

Town of Portage Lake
Special Town Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 19, 2016
Portage Lake Municipal Building
6:00 P.M.

Aroostook, §

State of Maine

The meeting was held at the Portage Lake Municipal Building on Wednesday the nineteenth (19th) of October, 2016, at six o'clock (6:00) in the evening, then and there, to act on the following articles to wit:

There were 22 resident voters and 2 resident non-voters in attendance.

ART. 1 To elect a moderator to preside at said meeting.

Motion made and seconded to nominate Frank Hallett as moderator.

Moved and seconded to cease nominations. All in favor. Motion to cease nominations carries; motion to approve Frank Hallett as moderator carries.

Two written ballots are cast for Frank Hallett, who is elected moderator to preside over said meeting. (Frank Hallett repeats the oath as moderator.)

ART. 2 To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$60,000 from Equipment Reserve, \$55,000 from BETE Reimbursement, and \$7,965 from Surplus for the purpose of purchasing a new plow truck.

Selectboard recommends approval.

Motion made to approve, seconded.

Discussion:

Judy Moreau: \$60,000 from Equipment Reserve. What is the balance?

Larry Duchette: \$70,000, roughly.

Judy Moreau: So that will leave \$10,000 in Equipment Reserve.

Larry Duchette: Correct.

Judy Moreau: \$55,000 from BETE. Can you explain a little bit about that?

Larry Duchette: BETE is a reimbursement that we get from the state based on equipment within the mills and different offices and whatnot. If you look at the schedule for your taxes, our BETE was \$5,895,400 total exempt value of all BETE. We get a return every year from the state, and this year it is \$55,283. In 2014 it was \$36,324. In 2013 it was \$25,560. In 2012 it was \$30,065. This is money that normally goes right into surplus.

Judy Moreau: Ok. Next question. The \$7,965 from surplus. What's the balance in surplus today?

Larry Duchette: Well over \$400,000.

Judy Moreau: And only \$28,000 on trade in? That's a bummer. That's a fairly new truck.

David Pierce: its 11 years old.

Judy Moreau: Why is it always Daigle and Houghton? I mean we have been buying trucks from Daigle & Houghton since the first plow truck we bought. I kid you not.

Barry Kenney: They came in with the bid.

David Pierce: The cheapest bid.

Larry Duchette: They weren't necessarily the cheapest, there was one a little bit cheaper down in Houlton, but it wasn't anywhere near the same truck.

David Pierce: It was the cheapest for what the quality was, is what I should have said I guess.

Judy Moreau: Ok, so in Houlton what was the dealer and what was the truck?

Larry Duchette: I knew you were going to ask me a hard question.

Barry Kenney: Freightliner of Maine.

Judy Moreau: That one is not the cheapest.

Larry Duchette: That was for the Wheeler. They had another one for a single axle, but I didn't even consider it because it was nowhere near the same quality of truck.

Judy Moreau: So is this one that we are going to get a Wheeler?

Larry Duchette: No it is not. A single axle. The roads aren't big enough for a Wheeler.

Judy Moreau: Is it going to be able to have a much bigger capacity, carry more loads than the one we have now?

Larry Duchette: The exact same. It is the exact same truck, pretty much. It is a 7400 series with an updated motor and it is a complete new package from one end to the other with an automatic transmission. That is the big reason we are moving in that direction.

Judy Moreau: Why are you getting an automatic?

Larry Duchette: It relieves fatigue on the driver. Vaughn already has problems with his back. And if we put too many drivers behind that standard shift, we *are* going to break something.

James Kelley: Just a quickie for you Larry, the BETE reimbursement I noticed over the last few years has been increased. What's the formula that brings us to this number? Or do you know?

Larry Duchette: I do not know, that is all through the State boys; they figure it out for us.

James Kelley: The other thing I want to respond to, the question on the standard transmission to the automatics. Having been in the oil business for a lot of years, about 20 years ago we moved to automatic transmission simply because it is difficult today to get drivers who qualify to drive trucks. And a lot of them, especially the younger generation didn't start on standard shifts, they started on automatics. We have and have had far less repairs on these trucks, especially with an automatic transmission. So that is primarily the reason we are looking at the automatic transmission.

Rudy Boutot: I can name you probably 100 tuckers up in the woods here, I was one of them, and I only know two who had automatics and they converted them back to standards. I also feel that if you can't get a driver to drive a standard...there are people that are employed that can drive a standard. I wouldn't purchase a truck just because the guy's got a bad back or something. The ride ain't going to be any different.

Clayton DeMerchant: Is there any way that a list...\$14,000 you have over four years that you can show us what was wrong with this particular truck?

Larry Duchette: The last major one was we lost the turbo, which was three years ago. There has been a lot of electrical issues with it. I didn't bring that with me, but if you want to see it I can get a list for you. Right now we have fuel oil going into the engine--the seals are starting to go in it. The quote on that is roughly \$6,000 to repair it. The rust is becoming a problem, holes in the dump body will require plating soon and a paint job, all the original rollers and bearings in the drag system—which is the sander—both have never been replaced, original steel

hydraulic line is under the dump body, rust prevention will need to be done to the fuel tank, dump pins are worn out, the sweeper is bent. And there have just been too many different drivers in that truck, and I am fairly confident that they will break something. We don't need that in the middle of the winter.

Rob Reece: What make truck is that?

Larry Duchette: An International.

Rob Reece: What is the new one going to be?

Larry Duchette: International.

Judy Moreau: Isn't it a fact that when we got that truck 11 years ago, we used it about a month and it was back to Daigle & Houghton because of water in the oil or something. And it has been ongoing and ongoing...This truck that we got from Daigle & Houghton has been a lemon from day one, and we didn't have a warranty. Is this one going to have a warranty?

Larry Duchette: A two year warranty with the ability to purchase another 4 years for about \$4,000. That will give you six years.

Anita Theriault: So the town has enough money to purchase it, and we are looking at quite a bit of spending in repairs to keep the old truck.

Larry Duchette: Correct.

Motion carries with a vote of 17 for and 2 against, 3 abstain.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Corrine M. Routhier