wiencek, Ben Davis, Joe Ford, Laura Columbia, Suzanne Dunham, Lynn Burnell, Dennis Burnell, Dan Davis, John Goldfrank, Jeff Maget, Karyn Varney, Ashley Farrar, Whitney Rhodes, Monique Poulin, Polly MacMichael, Rob MacMichael, Nate Manzer, Josh Nunes, Bob Lightbody, Bobby Brown

Via Zoom: Kathy Houston, Dee Menear, Danielle Mathieu, Julie Swain, Jennifer Pooler, Paula Gravelle

Absent: None

Chairman Browne calls the meeting to order.

Board reviews meeting minutes from August 5th, 2024. Selectman Dunham makes a motion to accept all minutes as written. Seconded by Selectman Rushton. All in Favor.

Old Business: Karyn Varney from Quad Runners ATV Club is recognized to request use of non-motorized trail funds. Karyn explains that the ATV club received a request from the town to repair the trail from the sled shed down around to 27. Karyn says there was a mud puddle near the picnic table that was fixed by some of the club recently. Karyn says we wanted to ask the town about some TIF funds that were set aside for non-motorized trails the year before last. At the last meeting we asked if we could have some of that money to pay for the gravel and the stone to put down and the ATV club would pay for the labor and skid steer to get it put in there in order to get it up to snuff. Karyn says it is a multi-use trail used by hikers, bikers and walking dogs, even model planes are flown out there so we thought we would ask if that was something that the town would consider. Chairman Browne says he is not in favor of taking non-motorized funds for an ATV trail even though he understands that it is a multi-use trail he doesn't believe that the hikers, bicyclist and dog walkers made that type of an issue down there. Selectman Rushton asks what the non-motorized trail funds are intended for. Chairman Browne explains that the bike club on behalf of CRNEMBA asked for the funds for the trails on Stanley Stream and down in the town fields. He explains that this money is sitting in a fund for their use. Chairman Lander agrees that the damage was not from non-motorized activities. Selectman Dunham asks if once it is fixed if the ATV club will continue to maintain. Karyn says yes, we will have it in our yearly plans. We will make sure to submit it with our grant requests. Karyn explains that they submit a plan through the state and the town for grant money to fix certain projects, if received it is a 90/10 whereas they must match 10% of the request. The good part is that all that needs to be fixed is done through that grant. Karyn says she does not feel the damage is just from ATV's and they wanted to get a nice product placed so that they could maintain it in the future for years to come for everyone's use. Polly McMichael explains that when she made the request two years ago it was so that money could be used for matching grant funds and explains that leveraging the money might be a better use. Polly explains that it could also be used for Shiloh Pond trails as well. Selectman Jordan says she agrees, the money is earmarked for non-motorized, and she hates to take away from that. Upon further discussion it is agreed that non-motorized trail funds will not be given to the ATV Club to fix the trails on town owned property. Karyn says we will get it done, it may not be great, but it will be good as we are busy doing a lot of other things.

New Business:

Chairman Browne notes that the board will not be reviewing the commitment tonight as there have been some issues with the computer program that is used for commitment. He suggests meeting another night for commitment of taxes only. The board has agreed to meet on Monday 26th at 5:30pm.

Chairman Browne recognizes Engineer Bob Lightbody from Maine Highland Development to discuss changes in West Kingfield Road Construction. Bob has provided the board with proposals from Dirigo Bridge for two different box culverts. Bob says he is not in favor on placing two 60" culverts in the location at the end of the tar. He knows that the box culvert is pricier but feels that it should be presented as an option. Selectmen Dunham asks why he does not like double culverts in that location. Bob says it restricts flow. Bob says the box culvert would be a long-term solution. Chairman Browne says that we have had some wicked floods, and the culverts have not been taken out yet. Bob says you have a 48" that is squatted to about 20" and a 30" culvert there now. A smooth culvert will be better. Bob says if the board does not want the box culvert then he recommends one 60" culvert that is about \$36,600. Josh Nunes says they will also place riprap there and suggests two 60" culverts to double the flow. Selectman Jordan says she thought it was the end of the road where the three culverts are placed that keep washing out. Bob says no, this is not in the scope of this work. Josh Nunes says that the end of the road should not be ignored. Nate Manzer asks Bob why not place two 60" culverts if he was suggesting a box culvert. Bob says two will restrict the flow and it's not necessary. Josh says that additional gravel will need to be added. Selectman Lander suggested looking at changing the angle.

TM Targett notes that there is one culvert that is not being replaced due to location and that it is further in someone's driveway. Josh Nunes has looked at it and it about 40 feet from the Towns right-of-way. Josh indicated that ditching needs to be done in that area. The culvert itself is not in bad shape it just needs to be maintained. TM Targett reminds the board about spending public funds on private property. Following further conversation, the board agrees that the homeowner must complete the replacement of this culvert. The ditching in the ROW shall be completed by the town.

Board reviews a sewer abatement that was billed in error. Selectman Lander makes a motion to approve. Seconded by Selectman Rushton. All in Favor

Chairman Browne recognizes Paula Gravelle from Department of Education (DOE). Paula says that The EPS formula (per Title 20-A, Chapter 606-B) provides the state with a mechanism for establishing a minimum sufficient funding level to ensure the opportunity for all students to meet the standards and goals established in Title 20-A, Chapter 222; and an equitable way to distribute the funding responsibility between local communities and the state.

Essential Programs and Services (EPS) is designed to ensure that all schools have the programs and resources that are essential for all students to have an equitable opportunity to achieve Maine's Learning Results. The EPS model provides a basis for adequacy and greater equity in the funding of PreK-12 education because it is cost driven instead of expenditure driven. The model is

designed to respond to student needs and is based on years of research and information gleaned from high performing cost-effective school units.

Paula Says there is both state and local share and in order to receive State subsidy, SAUs must contribute the required local amount per the EPS calculation. Many SAUs raise above and beyond what the State requires for the local share – that is referred to as "additional local". Total Cost for education FY 24 EPS calculation is \$2,545,271,871. State contribution is 55% and the local contribution is 6.97Mil Rate - 45%. So, the state appropriation was \$1,400,174,513 and the local contribution was \$1,145,097,328. Local share is determined by the lessor of the most recent Maine Revenue Service (MRS) certified town valuations is compared to the 3-year average of the 3 most recent MRS certified town valuations is used as the EPS valuation for a town.

The EPS local required mil rate is It is the most any town will be asked to contribute towards the cost of education in their SAU for that fiscal year. The mil rate is the cap for the required local contribution for all towns in Maine per the EPS Formula. If the amount calculated by the EPS formula as the total cost of education for a town is less than the ability to contribute using the current mil rate (cap) times the towns valuation, then they will be required to contribute the lower amount, in effect, contributing less than the mil rate expectation. The mil rate changes each year and is determined after the Total Cost of Education for all SAUs, and other state-funded education is calculated.

The EPS mil rate is determined each year using the statewide Total Cost of Education, available state resources, and statewide property valuation - FY25 mil rate is 6.62. (The EPS mil rate is not the same as the town tax mil rate.)

The EPS mil rate is used to determine a municipality's ability to contribute to education and the most any town in Maine will be required to contribute in local funds for education to receive the calculated State funds per the EPS formula. The ability to contribute is the municipality's valuation multiplied by the EPS mil rate. The local contribution is the lessor of the town's ability to contribute and the town's allocation.

When an SAU/town's ability to contribute towards the cost of education is greater than their calculated local cost per the EPS formula, then they are considered a minimum contributor. The Required Local Contribution = the current Mil Rate x the Town's Valuation. The current Mil Rate is the cap, or most, that any individual town will be required to contribute to Education per the EPS formula. In FY 24 the Mil Rate (local contribution cap) was 6.97 and in FY 25 it is 6.62. No town will be expected to pay any more than the current mil rate x their town valuation for EPS education funding. If the town's ability to contribute is greater than their calculated local cost, then the actual mil rate they are contributing will be less than the current cap for all other towns. Paula says that anyone can access the EPS calculation each year through the Department of Education.

Paula explains that for Kingfield the required local contribution for K-12 education is \$1,021,685.83, the additional local is \$848,463.62 totaling \$1,870,149.45 which is a total local percentage of 40.08%. Adult education cost \$8,765.35 for a total cost last year of \$1,878,914.80. Avon's percentage was 12.40%; Phillips 23.25% and Strong 24.27%.

Following further conversation Selectman Jordan reminds Paula of their conversation of Kingfield paying what is the lions share and how she had questioned if we could go back to the other towns to change the amounts. Paula says there is no way to change the EPS formula as that is written into state statute. The cost sharing formula which is over and above the EPS funding formula could be looked at. The district is using the same percentages that the state uses which is town assessments/valuations and students. Others use 100% pupil, or assessments or a mix. Paula thinks this may have been set in 1966 when the district was established. The EPS started in 2006 so definitely by then.

Monique Poulin says we need to have all the data to make decisions. She says I think we need to do some research and run some numbers. Selectman Jordan says she agrees, and the board had discussed a committee. Monique suggests hiring an independent person for the research.

Chairman Browne agrees that we need to get all the information we can and really look at it in depth. Chairman Browne says we had several people who were interested in forming a committee and tearing it all apart to see if it is worth it. Nobody wants to close any schools. There are some older folks that can't afford anything any longer as our budget keeps growing for schools. Yes, we want our kids to get the highest education they can. That is not the point. The point is trying to make sure we can all survive. We need to look at it in depth.

Town Manager Updates/Discussion: TM, Targett provides updates to the board. Ralph Parker will be appointed to the Shiloh Pond committee to fill the vacancy left by Annie Twitchell. The Bunker property declaration has been sent to the town attorney for legal review. Nillo planned to start painting crosswalks this past weekend however there was a delay with the paint. The process has been started to update the scope of work and cost to repair other town roads. TM, Targett says she is in the process of updating the tax acquired policy as the new law states that it must be listed with a realtor for 12 months. We need to schedule an executive session with the Town Attorney. The board agrees to Monday night August 26th at 5:45pm. Lastly, AVCOG is having a regional comp plan meeting September 16th at 4:30 in Eustis and the selectboard has a meeting that night so it will be difficult to attend. The invite was sent to Carrabassett Valley, Rangeley, Eustis and Kingfield. Selectman Dunham offers to go to this. Selectman Rushton says he would be interested in attending as well.

Selectmen Discussion: None

Public Comment: John Goldfrank asks if someone is keeping an eye on change of uses within the public sewer system as it should increase rates. Travis Targett says last year the rate setting was passed off to Maine Rural Water and the town is waiting on them. John says that the board three years ago looked at this as they wanted to make sure everyone was paying their fair share. He remembers in the 1980s that there would not be any additional growth allowed on and he wonders how it is now. Travis says when people have a change of use he should be involved, right now he is not signing off on anything until we receive an engineer's report. John says some growth has been allowed. Travis says yes, the Montessori school is one of the first projects that he needs the engineers to jump on as this was never cleared through him, and he is not certain that the bed at that location can handle the additional volume.

Bobby Brown wants to speak on behalf of the disbanded Utility Advisory committee. Bobby says we were facing some items such as a plan for financing, improvements, repairs and reserves and have been waiting over two years for actuals. Peter Manning stopped what he had been working on due to this. On October 16th we presented the board with a letter from Maine Rural Water telling us what was needed, and the response was delayed and had no actuals. We have talked with them about measuring flow for rates. Bobby says we presented the board with a Keystone Project on the overall system which saved the town \$30,000.00 and presented an additional funding source. Bobby says it is crazy we were disbanded. He suggests the board read the meeting minutes and suggest the selectboard in the future does not disband a committee without notice. Bobby says they never received actuals which has been the hold up. TM, Targett says she provided financials to them in the way of budgets more than once which has actuals. Following further conversation Chairman Browne thanks Bobby and the committee for the work they did and asks Bobby to forward the emails from MRW.

Whitney Rhodes is recognized. She says she is trying to open a coffee shop and has been told by the wastewater superintendent Travis that this needs to wait until a study can be performed. She feels that there will not be much water going into the system as people will be walking out the door with it in the form of coffee. She indicates that she will not be cooking just serving coffee. She is trying to establish a business before she builds on her property which could be 1-2 years down the road. Superintendent Travis Targett explains that the engineers will be looking at water meter usages to perform an audit of the entire system however they are awaiting some results from Maine Rural Water. Whitney asks if she can use one of her units for her property that is vacant in the building owned by Rob and Polly MacMichael for a coffee shop and then just take that same unit back when she builds so it would be a wash. Travis says he is concerned about that unit's usage actually ceasing at the MacMichael location in order for it to go back. Travis says he needs to know that capacity of the beds and what can be allowed.. Following further conversation, the board agrees to have this item on the agenda for the next meeting provided more information is obtained.

Selectman Dunham makes a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Rushton. All in Favor.

**The minutes provided above are a summary. The Town meets record management requirements and retention schedules by maintaining permanent records of electronic recordings of meetings to satisfy the requirements of §403-A. Minutes by Leanna Targett.*