MINUTES

LIBERTY SELECTBOARD

March 25, 2019 6:00 PM

**Selectboard Attendance:** Melinda Steeves, 1st Selectman

Carrie Peavey, 2nd Selectman

Henry Hall, 3rd Selectman

**Town Officials:** Administrator Kenn Ortmann, Fire Chief Bill Gillespie

**Guest(s):**  None

1. **Open Public Meeting:** 6:07 PM
2. **Approve Minutes:** Pursuant to review Selectman Hall moved and Selectman Peavey seconded approval of the March 18, 2019 minutes. Unanimous.
3. **Warrant Review and Approval:** Done.
4. **Officials/Public comments:** Fire Chief Bill Gillespie shared his observations about the Ambulance
Service discussion at the Montville Town Meeting. Selectman Peavey confirmed that Montville voted to support the Service at the lowest level. It is anticipated there may be considerable discussion about future options at our Town Meeting. There was also discussion about options for billing Palermo for services provided to Palermo residents by the Liberty fire department and the Ambulance Service.
5. **TA informational items**
	1. **Media stories:** None.
	2. **Revaluation project status report:** None.
6. **Old Business**
	1. **Unusual private party arrangements that can place a burden on the Town:** TA Ortmann shared information he received from Maine Municipal Association (MMA) about non-lien options the Town has to collect taxes when unusual private party arrangements exist that can place a burden on the Town.

When the value of the unusually configured asset is likely to be modest (i.e. owner of a dilapidated building or old mobile home or RV is different than owner of the land) or where there are multiple owners of one property where one owner has refused to pay their share of the taxes, the Town can avoid taking ownership of an unwanted asset by NOT placing a lien on the property and, therefore, not progressing to the automatic foreclosure stage.

Chapter 4 of MMA’s Tax Collectors and Treasurers Manual outlines all of the different methods for collecting delinquent real estate (and personal property) taxes. Specifically, municipalities can collect delinquent real estate taxes through the municipal tax lien process, a small claims action, a civil action brought in the name of the collector, or a civil action brought in the name of the municipality. The most common methods to collect delinquent real estate taxes are the municipal tax lien process and small claims actions, since these are generally the easiest and most efficient methods. The manual discusses the each method, as well as the pros and cons for each of these methods in much more detail.

TA Ortmann will ask Clerk/Tax Collector/Registrar of Voters Gail Philippi and Deputy Hatfield to bring unusual situations to the attention of the Selectboard before they vote to place a lien on property.

* 1. **Final preparations for Town Meeting:** TA Ortmann shared an update of the spreadsheet comparing the cost of items in last year's warrant with the cost of items included in this year's warrant and showing the differing impacts of the three levels of Ambulance Service support. The update shows the impact of using an additional $50,000 from surplus to offset the amount raised from taxes.
	2. **Other:** None
1. **New Business**
	1. **Hoyt Fund:** In anticipation of "rolling over" a CD, the question is how much was in the fund originally and how much interest has accumulated and should not be included in the roll-over amount. TA Ortmann was asked to check on the amount as of the 2011 audit so the Selectboard can use that as a starting point.
	2. **Abatement requests:** TA Ortmann noted that we recently received two abatement requests; one just before the deadline and one after the deadline. He will be drafting memos for the Assessors regarding both requests.
	3. **Other:** Selectman Peavey noted that some School Budget Committee workshops are on Mondays. However, one specifically designed for Town officials is scheduled for April 4th at 6 PM. Given the size of the School budget and the significant portion paid by Liberty, she believes the Town should actively participate in the process.
2. **"11th hour" items**
	1. **Library septic system mowing responsibility:** TA Ortmann shared the request from Barbara Rehmeyer, President of the Liberty Library Association Board of Trustees, that the Town include mowing of the Library septic system in the mowing contract as promised in 2016.

The Selectboard reviewed the minutes from the October 24, 2016 Selectboard meeting where they agreed to add that task to the mowing contract. Ironically, less than a month later the November 14, 2016 mowing contract discussion omitted any discussion of the septic system and in each year since then the septic system has not been included.

The Selectboard then reviewed the 2001 Memorandum of Agreement between the Town and the Liberty Library association and saw that Paragraph 6 states "The Library shall, (within 18 months of occupancy and opening to public) at its sole expense, undertake the design, construction and maintenance of a septic system . . ."

The Selectboard asked TA Ortmann to respond to the request apologizing for the confusion, noting the responsibilities set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement, explaining that the Town just concluded the bidding process for mowing without this site included so we are not in a position to add it now, and recommending they contact our mowing contractor Jalen Babin about the possibility of septic system mowing.

1. **Adjournment:** 7:09 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kenn Ortmann

Town Administrator