

**January 9, 2023**

**SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

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Present: Terry Bergeron, Chair; Tim DeMillo, Vice Chair; Tom Goding, Lee Ann Dalessandro, Gary McGrane, Shiloh LaFreniere, Town Manager; Raeleen York, Deputy Clerk

Guests: Thomas Martin (Mt. Blue TV), Adrienne Foss (Daily Bulldog), Donna Perry (Sun Journal), Justin Triquet, Nikki Leroux, Silver Laus, Rob Taylor, Steve Gettle

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**1. Pledge of Allegiance** – 6:00 p.m. -Tim led the pledge.

**2. Minutes – December 27, 2022** – M/M/S Gary/Tom to approve the Selectboard minutes from the December 27, 2022 meeting. Vote 5-0-0.

**3. Old Business** – Gary asked about the Mutual Aid arrangement with Livermore Falls. Shiloh said that the Livermore Falls Selectboard was agreeable with the agreement last she heard. She will check on it for next meeting.

**4. JustNiks Mycosilva Presentation** – Justin Triquet, Nikki Leroux and their partner from Estonia, Silver Laus, were present to discuss their new business, JustNiks Mycosilva, with the Selectboard and answer any questions that they may have. Their business is chaga farming and they are trying to get established in Maine. They explained what chaga is and how it is used. The chaga business is growing quickly. They are looking for land owners who have birch trees on their property to start chaga farms. They drill small holes into birch trees and put dowels in the trees to start the chaga growth. The chaga grows until it is ready to be harvested. The dowels cost \$3 each, it takes about 5 to 7 years for the chaga to grow to size, and chaga is then harvested and bought back at \$5 per pound. Enough chaga is left on the tree to continue growing and will be harvested again in another 5 to 7 years. The chaga species that they are using originated here and so it is native to Maine. The native strain is called Damascus Chaga. They would not be introducing a foreign plant into our environment. The dowels are produced in Belgium with Maine's native chaga and then sent here. They would like to have the Selectboard consider using town property for chaga farming. The return on a \$450,000 investment could be as much as \$3.57 million according to Justin. The trees used would be white and yellow birch. If correct, this would be a larger return than timber harvesting. The owners gave the town 2 bottles of an elixir that they produce so everyone could try some. Their product will be available in a couple of weeks in this area. The Selectboard thanked them for their presentation.

**5. Community Resilience Grant** – Shiloh has been in contact with Larry O'Rourke of Optimal Energy Group regarding a roofing project for the town's municipal building. If the town would like Larry to manage the project his role would be to send the specifications to the organizations, arrange site visits, respond to their questions on the installation, review and compare the proposals, prepare a consolidated summary for the Selectboard and manage the installation. He would also work with the company that provided the original estimate to make sure it is up to date. Larry's fee is 10% of the total cost and was included in the original estimate. Gary wanted to know why we need to pay Larry to do this. Shiloh explained that he is someone capable of overseeing this kind of project. If someone else is able to do it then that would be something to consider but oversight is important to make sure everything is done correctly. M/M/S Lee Ann/Tom to hire Larry O'Rourke to manage the municipal building roof project for a fee of 10% of the cost. Vote 5-0-0

**6. Spirit of America Nominations** –M/M/S Lee Ann/Tom to nominate the paper mill workers for the Spirit of America award. Gary recused himself because he is now a member of the Board of Directors for the Spirit of America Award. Vote 4-0-1(Gary abstained)

**7. Other Business** – Terry announced upcoming dates of interest.

M/M/S Tim/Tom to adjourn at 7:06 pm. Vote 5-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Raeleen M. York