

Town of Sumner - Select Board Minutes
May 2, 2023 1:00 pm

The meeting was called to order at 1:13pm by Don Munroe.

Members present: Kelly Stewart, Mary Ann Haxton, Don Munroe, Sherry Sullivan, Shawn Corson

Public present: Robert Stewart, Chris Tripp, Brian Bullocks, Douglas Fournier, Gail Eastman, Pauline Kirschner, Joel Babb, Kirby Bonney, Wally Litchfield, Bill Savage, Matt DeMillo, Mike Henderson, Leah B. Rachim

Reading of the minutes were approved by Haxton, seconded by Munroe, and so voted.

Open Session:

New Business:

Haxton motioned to conduct an executive session, pursuant to 1 M.R.S. section 405(6)(E), to consult with legal counsel concerning the Selectmen's rights and duties relating to complaints received regarding a public official and an appointee, at 1:27pm with a second by Munroe and so voted. Kelly Stewart abstained; no lawyer was present on behalf of Kelly Stewart. Haxton made a motion to conclude the executive session at 2:19pm, seconded by Munroe, and so voted.

Haxton stated that no action is to be taken or further information to discuss at this time.

Haxton motioned to conduct a second executive session, pursuant to 1 M.R.S. section 405(6)(A), relating to: (a) complaints received regarding a public official and an appointee; and (b) a possible investigation of said complaints, at 2:20 pm with a second by Munroe and so voted. Kelly Stewart and Robert Stewart were in attendance at the second executive session. Haxton made a motion to conclude the second executive session at 2:27pm, with a second by Munroe, and so voted.

Haxton made a motion to (1) authorize the Town Attorney, Leah B. Rachim of Drummond Woodsum, to identify an independent investigator to investigate allegations relating to a prior town official and sitting elected official and to report back their findings to us; and to (2) authorize the chair of the Sumner Select Board to contact the Oxford County Sheriff's Department to report the information giving rise to the allegations against a prior town official and a sitting elected official. Munroe seconded Haxton's motion, and so voted.

Rachim stated she will consult with a private investigator. Rachim noted that whatever we have, whatever they ask for should be provided as we all need to cooperate. Independent investigators will look at who has participated although not everyone may be contacted. Law agencies and private investigators will use similar tactics.

Haxton stated that if an update is available, it will be provided at the Select Board meeting on May 9 at 6:00pm.

Joel Babb questioned if the investigator would look out for the interest of the town. Rachim replied that the investigator is not looking out for any interest. The only interest for a private investigator is not to protect. It is to ascertain or find supportive conclusion if concerns are criminal.

Haxton stated that a timeline cannot be provided but follow-up information will be provided as best as possible. The select board has no control over the sheriff's department or the investigation.

Old Business:

Upcoming events:

Budget Committee Meeting May 9th at 5 pm

Selectboard Meeting May 9th at 6 pm

Annual Town Meeting August 8th at 6 pm

Munroe motioned to adjourn at 2:35pm, Haxton seconded and so voted.