

**ORIGINAL**

**Town of Pittston  
Select Board Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2024**



**Board Members Present:** Jane Hubert (chair), Jean Ambrose, Joe Caputo

**Other Town Officials Present:** Sam Snow (Road Commissioner), Christian Jensen (Treasurer, Tax Collector, Office Supervisor)

**Recorder:** Christian Jensen, Marie Flowers (Admin Assistant)

1. **Call to Order** 6 pm
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Board of Appeals Nomination** Jason Corliss appointment to open position was approved 3-0
4. **Approval of Old Minutes** Approved 2-0-1
5. **Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrants**
  - a. **PAYROLL WARRANT:**
    - #2410, \$3773.41 approved 3-0
    - #2411, \$177.62 approved 3-0
  - b. **AP WARRANT PREVIEW:** #2412, \$71,474.76 approved 3-0
6. **Open Public Speaker(s)**
  - a. Cheryl Peaslee spoke about the ongoing petition for the recall of Joe Caputo
7. **Road Business (OLD)**
  - a. **Sand Supply Status** "Fine" per Sam
  - b. **Chelsea-Randolph-Pittston Regional Public Works Coordination** Meeting scheduled February 23<sup>rd</sup>, with Joe and Sam expressing intent to attend. Jane will email the meeting time.
  - c. **Troop Road Tree Branches** As per the Select Board's request of January 31, Sam stated that he looked at the Troop Road and noted the presence of saplings. He then asked Jane what she wanted done. She reiterated the nature of the complaint that led to the request last week for the Road Commissioner to look at the problem: that two cars, while passing, are brushing against branches. Sam stated, "Uh-huh." Jean then asked, "Do they all need to be cut back?" Sam replied, "All the roads need it bad, that's a minor part." Joe then stated he drove the road and couldn't identify the problem area. Jean then suggested that trimming the entire road might be more efficient, as it is "not a very long stretch of road." Jane then asked Sam, "Does that seem reasonable?" Sam replied, "If that's what you want

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to do.” Jane then asked, “Do you think that’s what we want to do?” Joe again reiterated that he did not think anything was “hanging into the roadway.” Jane then stated that the complaint was that when the branches were heavy with snow, they were contacting vehicles, following with, “I don’t know. Where do you want to go from here?” Jean replied, “I would say, trim them back. And there are other places in town that we ought to keep an eye on.” Sam stated that there are other places in town that are also in need of trimming. Jane stated, “I would cut it back.” Joe said, “I would wait until warmer weather when you are doing all of them...do them all.” Jane then asked Sam, “Do you think it is more efficient to wait until spring?” Sam replied, “Yeah, whatever you want to do.” Jane then repeated, “Sam, I’m asking. Do you think it is more efficient to wait until spring?” Sam, replied, “Yeah, that’s fine Jane. You want to wait until spring? We’ll wait until spring.” Jane then asked, “Do you think it is more efficient?” Sam replied, “Well, [words uncertain] more efficient about it, you’re going to be there working one road after another, but you want to wait until spring? That’s fine. I just needed to know what was going on.” Jane said, “Right.” Sam stated, “That’s all I’m asking.” Jane then asked, “Would you be chipping stuff or just cutting and throwing to the side?” Sam replied, “Exactly what you want. Chip them or pick them up. We can do either.” Christian, speaking as a resident, then asked why the Road Commissioner was not doing more to identify and propose solutions to the issue, despite the Board’s requests for him to do so? Jane further asked for an explanation of what is involved with the process. Sam then explained that it had been two years since this work had been done, as the last person contracted to do it got cancer. There was then clarification between Sam and Jane that the type of cutter Sam is describing cuts ground brush and low tree branches, again saying that this hasn’t been performed on the Town in two years. Another resident then accused Christian of “antagonism.” Jane overruled the speaker stating that it wasn’t on the topic being discussed. The resident continued speaking however, describing Sam as “that poor man” because Sam has had to endure questions about his performance and work as Road Commissioner. Jane then moved for “Sam to work on the Troop Road tree branches, but come in with a plan for the rest of the town as far as trees in the way of road passage.” Joe provided a second. During discussion, Sam stated, “I will do that.” Jane then repeated, “You will come in with a plan for trees to be cut in the rest of the Town of Pittston?” Sam replied, “Yep.” Jane then stated, “Thank you.” There was no official vote on the motion.

- d. **Four Wheel Drive Sign** Sam will pick up, remove the erroneously ordered “RD,” and replace the sign.
- e. **Salt & Brine Supply** Sam stated he doesn’t need brine, but rather “Ice-Be-Gone.” Joe clarified with Sam that it is stored in the “big round” tank in

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the salt shed, which is currently at 50% capacity. The board OK'd him to order the product.

**8. Road Business (NEW)**

- a. **Morton Brook/Nehumkeag Bridge** The Town received notice from Maine DOT regarding proposed replacement of the Nehumkeag Bridge, and the State is asking the Town to complete a survey. Sam stated he would call Brian at DOT. Marie provided Sam a copy of the email.
- b. **Road Plowing Complaints** Jane noted complaints that the Town has received recently about icy conditions on the road (due to melting and refreezing), especially for the school buses. Sam stated his trucks were running and sanding at the proper time. A resident stated his displeasure with Sam. The resident stated he called Sam with his concerns on an icy morning, and that Sam told the resident to "slow down," that the "school buses will be fine" because they have enough weight, and to "wait until 10 o'clock" for the ice to melt off. Sam replied that the truck was out on 194 when the resident called.

**9. General Town Business (OLD)**

- a. **Recall Petition** The current Town Clerk has a question in to MMA is awaiting a response. Jane is hoping for an expedient resolution to the recall petition.
- b. **Recall Ordinance Review** Last week the SB requested the Appeals Board to review the current Recall Ordinance due to a request from a resident to rescind the Town's Recall Ordinance. The Appeals Board will meet on February 8 at 6 pm to review the ordinance
- c. **Rescinding of Recall Ordinance** Jane read a response from MMA regarding the process of rescinding a current ordinance. In summary, the process is identical to that required to enact an ordinance, requiring a proposal, a hearing, and a vote at a special town meeting. Jane moved to hold a hearing and special town meeting for the question whether to rescind the Pittston Recall Ordinance. Joe provided a second.

In discussion, Jane stated that the hearing can be held at the same meeting as the vote. Joe stated he is hoping for the Appeals Board to provide their recommendation.

One resident asked if the hearing and vote could be held at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. Another resident asked if there was a need to have a replacement for the current recall ordinance before it could be rescinded. The board clarified that it is up to the Select Board to schedule the hearing and vote, there is no requirement for a municipality to have a

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recall ordinance, and that there is presently a State recall statute, which would still apply.

Sam inquired whether rescinding the Town's Recall Ordinance would affect the recall petition currently in progress. Jane replied that the recall petition process and rescinding the Recall Ordinance are separate events, and how one would affect the other is not known.

A resident asked whether the Board is moving forward with the current recall petition, and Jane replied that the board and Town Clerk are receiving legal counsel from MMA on the process. The resident then asked whether the previous Town Clerk, Deb Barry had already certified and presented the petition. Jane replied that Mrs. Barry had not presented the petition, but fled the room when asked about her assessment of the additional provisions and requirements of the Recall Ordinance.

Another resident asked if there is a record of discussions and meetings with MMA and other legal counsel. Jane replied that there is.

The motion was clarified to "schedule a hearing and special town meeting for the purpose of rescinding the Town's Recall Ordinance." Motion passed 2-1. The hearing and special town meeting are to be held on February 22, 2024 at 6 pm.

**10. General Town Business (NEW)**

- a. **General Assistance Webinar** Jane asked for permission to attend an MMA-provided webinar at a cost of \$50. Additionally, Jane suggested that training approval be delegated to the Office Supervisor. The board agreed to both points without a vote.
- b. **Abatement and Supplement** Treasurer presented abatement and supplement paperwork to the board on behalf of the Assessors' Agent for their signature
- c. **Office Hours** Jean asked Christian when the Town Office might be expected to expand from the current limited hours. Christian explained that while the plan had been to begin expanding hours this week, that the new Town Clerk has been limited in her hours due to a serious personal matter, which has delayed the staff's ability to clean up the files and processes of the front office, to get the election and voter registry up to date, and get familiar with the agent computer systems in Pittston. Christian stated that the office will begin to increase hours incrementally as staff is ready and able to accommodate additional time. Changes will be posted when they are ready.

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11. Town Announcements & Information

- a. Next SB Meeting(s): Feb 14, 21, 28 (6 pm)
- b. Next SB Work Session(s): Feb 12, 26 (2 pm)
- c. Planning Board: Feb 8 (6 pm)
- d. Appeals Board: Feb 8 (6 pm)
- e. Riverwalk Committee: Mar 4 (6 pm)
- f. Pittston Historical Society: Apr 9 (6 pm)

12. Meeting Adjournment 6:41 pm

Respectfully submitted by:  2/21/24  
Christian Jensen, Treasurer Date

Jane H Hubert 02/15/24  
Jane H Hubert, Selectperson Chair Date

Mary Jean Ambrose 2-21-24  
Mary Jean Ambrose, Selectperson Date

Joseph Caputo 2/21/2024  
Joseph Caputo, Selectperson Date

