

TOWN OF CUSHING  
SELECT BOARD  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, January 10, 2022  
Cushing Community Center

**Selectmen Present:** Chairperson Alton Grover; Selectpeople Martha Marchut, Craig Currie, and Daniel Staples

**Selectmen Absent:** Tracey Bally

**Staff Present:** Town Clerk Lisa Young

**Public Present:** Cheryl Stackpole and Corey Jones

**1. Call to Order:** Chair Alton Grover called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and a quorum was determined.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

**3. Approve and sign the Warrant:**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Craig Currie, to approve 2021 Warrant 56 and 2022 Warrants 1 and 2

**Discussion:** none

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

**4. Review and approve the minutes of the December 27, 2021 meeting**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Martha Marchut made a motion, seconded Dan Staples, to approve the minutes of the December 27, 2021 meeting as written

**Discussion:** none

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

**5. Additions and Changes to the Agenda:**

**5a. Food Pantry**

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Dan said he went and saw Rich Moody and he [Rich] kept saying how the Board didn't communicate with him. Dan said he didn't call him, but it's been in several minutes that they'd talked about the Food Pantry. Dan said the bottom line is, it seemed they had it planned all along to go to Friendship. Rich said no, it happened spur of the moment. Dan said but yet they have a 20x40 building and generator, electricity, and parking lot. He added if they did that spur of the moment, they're real good. Dan said bottom line is they're going to use this one until they get the new one going this spring,

then they're all done with this building. Alton asked if they're going to plan on doing what we used to do or no. Dan said he asked if they're still going to have one here for people and he said no, there is only two people from Cushing on the Board, the rest are all from Friendship. He said they get volunteers once in a while but nothing steady. Craig said that's the real reason they moved to Friendship; the Board is all Friendship folks. Dan summarized bottom line is if people want to use it [Food Pantry] they're going to have to go to Friendship. Craig felt they should do a survey of users at some point. He said he is still really concerned about the distance. Dan agreed, he said Rich said it's only 6 or 7 miles, and people in Friendship drive it to come up to this one. Dan said he thinks it's a little different when you drive up off a peninsula vs going down just for that and coming back. Craig said maybe it won't be an issue but feels they could at least survey the folks that use it to see if it is an issue or not. Dan said they seem pretty well set. Craig understood that but said they could also have two. Dan said if you could get the help maybe. Alton said that's what we always used to do. Dan said the average age of people working it is over 70; he added we need some young people to get involved.

## **5b. Maine Municipal Audit Services**

**ACTION:** none

**Discussion:** Lisa said she had something in the new mail from Mindy with Maine Municipal Audit Services. She said she will be here next week for our audit. She said that was the engagement letter that she thinks everyone read, but on the back, it asks for a signature and last year they had all the Select People sign along with Lisa, so she wanted the Board to do that again.

## **5c. Donation**

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Martha mentioned the donation from Frank Muddle and wanted to be sure he was sent a thank you letter. Lisa confirmed she did send a thank you to him for that donation, and she talked to him as well.

## **5d. Sand Shed Door**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to have Miller and Miller look at the panels we have and to find out if they can use them to fix the sand shed door

**Discussion:** Alton asked if it's okay to get a hold of Larry and get him to look at the door again. He said there are two panels over in the garage that they think will fit the bottom panels on the sand shed door. He said they haven't been able to fix it because there was so much sand, but now there is room to work in there. Alton wanted Larry to see if those panels will fit and can be used to fix the door. Martha asked if once the door is fixed, can it be shut. Dan answered yes shut and probably locked.

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

## **6. Unfinished Business:**

### **6a. Broadband report from Axiom**

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Craig said he emailed everybody, Lisa too, a copy of the feasibility study (the study we paid \$5,000 for last year). He said after he sent it, he [guy that did the study] did write back and say there were a few changes, but nothing substantial that would change the bottom line. Craig said it would be \$2.5 million to wire the whole town with fiber. He said that includes all of the private lanes. He said the guy added some interesting revenue ideas in the study showing about how many people would take it and at what price. Craig said he doesn't think there is anything they need to do with it immediately except they now have a number that they have. He said he would certainly like to give it to the Midcoast Internet Utility group. He said they signed the commitment to join, which is fine as they seem to be going through some growing pains themselves, so he's glad they didn't. He said he still feels there is a legitimate way to look at it and there's no harm if the rest of the Board agrees in letting them see the cost to do Cushing so they can put it into their calculations. Craig said they [the group] are basically trying to get State/Federal money to do it and he feels Cushing is an appealing prospect for them because we have a lot of underserved people and a demographic that's a little different than say Camden, which might help them to get grant money. Craig just wanted to make sure the Board is okay with him sharing the info with the Midcoast Internet Utility. Dan said he didn't see any harm in sharing it, but he isn't sure he wants to join anything yet. Craig said he agrees, and he doesn't want to join anything just yet either. Dan said we do fall right under the guidelines, to help these small regions. Craig said one of the proposals in the study, and he doesn't think we'll want to do this, is to form our own private utility. He said even thinking about something like that would have to go to a referendum. Martha asked Craig if he knew the sense it would take to do something like that. Craig said no, and honestly, he doesn't think anyone really does. Dan asked if it was right it could take up to 4 or 5 years. Craig said at least, and the thing he has heard from the Midcoast Utility is that the State has already got hundreds of millions of dollars from the Feds for this, and it has been a very slow process to get that moving and grants out, etc. He said there seems to be a lot of frustration already on getting any of that money out to where it needs to be. Craig said he would also like to post a copy of the study on the Cushing website and to the Cushing Post if the Board agrees. He said he thought parts of the study would be of interest to some residents and kind of eye opening. Dan said we should, we used town money to do it, that's public information. Craig said he will get Richard to get it posted. Martha thought it may be good for some discussion at the town meeting, too. Craig said he thinks the guy that did the study would join for a meeting to answer questions and asked if it would want to be a part of the annual town meeting or separate. Dan thought adding it to that would be good, he could explain what he did and answer some questions people may have. Martha added Mike Mayo is really good at managing those too. Craig said once there is a date, he will reach out to the guy. Lisa said that date is set, it's in stone, always the third week of March. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday is election and Town Meeting is following Tuesday at 7 p.m.

## **6b. ARPA Funds**

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Craig said he also sent around the final rules on use of the ARPA funds. He said he felt they really broadened it. He said he got the notice from the legal department at MMA and they will go through it and give more details. He said at least it's finalized so they're not working under something that can change. He said they really broadened it for the ability to use it for more with a lot less reporting required for small towns. Craig said it is something they'll also want to talk about and bring up at the Town Meeting, as well. Craig said we have got the first half, and the second half should be coming in April. Craig said we also got a little more from a grant, they divvied up what was left and split it amongst the towns that did apply for the grant, which not all did. Dan asked if Craig had heard anymore from the County. Craig said they denied all town specific requests and are supposed to revisit it after the first of the year. Craig said our guy on the budget committee is from Thomaston and they are now involved in the process. He said he isn't sure exactly how to when the process will start back up, but Craig was told all town specific requests will be back on the table. He said that doesn't mean they will be granted, but at least will be considered again. He said it will be the County budget committee and the three

commissioners. Craig said he hopes to have an update on County stuff by next meeting, adding half of the \$7.8 million is just sitting there, and like us the other half is supposed to show up in April.

### **6c. Harbormaster boat**

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Alton said they got an answer back from MMA. Dan said basically it needs to go to the Town Warrant to get permission from the Town residents to sell it. Alton read the official response. He said it does need to go out to bid, too. Lisa clarified she will add an article to the Town Warrant for it, and they can't do anything until after Town Meeting. The Board agreed.

### **7. New Business:**

#### **7a. Review and sign annual Policy Regarding Check Disbursement Prior to Expenditure Warrant Approval**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Martha Marchut, to accept the Policy Regarding Check Disbursement Prior to Expenditure Warrant Approval

**Discussion:** Lisa said this is the same yearly policy. She said nothing has changed.

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

#### **7b. Review and approve Holidays for 2022**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Martha Marchut, to approve the 2022 Holiday Schedule

**Discussion:** Dan noted for Columbus Day the Selectman meeting will be moved to Tuesday. Lisa confirmed they have a policy for that when meetings fall on holidays.

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

#### **7c. School Choice Week**

**ACTION:** Chairperson Alton Grover made a motion, seconded by Dan Staples, to recognize January 23-29, 2022 as School Choice Week

**Discussion:** Alton said this must be the proclamation department. Dan said we've done it every year. Lisa said it has been in the new mail but hasn't been voted on.

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

#### **7d. Accept resignation from Pat Aboud from the Budget and Ordinance Committees**

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to accept the Resignation from Pat Aboud from the Budget and Ordinance Committees

**Discussion:** Dan asked if she would do the budget committee this year or if it would be effective immediately. Alton said it doesn't say on the letter. Dan said he will give her a call and ask.

## Motion Carried 4-0-0

### 7e. Schedule Budget Meeting and review 2021 revenues

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to schedule a budget workshop at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 15, 2022

**Discussion:** Dan said he is available Saturday if anyone else is. He said it's getting close, so we need to get started on it. Dan said he prefers mornings first thing in the morning instead of middle of the day. Craig asked about scheduling the joint meeting with the budget committee. Dan said they can figure that out after the workshop, he said if you hit some snags, they need those figured out before meeting with the budget committee, too.

## Motion Carried 4-0-0

**ACTION:** Selectperson Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Craig Currie, to accept and approve the transfer of certain Revenues into the listed expense accounts

**Discussion:** Lisa said in the past the Board has approved putting certain Revenues back into the expense accounts. She said she listed out those accounts, such as ambulance runs go back into the rescue squad expense account. She said there are a bunch of agent fees that have previously gone into the administration account. She said you can see all of that listed and totaled on the papers.

## Motion Carried 4-0-0

### 7f. Review Covid Protocol

**ACTION:** none taken

**Discussion:** Dan said his questions have been answered. He said the office girl has done her quarantine, he said they wrote a policy and then don't look at it for a year, he thought it would be good to review is. Martha said she thought there was a question about testing. Martha said we were going to ask anyone working in the office who has actively had covid to test before returning. Dan read, "after completing quarantine, they are asked to provide a negative test to the Cushing Select Board before returning to work." Martha said good, she just wanted to make sure as it is no longer required by the federal government. She said her other question is rather we want to make practice right now while things are as active as they are, of following the recommendation of the CDC and wearing masks. Dan said it's a recommendation, but the way he sees it, if someone comes into this room rather, they're vaccinated or not it's up to them to wear a mask and protect themselves. He added he is fully vaccinated and taken every shot he can so he doesn't feel he should be required to protect other people. He said according to CDC it's a recommendation, not a mandate. Martha said she was just putting it out there if they want to follow it or not. She just felt it was a good time to mention it and talk about it since it's on the agenda. Lisa asked for clarification on rather she needs to call and let someone know they need to provide a test; she asked if an at home test is okay. The Board said at home is fine to show negative. Alton said you can go up to Rockport and get them for free there. Corey Jones said Sami has tested twice, \$25-30 a test, and you can still test positive up to three months. He said you don't necessarily just test negative after 10-14 days when you're not contagious anymore. Cheryl Stackpole said she is curious what other jobs require, as she knows you can test positive up to 90 days, too. She said travel for instance, if you have tested positive within 90 days you do not need to show a negative test to travel. She said if you show proof of having Covid within 90 days, you don't need to test. She added you also

don't need it to return to school; if you've tested positive and complete quarantine and are asymptomatic you don't need a negative test to return to school. Dan said the rules are changing every day, it depends on what will fit the government and what they want to do. He said this is what we had in our policy. Dan said he talked to Sami the other day and she said she felt good and seemed to be doing well. Corey said she is; he added Parker was able to continue to go to school the whole time she had it. The nurse said if he's tested negative and has no symptoms, they're masked, and he did not need to quarantine for the contact. He said he has stayed good and tested negative four times. Dan said we're not going by State or Federal, this is our policy so if we no longer agree with it, we need to change our policy. Corey said if you chance all three office girls getting it, and showing positive for 90 days, that's tough. Dan added it would be a long office closure. Martha said this policy, as Corey knows it well and was there when it was written too, were made when things were very different. Martha added it may want to be revisited. Martha asked if Mariann was still the Health Officer, Lisa said she is on until March. Dan mentioned talking about it on the next meeting. Lisa said Sami is scheduled to come back Wednesday, so she needs to know what to tell her. Dan asked if she had an at home test and thought maybe she could take one tomorrow. Alton said when he had it, and he had it bad and was in the hospital, he couldn't get it and he couldn't give it, and he had to wait 90 days before testing or getting vaccinated. Lisa said she printed off the CDC stuff that says 5 days you stay home, and 5 more days you wear a mask. Corey said that's what they told Sami. Cheryl read the school's policy that they just sent out. Dan said Sami should test, if it's negative come back to work, and wear a mask 5 more days.

**8. Comments from Citizens:** Cheryl mentioned a recent go around on Facebook regarding the "town plow truck" plowing St. George. Cheryl said it has gone around Facebook, so she just wanted to bring it here and get some clarification on the record. Dan said that's why he called Sami, he felt she handled that very good. He added she gave a good explanation of it. Alton said it all could have been avoided with one call to him; he said the dispatcher at the Sheriff's should have called and he could have taken care of the situation. Alton said the truck was involved in a slight accident on the St. George Road and the cop went down and the plate number was called in and came back as registered to the Town of Cushing. Alton said he heard it come across the scanner, so he called Jimmy Kalloch and he said the plates that go on the truck hadn't got put on yet, it was laying on his desk. He apologized and said he would go switch them right then and bring the plate back down to the Town. Lisa said she is surprised it wasn't off. Alton said he thought it was, too. Corey added you'll never make those people happy; he said Rockland's roads were worse than ours. Dan said five people said it was the worst ever, then five more said it was the best it's been. He said it went on and on, but again he thought Sami handled it very well.

## 9. Adjourn

**ACTION:** Chairperson Alton Grover made a motion, seconded by Dan Staples, to adjourn at 6:47 p.m.

**Motion Carried 4-0-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Jones  
Recording Secretary