

## Stockton Springs Select Board Minutes

March 10, 2025, Morning Meeting: Budget Workshop and Executive Committee

Attendees:

Select Board Members Present	Elizabeth Lenharr (Liz Lenharr) Marsha Shute Betsy Bradley John Bellino – Interim Town Manager
Select Board Members Absent	
Recording Secretary	Sarah Hardy
Community members	Approximately 5 community members were in attendance for some or all of the meeting. Speaker names were captured in the notes as best as possible. No attendance list was captured.

**Yellow Highlight** indicates NEW or not-yet-completed action items.

**Green Highlight** indicates COMPLETED action items.

**Blue Highlight** indicates incomplete notes, based on in-person note taking where something was missed. May need to go to tape backup.

#	Agenda	Notes
1.	Roll Call: Call to Order	Betsy Bradley called meeting to order at 9:10am roll call – see attendance above
2.	Public Comment – Any Topic	<u>Public</u> none  <u>Select Board</u> none  <u>Town Manager</u> none
3.	Budget Workshop	<u>Tech/Legal</u> John – left at \$3500 but there is concern that might not be enough. Haven't gotten all the bills from this year to know what a good basis might be. Betsy asked what it was in previous years Amber: \$5500, \$4500 in previous years, she would suggest going up to \$5500. John agrees it's good not to have to worry to contact them with any question.

Betsy recalled it had been higher for a while before that, only last couple of years did it get lowered.

Tech source – the number reflects recent invoices, it includes an increase in base pricing plus additional emails that were set up for recording secretary and the select board.

If any of the committees get the grants they've requested (ambulance and Resilience committee) then it would cover some of the tech needs like zoom calls so that's not included in the budget.

However, there is a tech coordinator budget which may be used for monitoring zoom meetings.

#### Assessing

Health insurance benefits package is going up

The software used for tax maps has increased

Postage is the same

Increased the budget for training, even cost of seminars has increased lately so this will covers that increase.

#### Rec

Amber can speak to Rec -she does it as a volunteer essentially, there is only \$100 allocated for her payment.

The budget went down about \$500 compared to last year because last year's included the pickleball court painting.

There was a small increase in the cost of portable potties.

Q: Betsy – does this include community builder expenses?

A: Amber – yes, it's listed under Supplies.

Other supplies include things for little league, for maintaining the grounds (little league does do fund raising but the town helps). The cost of supplies did decrease some.

#### Parks

Overall decrease

Portable potties went up, but the cost doesn't look high enough compared to the one in the rec budget.

Q: John – do the we pay all year for these?

A: Amber - only when they are up. Need to check with George because maybe the duration is shorter than the one at the ball field. **John to ask George about how they came up with this number.**

Also includes amount of \$2000 for Sandy Point trail rehab.

Q Betsy – what’s the monthly cost for potties

A: Amber they are \$185 a month but that is handicap so it may be more than a non-handicap unit.

Suggest bumping the cost of potties to \$1500

Q: John - There is an office supply list – what is that?

A: Amber – it may be for the physical bathroom. For toilet paper, a new seat etc.

John noted that there hasn’t been a noted line for this in previous years. He also noted that other department budgets were much lower for supplies, perhaps the cost was split this year across depts and not last (just a coding difference)? He noted that sign and drum liners were taken out of office supplies. He suggests taking the line out from Parks, especially because we hadn’t spent much from this in 2024.

Q: Betsy – is the harbor’s potty is included?

A: Amber – the harbor pays for their own.

Amber mentioned that occasionally if needed a second potty will be rented temporarily in various places around town

#### Public Works

The budget increased this year by 2.51%. It’s the highest percentage of budget for the town.

John mentioned that when he’s worked for other towns without a public works department, all the work had to be contracted out and that’s much more expensive than having a budgeted department in the town.

It was noted that George didn’t want to increase the budget but had to because prices went up again (diesel etc.).

He didn’t want to increase paving budget but John noted that eventually the town will need to do that because costs are going up and repairs may be delayed. The budget covers about a mile of paving.

It was noted too that because public works are on staff we don’t have the delays that might happen with contractors.

The only line item of contracted labor is tree trimming under the services section – and it has increased this year but in previous years

we had paid more than budgeted so it made sense to increase it. This is an investment and keeps us from losing power in storms.

Plowing – covers the fill in plow driver, included 40 hours for sick coverage or if there are a lot of storms.

Overall, even with increase to line items the budget is lower than last year because it doesn't include roof.

#### Cemeteries

Current year is \$5200

Betsy – are these rollovers?

Amber – yes there is about \$110 in interest

Does this include Charlie? He restores damaged/sinking markers. Yes, this is restoration/supplies \$1500

The total is the same as previous years and the totals vs actuals is on target for the year.

In 2023 \$2380 was spent and same in 2024.

There is a sub account for each cemetery – can't touch the principal but can spend the interest. The interest for Mt Recluse is up to \$6000, Sandy Point cemetery \$1500, Mt Prospect \$1700, another \$2400. Amber didn't know how money from this account is spent but the money is there in case there is a new and significant even requiring repair.

Can we cut this budget to \$2500 for this year? If there are major changes needed then the budget can be requested and included in next year's budget.

We should encourage the keepers to spend the remaining budget from this year if there has been any delayed work planned.

#### Streetlights

Budget \$9000

Actual expenditure is \$9240

Did we switch out to LED? Yes, the board thought so.

#### Trash

The budget went down because the cost decreased from Eagle Point

		<p>There was general discussion about how the process for budgeting was better than in years past.</p> <p>In next week's meeting @9am will be going over public safety.</p> <p>*Amber – need to add a line to the budget for earned paid leave. She just remembered it wasn't added yet. <b>She will work with John on that.</b></p> <p>Betsy made a motion to move into Executive session @9:53, seconded by Marsha. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
4.	Executive session, 1 M.R.S.A ss405(6)(A) – Town Manager Hiring Process	
5.	Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at #am

Open Action item list:

Date raised	Action	Assignment	Status
1/13/25	<p>In public comment Tom Moore mentioned an emergency communication antenna which hasn't been mounted since the new roof. It couldn't be reattached because it would require puncture of the new roof. Betsy asked for the paperwork on what needs to be done, it had previously been provided to Mac. Tom will provide the estimate. The company is Atlantic Communications.</p> <p>a. <b>Select board to decide on how to handle the antennae installation</b></p> <p>Betsy updated that Loren felt strongly that the antennae get moved off the town and onto the Emergency building. Dianne mentioned Tom Moore did have some concerns about the location and the facilities available at each location.</p> <p>b. Action as of 2/10/25: John to revisit this topic with Tom Moore. Determine which location is optimal. We will need to consider costs of installation and method of installation for each location. Suggest including Vern in discussion with Tom since they seem to have different opinions.</p>	<p>a. Betsy Bradley</p> <p>b. John Bellino</p>	<p>In process, see notes from the 1/27/25 meeting.</p> <p>Updated on 2/10/25</p> <p>Updated in notes from 2/24/25</p>

1/20/25	Research new high-speed internet for Town facilities – town office, town garage, harbor master building	John Bellino	Assigned to new interim town manager in 1/27/25 meeting In process as of 2/10/25
1/27/25	Create warrants and plan for June town meeting: 1. Broadband, next phase (this will be June meeting)	Loren Cole or new Interim town manager John Bellino	Pending
2/10/25	Since the cancelation of Tally Ho purchase, the \$140,000 needs to be placed in the correct firehouse building account (separate from the fire station equipment account)	John Bellino	Pending
2/10/2025	Because of the cancelation of the Tally Ho purchase, can we use the ARPA funds for the ambulance? 1. Is there any benefit of paying off the bond early or does it make more sense to leave the ARPA money (\$82,000) in an interest-bearing account and accumulate interest? Confirm with Tim Pease.	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	In March, when the bond money for the ambulance comes in, add an item on the agenda to receive the bond money.	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	Find the policy documents related to the new state law requiring towns to engage real estate agents for the sale of town owned properties. Mac had obtained the policy drafted by Bangor’s town manager. If they can’t be found, reach out to Bangor for them again.	John Bellino	In Process Discussed in 2/24/25 select board notes.
2/10/2025	Bring the list of properties (tax forfeiture, gifted, town-owned) to be sold by the town for review at a future select board meeting.	John Bellino	
2/10/2025	Action item review pay “steps” and pay increase policies as part of the personnel review.	John Bellino	In Process Discussed in 2/24/25 select board notes
2/24/2025	John will have a Stockton springs draft of the tax acquired property’s sales policy ready for the next meeting (March 10, 2025)	John Bellino	In Process Discussed in 2/24/25

			select board notes
2/24/2025	Create a clean copy of the Keep the Heat on policy and bring back to next meeting (March 10, 2025)	John Bellino	In Process Discussed in 2/24/25 select board notes
2/24/2025	Email a copy of the draft town budget to the select board for their review	John Bellino	In Process Discussed in 2/24/25 select board notes
2/24/2025	Add solar moratorium to the next Select Board agenda (March 10,2025)	John Bellino	
2/24/2025	Get the 2025 Planning Board meeting minutes posted to the town website	John Bellino	
3/10/2025	Budget action: John to ask George about how they came up with this number for portable potties.	John Bellino	
3/10/2025	Budget action: Amber – need to add a line to the budget for earned paid leave. She will work with John on that	John Bellino and Amber Poulin	

Completed Action items:

Date raised	Action	Assignment	Status
1/20/25	Notify David Estes about his renewed contract for Harbor Master	Loren Cole	Per Skeet, David was contacted and accepted the position. Complete 1/27/25 meeting.
1/20/25	Place ad for Assistant Harbor Master	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25
1/20/25	Place ad for Town Manager	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25
1/20/25	Contact Rich Cromwell for assistance on hiring Town Manager	Loren Cole	Completed see notes 1/27/25

1/20/25	<p>Contact Tim Pease (town lawyer) for next steps in acquiring funds and paying for the ambulance approved at the 12/30/24 town meeting</p> <p>Update 2/10/25 - Complete and the application has been submitted. Awaiting final approval, committal from the bond. Expect the bond in March, leave this on action item to receive the bond money in the second march meeting.</p>	John Bellino	<p>discussed next steps in 1/27/25 meeting</p> <p>Complete, on 2/10/25 meeting.</p>
1/27/25	Ambulance Bond – to be submitted before 2/5/25 deadline	John Bellino	Complete, updated in 2/10/25 meeting
1/27/25	<p>Create warrants and plan for special town meeting or June town meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Buyout of solar panels on town garage, (special town meeting)</li> <li>2. Create a 5 person select board (special town meeting)</li> </ol>	John Bellino	Warrants and Plan completed for Solar Panel Buyout and 5-person board in special town meeting. Closed on 2/10 meeting
1/13/25	<p>Regarding the buy-out of the existing solar panels on the town garage. Per Linda Meadows, who has examined the contract and raised her findings in public comment, if we are to initiate the purchase we must indicate our intent before February 7, 2025, or we will have to wait another year.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The select board decided to initiate the negotiations.</li> <li>b. Per Betsy – it would have to be raised as a budget item on the budget, thinks we should initiate the negotiations. No motion is needed</li> </ol> <p>Skeet – is this sundog solar? Danny Piper (gave his number to Loren) is a neighbor and thinks they'd work with the town, and thinks he'd be sure to come to a good deal.</p>	John Bellino	<p>In process, see notes from 1/27/25 meeting notes.</p> <p>John to get final numbers in time to be included on the warrant for 2/24/25 special town meeting.</p> <p>Closed on 2/24/25 when the town voted against buying out</p>

			the solar lease.
1/20/25	<p>Create the warrant for a 5 member select board for the next town meeting</p> <p>Must be done by Thursday, per Dianne warrant will be ready for signatures Wednesday afternoon.</p>	John Bellino	<p>In process, discussed next steps in 1/27/25 meeting. Due Thursday, in process as of 2/10.</p> <p>Complete. On 2/24/25 the town voted against increasing the number of select board members to five.</p>
2/10/2025	<p>Meeting Minutes from 12/23/24 Will be brought forth for approval at the next meeting.</p> <p>Make sure all approved minutes are on the town website.</p>	John Bellino	Completed in 2/24/25 meeting