 TOWN OF EAGLE LAKE

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN’S MEETING**

**DECEMBER 20, 2023**

**1**. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Arthur Carroll at **5:30** P.M.

The Board members present included: Board Chair Arthur Carroll, Wendy Dube, Jennifer Cole, Denise

Martin and Apryl Gagnon.

Others: Town Manager, John Sutherland, Fire Chief Robert St. Germain and Deputy Clerk, Rita Ricciardi.

Others in attendance included a number of residents of Sly Brook Road to offer support for the proposed

Sly Brook Road substation. These residents included: Adele Carroll, Raymond Saucier, Robert Davis, Reno

Corriveau, Cliff Audibert, Louis Albert, Eric Shelton, Bruce Nadeau, David Desjardins and Thomas

Pelletier.

**4**. **SLY BROOK ROAD FIRE DEPARTMENT SUBSTATION UPDATE**

Board Chair Arthur Carroll requested we proceed with agenda item #4 since several residents of

Sly Brook Road were in attendance. John added that Sandra and Peter Pinette could not attend the meeting

due to travelling for a prior appointment. They sent John an email stating they support the efforts to create

a substation on Sly Brook Road.

John stated that the project is currently in the beginning stages. The Town of Eagle Lake received a $250,000 Community Project Funding grant to help build a fire department substation and a temporary emergency warming and cooling shelter. A local resident has offered to sell the Town of Eagle Lake a two acre parcel to locate the building. John contacted Sarah Ashley, from Sash Engineering, to do soil samples to determine if the parcel is a buildable lot. Sarah informed John that based on her analysis of the soil samples, the site is ideal for the proposed structure. John stated that as part of the grant requirement, the property must undergo an environmental review to determine if the project will create any water issues, disturb critical habitat for endangered or threatened species, or disrupt any historically significant structures or important Native American sites. John stated that he has contacted engineer Jim Lord from Dirigo Engineering to assist him with this process. Jim performed an environmental review for the Eagle Lake Water and Sewer’s upgrade project. David Moyes from Moyes Environmental did a wetland declination on the site and produced an overhead map identifying the location of wetlands to the building site. John stated that he is doing as much of the review himself to save as much of the awarded $250,000 for building the substation. John also submitted a map of the site with outlines of the proposed building and parking areas to illustrate how the site will look once the project is completed. John added that he expects it will take most of the winter to complete the review. Once we know the property will pass the environmental review, the Board can move forward with purchasing the property. John added that town meeting approval will be required to purchase the property and move forward with any additional financing that will be required.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Board Chair, Arthur Carroll opened up the floor for public comment on agenda item #4. Arthur

stated that he knows that the Board of Selectmen have stated that they support the project but have

concerns about having firemen to staff it. Arthur stated that he has submitted an application to be a

firefighter. He stated that he has a Class A license and could operate a fire engine and get the unit to the

scene. Arthur also has completed training on operating a mass care shelter. He added that Cliff Audibert

is a member of the Fort Kent Fire Department and is a trained firefighter. He is also a mechanic. Bruce

Nadeau also submitted an application. He lives about one hundred yards from the proposed site. Glen

Saucier and Dave Lewis are two additional fire department applicants. Eagle Lake Fire Chief stated that

he will be looking at all of the applications that he has received and plans on scheduling interviews in

the new year. Arthur and town manager John Sutherland attended a meeting with Aroostook

County Emergency Management Director Darren Woods in Cross Lake. Darren has built three fire

department substations in the unorganized territories. Darren informed Arthur and John that he

recommends that we focus on firefighter applications and training as soon as possible so by the time

the substation is built, we will have trained firefighters to staff it.

Robert Davis stated that he has spent 10 years in Texas working with emergency management.

Robert added that he was involved with Emergency Management for hurricanes Ida and Katrina.

He added that he is in favor of the substation because it will also help during an emergency and reduce

property owners’ homeowner’s insurance costs. Eagle Lake Selectperson Denise Martin stated that she

wanted to see the substation built, but she also wanted to see everything in place. She added that she

does not want to see a substation being built with no volunteer support. Selectperson Wendy Dube

agreed that to do the project the right way, we need trained firefighters to man the station. Sly Brook

Road resident Tom Pelletier stated that the additional construction on Sly Brook Road increases the

need for infrastructure to support it. Tom stated that the automatic aid agreement with Fort Kent is a

step in the right direction. Tom added that on a previous call to the fire department, it took 48 minutes

for a truck to show up.

Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain said that he currently has a roster of fourteen

firefighters, twelve are trained to be in the “hot zone”. Arthur reiterated that he has six additional

applicants for the fire department. Robert said that he plans on reviewing the applications in January.

He plans on scheduling interviews and doing background checks soon after. He added that fire

department trainings are scheduled for the last Sunday of each month. Robert added that once

firefighters from Sly Brook are added to the roster, he will appoint an officer from Sly Brook to lead

the substation responders.

Sly Brook Road resident Eric Shelton stated that his wife Michelle is interested in joining the fire

department and has experience on the fire department in El Paso, Texas. Adele Carroll added that ISO

rating indicates that an appropriate response time is nine minutes and twenty seconds.

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION: 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F) CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS**

Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain addresses the Board of Selectman

Eagle Lake Town Manager said that Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain had a couple of issues to

discuss with the Board. Due to the nature of the topics involved, John said that he felt an executive

session would be appropriate.

Moved by Apryl Gagnon to enter into executive session, seconded by Denise Martin.

Vote – unanimously in favor.

The Board went into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.

Executive Session ended at 6:42 pm.

As a result of the Executive Session Wendy Dube moved to accept the fire chief’s request to take $1,000

from the fire department’s fund raising account and distribute $500.00 to a former firefighter who is ill

and $500.00 to give out as ten, fifty dollar Hannaford gift cards to distribute to needy families during the

upcoming Christmas season. Names of area families in need will be placed into a hat and winners will

be drawn at random.

Fire Chief Robert St. Germain thanked the Board for considering his request. He said that the

firefighters presented him with the proposal as a way to give back to the community during the

Christmas season.

**3. REVIEW AND CONSIDER AID TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT APPLICATION**

John informed the Board that the Town of Eagle Lake was fortunate to use the F.E.M.A. Aid to

Firefighter program to secure grant funds to purchase a new fire engine and twelve SCBAs and a

breathable air compressor and filling station. Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain approached

John about an application for a rescue truck to carry the Jaws of Life. The current truck is a 1990 Ford

F150 pickup that the department purchased with their fund raising account funds. The truck has

electrical issues because it is not wired to handle the emergency lights and necessary scene lighting.

John added that this year’s grant application will focus on turnout gear. John said we could upgrade our

department’s gear and add additional turnout gear for the volunteers from Sly Brook Road.

Moved by Denise Martin to pursue the Aid to Firefighter’s grant application, seconded by Apryl

Gagnon

Vote: unanimously in favor

**6. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT UPDATES**

a. **Micro Loan**

John stated that account JS111222021 made one payment during the month. When the account

holder came in, he acknowledged to Town Manager John Sutherland that he understands that the

Board of Selectmen wants him to pay extra until his account becomes current.

b. **Pond Brook Estates**

Maintenance has completed work in apartment #12 and is now working on apartment #9. Chris said

that the tenants from apartment #9 have been in the unit for over ten years.

c. **Roads**

Cody Dubois is doing a good job with maintaining Sly Brook Road. His contract runs out this year.

John said he would like to see the Town go out to bid for 24-25, 25-26, and 26-27 this spring. This

way we will have a number for the upcoming municipal budget.

1. **NASWA**

John informed the Board that the Board of Director’s for NASWA was meeting tomorrow. Based on

this year’s revenues and expenses, he expects the Board to keep the NASWA stipends close to where they were previously.

License Amendment Update: John said letters went out to abutting property owners as required by the DEP. An ad was placed in the local paper advising residents where they can send their questions or concerns. The application fee was mailed to the DEP. John said that once he gets word that the application was received by the DEP, he will begin to electronically send the application and supporting documents. He is hoping to have the application completed by Christmas.

John informed the Board that NASWA purchased a used Case 580 backhoe from Frank Martin and Sons for the transfer station.

1. **Eagle Lake Fire Department**

John informed the Board that Eagle Lake Fire Department is still waiting to hear from the Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation if their grant request for $50,000 for a battery operated Jaws of Life unit was successful. John said he originally expected to get the results before the middle of December, but due to the large number of application received, results will be delayed.

John said that he expects the SCBAs to be delivered on or around December 27th.

**7**. **MONTHLY FINANCIALS**

Reviewed monthly financials for October / November 2023.

Motion was made by Wendy Dube to approve October and November financials, 2nd by Denise Martin

Vote: unanimously in favor

1. **Bank Reconciliation**

Motion made by Apryl Gagnon to approve the Town of Eagle Lake’s bank reconciliation for November 2023, 2nd by Denise Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

Motion made by Denise Martin to approve the Pond Brook Estates bank reconciliation for November 2023, 2nd by Apryl Gagnon.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

1. **Sample Check Audit**

Motion made by Apryl Gagnon to approve the Town of Eagle Lake & Pond Brook Estates sample check audits for November 2023, 2nd by Denise Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

c. **Sign Warrants**

The Board reviewed the warrants for November. Jennifer Cole noted that she wants to continue to

see the price per gallon and the equipment that the fuel was expensed to on the invoices. Board

Chair Arthur Carroll asked if any Board member had a question of concerns regarding the warrants.

Motion made by Apryl Gagnon to approve the signing of The Town of Eagle Lake warrants, 2nd by Denise Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

Motion made by Denise Martin to approve the signing of the Pond Brook Estates warrant, 2nd by Apryl Gagnon.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

d **Micro Loan**

Motion made Denise Martin to approve signing the Micro Loan statements, 2nd by Apryl Gagnon.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION: 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F) – CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS**

Board of Selectmen discussion with Town Manager

Motion by Apryl Gagnon to go into Executive Session at 7:20 pm., 2nd by Denise Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

Executive session ended at 7:45 pm.

As a result of the Executive Session, John will give Town of Eagle Lake employees a Christmas stipend

of $100 for full time and $50 for part time employees. Dana Nadeau will receive $100 for shoveling the

sidewalks at Pond Brook Estates and to advertise for a Code Enforcement Officer

**8. REVIEW AND ACCEPT MINUTES**

Eagle Lake Board Chair Arthur Carroll asked Board members if they had a chance to review the

minutes of the November 15, 2023 Board of Selectmen’s meeting. Upon hearing no issue or concern,

Arthur asked for a vote.

Motion by Apryl Gagnon to accept the minutes of the November 15, 2023 Board of Selectmen’s

meeting, 2nd by Denise Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**9. REVIEW & CONSIDER WINTER PLOWING**

John stated that since we were informed that our former plowing contractor Thomas Long was unable

to fulfill the contract for winter maintenance for the upcoming winter season, we have been doing the

plowing in house. John added that we have plenty of funds in the budget if we need to hire a plowing

contractor to assist us with a big storm. John added that he spoke to Eagle Lake road plowing contractor

Fred Simard on providing sand for the parking lot at the town office, recreation building and Pond

Brook Estates as needed. John said that he is confident that things are working well and we have the

tools to do the job ourselves. John added that he is recommending to the Board that we continue to do

the winter maintenance ourselves.

Motion made by Denise Martin to continue to do winter snow removal and sanding ourselves, 2nd by

Jennifer Cole.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**10.**  **REVIEW & CONSIDER THE UPCOMING MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

John informed the Board that a copy of the proposed 2024-25 Municipal budget is in their meeting

packets. John said that we will need to review the material to see if the Board recommends any changes.

Once the initial budget is approved by the Board, we can contact Budget Committee members to

determine dates for a meeting to determine the 2024-25 Municipal Budget.

Motion made by Apryl Gagnon to table this item and set a date when it can be reviewed as a separate

item, seconded by Jennifer Cole.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**11. REVIEW AND CONSIDER A.R.P.A. FUNDS**

John reminded the Board that we still have A.R.P.A funds that must be committed by December 31,

2024 expended by December 31, 2026. John explained that a contract must be signed by December 31,

2024 to commit the funds. It could be a road project that will take time to engineer, go out to bid and

pay the invoices. That is where the funds must be expended by December 31, 2026.

The Board asked John to table this item. It can be included in the meeting where we are reviewing

the municipal budget as some of the items like fire department turnout gear can be purchased with

A.R.P.A. funds.

**12. REVIEW AND CONSIDER PAGING CONTRACT WITH FORT KENT**

John said that the agreement for paging with the Town of Fort Kent has been a blessing for our

community. Eagle Lake Fire Chief Robert St. Germain informed John that this agreement has reduced

radio dead spots and greatly improved the fire department’s ability to communicate with its dispatch.

John said he received a contract for dispatch services from the Town of Fort Kent for two years at

$1,500 per year. This is what we are currently paying so there will be no increase for two years. John

said his recommendation is to sign the contract.

Motion was made by Denise Martin to approve John signing the contract with the Town of Fort

Kent for dispatching services, 2nd by Wendy Dube.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**13. REVIEW AND CONSIDER OFFER ON D’AMICO PROPERTY**

John informed the Board that realtor Holly Hardwick informed him that she had an offer on the property

for $25,000. She later stated that the interested party dropped his offer to $21,000. Since that conversation,

Holly informed John that the proposed buyer is not responding to her request for updates. John asked the

Board to give him some guidance to offer Holly if they wish to set a minimum price for the 1.8 acre parcel

or if they wish to review and consider each offer on a case by case basis.

Motion was made by Apryl Gagnon to consider offers on a case-by-case basis, seconded by Denise

Martin.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**14**. **REVIEW AND APPROVE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR’S SCHEDULE**

John informed the Board that the Town Office will be closed Monday, December 25, 2023 for

celebration of the Christmas Day holiday and Monday, January 1, 2024 for celebrating New Year’s Day.

Motion made by Wendy Dube to approve the town office holiday schedule as requested, seconded by

Jennifer Cole.

Vote: unanimously in favor.

**16.** **OTHER BUSINESS**

John informed the Board that he had no Other Business.

**17. ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:30 pm made by Apryl Gagnon, 2nd by Jennifer Cole.

Vote: unanimously in favor.