

TOWN OF SEBAGO
EMERGENCY SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2023
8:00 AM
TOWN OFFICE

ALL REGULAR BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 1ST AND 3RD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH.

Reminder to the attending public: Select board meetings are open to the public, but the public may not speak unless recognized by the Chair or Vice Chair and only during public comment. Comment time is limited to 2 minutes per speaker. Matters related to personnel, will not be heard or discussed.

EMERGENCY SELECTMEN MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phil Lowe called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

I. Roll Call

Present: Selectmen: Phil Lowe, Barry Jordan, Mark Roy, and Charles Frechette. Town Manager Maureen Scanlon, Town Clerk and Recorder Letitia M. Genest,

Guests present: CEO Brandon Woolley, Fire Chief Phil Strike, Dave McCarthy, Dan Callahan

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at the start of the meeting.

III. Business: Emergency Selectmen Meeting

Phil Lowe stated the plan of business today is due to the weather forecast and the safety concerns for those traveling to tomorrow's Special Town Meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Barry Jordan made a motion to cancel tomorrow's (March 4, 2023) Special Town Meeting and schedule a new Special Town Meeting for March 11, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. at the Town Hall. To cover the same items on the March 4, 2023, Warrant.

Phil Lowe seconded the motion, and asked for any discussion.

Barry Jordan thanked Phil Lowe for calling this meeting, with the given weather forecast there is a concern for the citizens safety traveling to attend the Special Town Meeting in the forecasted blizzard conditions. It is owed to the community, to have as many people attend this meeting regardless of what side they are on. Barry stated that is why he supports the canceling and rescheduling of this Special Town Meeting to March 11, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

Charles Frechette commented this is looks to be the biggest storm of the winter.

Mark Roy agrees with rescheduling and stated that public safety in the town is the number one concern. There is no need to stress our other Town departments, or the possibility of someone getting hurt trying to come to the meeting.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Phil Lowe commented that there are two other items that have been brought to the attention of the Select Board that are relevant: Voting & Cancellation Memo

- A. Charles Frechette reported that he has had people reach out to him concerning the way in which the voting will take place. Many feel uncomfortable with the show of hands due to all of the turbulence and drama on social media. A secret ballot or referendum ballot seems a fair way for everyone to vote.

Barry Jordan commented that it is up to the people to choose which way the voting will take place.

Charles replied those who are uncomfortable with a show of hands vote, may not show up to vote.

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Phil Lowe opened up comments from the floor.

CEO Brandon Woolley stated that a "secret ballot" (to address Charles Frechette's opening comment) would require preparation of ballots ahead of time and would allow for voting to take place before the meeting. The terminology is a "written ballot" as it can be made from a motion off the floor. He suggested to include "The Select Board recommend a written ballot" in the notice.

Barry Jordan replied that it is up to the people to decide the way in which the vote will take place.

David McCarthy stated at past Special Town Meeting meetings that motion (written ballot) has always come from the floor.

Town Manager Maureen Scanlon commented the Town is prepared if it goes to a written ballot.

Charles stated he remains concerned, as it has the ingredients of getting out of hand as well as driving a wedge between the public if it goes to show of hands voting. He feels that going to written ballot is the fairest way to vote.

Mark Roy commented because of the contentiousness, and how things have become more aggressive, the form of Town government we have in place, allows the voters to choose the way in which the vote will take place.

Charles asked Phil Lowe what the timeline is for the vote going to Secret Ballot.

Phil commented that it would put it off for a substantial amount of time which he can't define at this time (with set up time, processing, and the added cost to the taxpayers) legal has suggested that it not be put off any longer than needed due to its contentious nature. He acknowledged the concerns for all those who spoke. He made a suggestion to go forward with the procedure that has always been done at Town Meetings. The postponement is the smart and safest thing to do. It is agreed that a written vote request could come from the floor. This allows the people to voice their choice for voting.

Barry Jordan made a motion to continue with the normal procedures at the March 11, 2023 Special Town Meeting. Mark Roy seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

- B. Phil Lowe stated that a postponement message has been drafted (by Claudie Lowe) to get into the hands of as many people as possible before tomorrow.

Barry Jordan commented on the wording that the meeting "is not being postponed" it is being "cancelled", and scheduling the new Special Town Meeting for March 11, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Barry requested that the language be changed to reflect what is taking place.

Maureen suggested that such a notice should come from the Town Manager. She will make the changes needed and then distributed. She stated that life safety is the number one issue we are dealing with.

Mark stated that it is an enormous amount of work for the Select Board and the Town Office to ensure that everything is being done legally correct, and in the best interest of the towns people.

Discussion took place with all Select Board members, Town Manager, and Fire Chief on what will take place (plowing, set up of signs and those being there in person) if people show up due to having not heard or seen that the meeting has been cancelled.

IV. Adjournment

Charles Frechette made a motion to adjourn at 8:21 a.m. Mark Roy seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Letitia M. Genest
Town Clerk

Approved at the March 21, 2023 Meeting