TOWN OF CHINA

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Select Board Meeting
Monday – 12/11/2017 – Town Office Meeting Room
7:00 P.M.

Minutes

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance at 7:00 p.m. Board members present were Irene L. Belanger, Jeffrey LaVerdiere, Donna Mills-Stevens, Neil Farrington, and Robert McFarland. Others present were Ronald R. Breton, Mark Davis, Ed Brownell, Paul Lucas, Larry Sikora, Tim Grotton, Kevin Rhoades, Danyl Hoague, Frank Soares, Elwood Stevens, Thomas F. Richards, Bob Kurek, Carl Gartley, Mary Grow and the Town Manager. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

On a motion by Selectperson Neil Farrington and a second by Selectperson Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere, the Board voted 5-0 to accept the minutes of the 11/27/2017 Select Board meeting as presented.

On a motion by Selectperson Neil Farrington and a second by Selectperson Donna Mills-Stevens, the Board voted 5-0 to accept and sign China Payroll Warrant #31 for $29,165.47 as presented. On a motion by Selectperson Neil Farrington and a second by Selectperson Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere, the Board voted 5-0 to accept and sign Town Payables Warrant #32 for $483,947.43 as presented.

Unfinished Business:

- **Transfer Station Committee Presentation – Frank Soares, Chairperson**: The Select Board started the meeting early to accommodate a presentation by the China Transfer Station Committee. Chair Frank Soares began the presentation by introducing the members of the Committee and reminding all in attendance of the mission of the Committee. He went on to note the capital improvement plan produced by the group and introduced Bob Kurek who provided information to the Select Board about the 2018-2019 capital requests. Bob handed out information sheets for everyone to follow supporting the Committees' recommendation to purchase a new forklift and a new "pre-crusher" in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The forklift purchase will replace the current one used at the transfer station.

  Bob Kurek, Palermo's representative on the TSC, said the current forklift could present safety problems if not replaced. Transfer Station Manager Tim Grotton said the forklift now in use failed recently and the Town Manager noted that he authorized immediate repairs to make sure the forklift is safe to use. Bob proceeded through information indicating a replacement forklift would cost up to $26,000 with consideration for a trade-in. He compared this to a purchase of a used forklift that would cost $6,000 less than a new replacement unit.

  Bob went on to information relating to the purchase of a pre-crusher noting that a new machine would cost $53,000 plus an additional installation cost of $3,000. He said that by increasing the average weight of a load hauled to Waste Management in Norridgewock to at least 10 tons from the current average load weight of 6.6 tons, the new machine "would pay for itself in about 17 years". Currently the transfer station personnel spend a good amount of time tamping down the demolition and debris with the bucket loader and still only average a little over six tons per load. By increasing the average load weight to 10 tons there should be a savings of approximately $3,300 annually in transportation costs. He added that the pre-crusher could be used as a back-up to the hopper during busy times and in an emergency situation.

The Select Board discussed how to fund the equipment and noted that there is a transfer station reserve account that could be used. The reserve fund is resourced through the capital contribution the town of Palermo pays annually. The Board intends to revisit this item during the budget deliberations in January.

- ***Assessors' Meeting - Executive Session Pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. §841 Application for Abatement – Inability to Pay – Hardship or Poverty:*** Digressing from regular meeting, on a motion by Selectperson Irene L. Belanger and a second by Selectperson Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere, the Board voted 4-0-1(Mills-Stevens) to interrupt the regular SB meeting and convene the Assessors meeting and further to enter ***Executive Session Pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A. §841 Application for Abatement – Inability to Pay – Hardship or Poverty.***

  Return to regular meeting: On a motion by Selectperson Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere and a second by Selectperson Neil Farrington, the Board voted 4-0-1(Mills-Stevens) to exit Executive Session, and resume the Assessors' meeting. On a motion by Assessor Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere and a second by Assessor Irene L. Belanger, the Board of Assessors voted 4-0-1(Mills-Stevens) to deny the poverty abatement request submitted by Mr. Lawrence Lee Laske, the reason stated being that Mr. Laske was not able to prove the hardship and inability to pay; his income appeared to be sufficient to mitigate the circumstances and the property was not going to foreclosure.

  On a motion by Assessor and a second by Assessor, the Baord of Assessors voted 5-0 to adjourn the Board of Assessors' meeting and reconvene the regular Select Baord meeting.

- **Organization Reports/Transfer Station Coordinators/Other Reports: Thurston Park II Committee, RSU#18, MRC, MRRA, TIF Committee, China for a Lifetime Committee, Transfer Station Committee, Broadband Committee, etc. (other):**

New Business:

- **Public Comment:** Regional School Unit (RSU) #18 Superintendent Carl Gartley stopped at the town office during the SB meeting intending to note in person his written invitations to Select Board members and other town officials to tour China's two schools and to be updated on the intentions of the school administration in their use of bond proceeds over the next two years. There was not any date set for a tour. Mr. Gartley noted that more than $2 million of the $14,000,000 million bond issue RSU#18 voters approved in November of 2017 will be spent on China Schools.

  Mr. Gartley said the RSU is applying again for state funds to enlarge China Primary School so that China Middle School could be closed. There are 84 applications for major construction being submitted, he said; the state typically funds about a dozen in a 10-year period.
  Meanwhile, more than $2 million of the $14 million bond issue RSU voters approved in November will be spend on China schools, Gartley said.

- **Policies and Procedures:** The Board will continually review policies and procedures with the intent of updating any and all that need attention.
- **Appointments:** On a motion by Selectperson Joann C. Austin and a second by Selectperson Irene L. Belanger, the Board 5-0 to appoint Neil Farrington the China Bicentennial Coordinator. Selectmen accepted Board member Neil Farrington's offer to serve as coordinator for China's 2018 bicentennial celebration, a post Farrington has been filling informally for more than a year in the absence of any other interested person.

- **Historic Preservation – Neil Farrington:** Farrington proposed selectmen enter into discussions with trustees of the Branch Mills Union Church about the town taking responsibility for maintenance of the 1857 building. He asserted the town might be better able to apply for historic preservation grants. Selectperson Farrington added that his proposal would distribute support for China's four villages more evenly noting that South China has gotten sidewalks and help with the library relocation, Weeks Mills has had a one room school house renovated and China Village has the causeway project being funded with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) money. By consensus, the rest of the board approved a professional inspection of the church as a condition of consideration of recommending the purchase of the property.

Manager's Communications (Non-Action Items):

- **Committees – Meetings/Updates:** The respective dates, times, and places of the meetings were announced, e.g. TIF Committee, China for a Lifetime, Transfer Station, Forestry Committee, RLF Sub-Committee, Broadband Committee, Other.
- **TIF Information/Conversations:** The Board agreed to have this item on the agenda for continued conversation and clarification.
- **Strategic Planning Session – Next Steps:** This appears on the agenda for potential discussion as other projects in the planning process mature.
- **Fire Pond Update – China Neck Road:** The Chair, Robert MacFarland asked if the Board had any other information to be brought up and recognized Selectperson Donna Mills-Stevens who said the planned fire pond on Neck Road needs approval from the state Department of Environmental Protection before work to enlarge the existing pond starts. Mills-Stevens had also found a report of waste dumped on one of the properties involved, with, in her opinion, no evidence the state had closed out the issue. Selectperson Mills-Stevens noted that she felt the digging/enlargement of the pond needed a MDEP environmental wildlife and pollution inspection and approval based on her previous experience with ponds. The Town Manager indicated he would pass this information along to the CEO for communications with the MDEP.

- **2018-2019 Municipal Budget Presentation of First Draft:** The Town Manager said that he would have a first draft of the 2018-2019 municipal budget at some point in December, most likely to be handed to the SB at their next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 28, 2017, or shortly thereafter.

In other business:

Because the next regular China selectmen's meeting would have been Christmas Day, board members rescheduled it to 8 a.m. Wednesday, Dec, 27. Selectmen agreed to close the town office Tuesday, Dec. 26, to conform to the state schedule. L'Heureux said the transfer station will be open half a day, 7 a.m. to noon, on Dec. 26, to avoid a big rush at the end of the holiday week. (Note the hours of both entities)

On a motion by Neil Farrington and a second by Selectperson Jeffrey R. LaVerdiere, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene L. Belanger

Irene L. Belanger, Secretary
China Select Board and Baord of Assessors
Minutes for Both Meetings