

# TOWN OF BUCKFIELD

## Select Board Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2024, at 6:30 PM

In Person and Remote Participation via Zoom

### **CALLED REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER AND DECLARE A QUORUM AT 6:33 PM**

**Present:** Chairman Robert Hand, Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett, Selectman Azalea Cormier, Selectman Heather Henley, Selectman Peter Fickett, Town Manager Cameron Hinkley, Town Clerk Brittany Parrott (Zoom), Vivian Wadas, Judy Berg (Zoom), Charles Berg (Zoom)

Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett ran the meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **1. REVIEW AND FINALIZE 2024-2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to recommend adding \$1,000 to the budget for annual maintenance for the two Stryker units in the Rescue Department budget and that the Board increase the Librarian wages by the cost-of-living increase over the past year. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – Discussion:** Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett explained the information that the Town Manager had provided regarding the cost for annual maintenance on the Stryker units. The Board discussed the associated costs if anything goes wrong and parts need to be replaced. Selectman Peter Fickett asked if the Librarian was ok with the proposed increase. Town Manager Cameron Hinkley confirmed he spoke with her, and she was ok with it. – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to ask the Town Manager to draft the warrant articles based on the budget brought to the Board after having gone through the Budget Committee including their recommendations and the recommendations of the Select Board. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – DISCUSSION:** Selectman Heather Henley asked about the proposed TextMyGov that appears in the notes. Town Manager Cameron Hinkley stated this was informational only and not included in the proposed budget. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett asked the Town Manager several questions about the program. The Town Manager stated that it had been several months since he watched the demo and provided information about the initial contract. Selectman Azalea Cormier asked the Town Manager if the program could potentially save his staff \$9,000 worth of time over the next two years. The Town Manager described ongoing questions that people call into the Town Office to ask such as hours of operation, recreation registration information, etc. that could be automated by the system and answered elsewhere. Additionally emergency notifications could be sent out to those that are opted in. The program is all text message based. – **Selectman Azalea Cormier rescinded her second. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett amended her motion to include \$5,500 to include the cost of TextMyGov. Selectman Peter Fickett seconded – DISCUSSION:** Judy Berg asked what the total proposed budget was and what the proposed mil-rate would be. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett explained that if they included the \$5,500 and deducted the proposed revenues and proposed fund balance appropriation from the proposed budget the Town would need to raise \$473.75 less than the previous fiscal year for the municipal budget. Judy Berg asked if anyone knew what the proposed school budget was, and the Town Manager stated that the current projection was an 11.5% increase – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

## 2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT UPDATE – FINAL DECISION

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to determine the Community Resilience Project timeline. Selectman Peter Fickett seconded – DISCUSSION:** Selectman Azalea Cormier stated that she reached out to Zach Gosselin from AVCOG. He confirmed that the Town could propose the grant application in phases and that windows would qualify if they met Efficiency Maine standards. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett committed to reaching out to vendors to gather estimates by Friday March 22, 2024, to allow time to submit the information to Zach Gosselin and meet the deadline of March 29, 2024. – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

## 3. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

EMA Director Vivian Wadas provided an emergency management update to the Board.

## 4. BUILDING PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to amend the Building Permit application fees to reflect a flat fee, and a five cent per square foot addition to that fee. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – DISCUSSION:** Town Manager Cameron Hinkley explained the current fee structure. The Board discussed how other Towns charge fees for building permits and reviewed similar sized towns fee structures. – **Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett moved to postpone the matter until the Board set the dates for the Public Hearings. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1. CONSENT AGENDA

|                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| a. Disbursement Warrants    |                     |
| Payroll Warrant 84          | \$ 16,680.01        |
| Accounts Payable Warrant 85 | \$ 47,188.42        |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$ 63,868.43</b> |

**Selectman Azalea Cormier made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Chairman Robert Hand seconded – VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

### 2. SET PUBLIC HEARING DATES

- Shoreland Zoning Ordinance
- Building Permit Ordinance
- Town Meeting Warrant

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to set dates for the Public Hearings listed on the agenda. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – DISCUSSION:** Town Manager Cameron Hinkley recommended setting two Public Hearings on the same night with one to immediately follow the other. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett proposed holding the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Public Hearing, immediately following the first Public Hearing for the budget, and on a second date hold the Building Permit Ordinance hearing followed by the second Public Hearing for the budget. Selectman Azalea Cormier asked for clarification on holding one Public Hearing on a weekday and one on a weekend day. Town Manager Cameron

Hinkley recommended holding the second budget Public Hearing on April 6<sup>th</sup> and moving the Select Board meeting to immediately follow so that the Warrant can be finalized and approved. The Board set April 2, 2024, at 6:00 PM, for the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Public Hearing and Town Meeting Warrant Public Hearing to immediately follow. The Board set April 6, 2024, at 12:30 PM, for the Building Permit Ordinance Public Hearing and Town Meeting Warrant Public Hearing to immediately follow. – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion that the Board bring the Building Permit Fee discussion back to the table. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – DISCUSSION:** Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett asked the Board to clarify the language in the Ordinance on when a Building Permit is allowed.

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion that the Board postpone the matter of Building Permit Fees to a later Select Board meeting following the Public Hearings. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – DISCUSSION:** Vivian Wadas asked for clarification about the fee schedule and whether it was part of the ordinance. The Board explained that the fee schedule was not part of the Ordinance. – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

**Selectman Azalea Cormier made a motion to make changes to the draft of the Building Permit Ordinance. Selectman Peter Fickett seconded – DISCUSSION:** The Board discussed exceptions when a Building Permit would not be required. The Board discussed and agreed that a Building Permit would not be required when ordinary repairs and maintenance or when renovations total a fair market value of \$15,000 or less and an expansion of footprint is not involved; when a temporary accessory structure is erected or placed on a parcel for less than 6-months over a rolling 12-month period; and when erecting, placing, or building a one floor accessory structure with less than 80 square feet of floor space. – **VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Public Comment Period (*the Board sets aside up to 15 minutes at the end of every meeting for public comment*)

Vivian Wadas asked for clarification on approving local revenues. She asked what happens if the Rescue Department's revenue exceeds the approved proposed revenue from the current year. She urged the Board to consider having a Warrant Article asking to appropriate the revenue above and beyond the accepted amount to the Ambulance Replacement Reserve Account rather than lapsing to fund balance.

Town Manager Cameron Hinkley asked if there were any additional warrant articles that the Board wanted to be included in the draft Town Meeting Warrant.

Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett asked if the previous year's warrant articles were written to revert to the following year's budget if they fail. Town Manager Cameron Hinkley confirmed and explained why. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett stated that she was concerned that if they revert to the previous year's budget things will need to be cut. Town Manager Cameron Hinkley suggested including one warrant article asking the voters to operate at the previous year's budget until such time a new budget is passed at a Special Town Meeting.

Vivian Wadas asked if the warrant articles will be written in a way that all Public Works divisions will be included in the same article. She stated she was confused because last year they were not written that way. Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett suggested combining them and if they fail to revisit it. Town Manager Cameron Hinkley provided input supporting combining General Government, Public Safety, Public Works, Community, etc. and suggested that if a department fails, they could break down the divisions at the special Town Meeting.

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to direct the Town Manager to draft the Town Meeting Warrant so the Town will be voting on departmental budgets in their entirety. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6) – *None Needed*

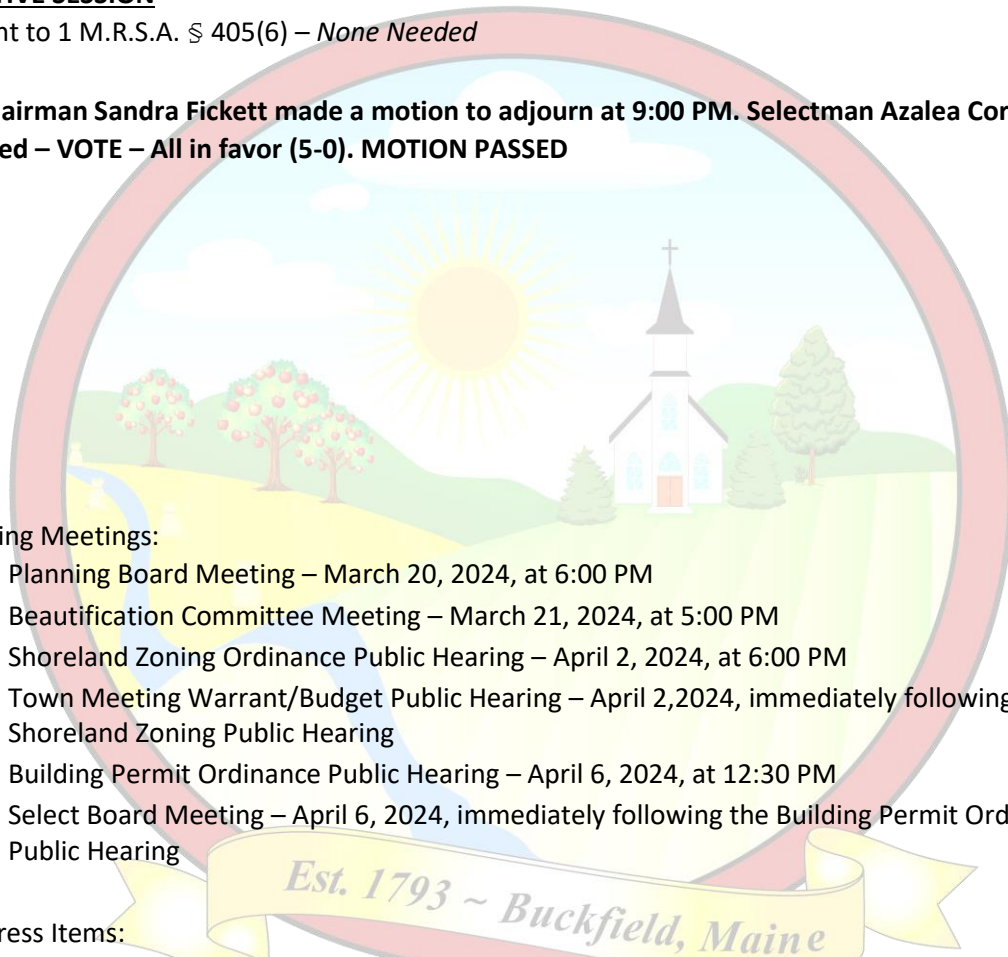
**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 PM. Selectman Azalea Cormier seconded – VOTE – All in favor (5-0). MOTION PASSED**

### Upcoming Meetings:

1. Planning Board Meeting – March 20, 2024, at 6:00 PM
2. Beautification Committee Meeting – March 21, 2024, at 5:00 PM
3. Shoreland Zoning Ordinance Public Hearing – April 2, 2024, at 6:00 PM
4. Town Meeting Warrant/Budget Public Hearing – April 2, 2024, immediately following the Shoreland Zoning Public Hearing
5. Building Permit Ordinance Public Hearing – April 6, 2024, at 12:30 PM
6. Select Board Meeting – April 6, 2024, immediately following the Building Permit Ordinance Public Hearing

### In Progress Items:

1. School Budget Exploration – Improve communications with elected School Board Directors and the Select Board
2. Capital Improvement Planning
3. Comprehensive Plan – Revisit
4. Fire and Rescue Department Integration
5. Municipal Property Usage Ordinance **(Board currently working on Policy)**
6. Select Board – Self Evaluations/Goal Setting
7. Cemetery Trust/Cemetery Plan **(Attorney memorandum received March 1, 2024)**
8. Old Church on the Hill **(Second opinion received – need volunteers)**
9. Emergency Plan **(Local EMA Director)**
10. Proper Reserve Account Establishment



## Select Board – Committee/Board/Organization Liaison Assignments

**Chairman Robert Hand:** R.S.U. # 10 School Board, Road Committee, and Budget Committee

**Vice Chairman Sandra Fickett:** Planning Board and Community Events Committee

**Selectman Azalea Cormier:** Recreation Committee, Ordinance Development Committee, and Old Church on the Hill Committee

**Selectman Heather Henley:** Buckfield Village Corporation, Library Committee, and Beautification Committee

**Selectman Peter Fickett:** Appeals Board, Social Services Committee, and Economic Development Committee

