

Selectman's Newsletter

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April 7, 2007

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Included in this mailing are the minutes of the March Selectmen's meetings, as well as the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting. The following are some other items either not mentioned or not fully discussed in the minutes.

Annual Town Report The Annual Town Report was delivered throughout town in the third week of March. Cathance Lake Variety and the Selectmen's office have extra copies for taxpayers who did not receive them.

Town Officers All but one of the officers of the preceding year were reelected at the Town Meeting (see the Town Meeting Minutes or the list in the Annual Town Report for details). The one change was in the office of Treasurer, which is now held by Ann Marie Flood. Callie Hatton was reelected to the School Board. An appointment to the Planning Board is pending.

Cemetery Committee The recent Town Meeting approved the spending of \$1000 for upkeep of the cemeteries in addition to the cost of mowing. This outlay will be made under the advisement of a committee of volunteers who will visit the cemeteries and inventory the work that needs to be done. The Cemetery Committee will also be assessing repairs to the plots of the individuals who left bequests to the town's Cemetery Trust Fund. Committee work is not likely to be difficult: an afternoon and some hours of follow-up would be all. Volunteers please contact Stuart Shotwell.

The Grange The Selectmen paid a brief visit to the Cathance Grange on a recent Wednesday night. There they proposed that the Grange consider an arrangement that would transfer ownership of the Grange Hall and responsibility for its maintenance to the town. The Grange would retain rights to use the Grange Hall for its meetings. The town, in addition to being able to continue to use the Grange for voting and for various town meetings, would be able to build a small town office attached to the building. The facility would eventually include a bathroom and necessarily a well and septic system. Several other small towns in the state have made such arrangements with the Grange organization, including Charlotte. Though the very preliminary reaction was favorable, the Grange members requested that the Selectmen return and restate the proposal when more members were present. If the Grangers agree, the Selectmen will consult the citizens of the town on this subject at the June meeting.

State Threats concerning Cooper's Polling Place There is a second problem that requires cooperation between the Grange and the town. The town has received a letter from the Department of the Secretary of State demanding that the Grange be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Help America Vote Act. The state conducted an audit of the Grange as a polling place and flunked its disability access by every applicable standard. If the town gets an upgrade to meet the standards of these Acts before June 29, 2007, it may receive reimbursement of 80 percent of the expenditures, up to a limit of \$3,500; otherwise it must bear the full cost. Furthermore, the town must have a written agreement with the Grange in order to use

(over)

public funds for this purpose. "This is a municipal responsibility which cannot be ignored without possible legal repercussions," the letter warns.

Bond Issue The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is planning to clean up the 600 tons of tires on the Smith property in Meddybemps right over the Cooper/Meddybemps town line. Funds for this cleanup are included in the State bond issue that comes before voters at the next election.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

Even More about Ditches than You Ever Wanted to Know

A question was raised at Town Meeting about the East Ridge Road that deserves a longer answer here: If new ditches had been dug on the road last summer, as was proposed at the June 2006 Meeting, would the recent flood damage have been avoided?

Before I answer this question, let me give two reasons why this work was not done last summer. (1) Trimming of vegetation along the roadway had to occur first, and it took most of the work season to chase down personnel willing to take on this back-breaking and potentially hazardous work. The operation did not start until late August and did not finish until mid-October. The workers we did find (all town residents, including a Selectman who contributed several days' worth of time to hauling brush for the chipper) performed an excellent job. But it is almost pure luck that these workers happened to have free time available at all. Who wouldn't rather have steady work for DiCenzo or some other area contractor than take a few weeks' stint at hard labor for the town? (2) The trimming of the roadsides confirmed the existence of a system of ditches and culverts. That system was clearly not optimal, but in some ways it was about as good as could be expected under the circumstances (I'll say more about that in a minute). Given the existence of that system, it seemed best to attempt to improve it rather than spend \$22,000 digging a completely new system. I mention this in particular to make it clear that the Selectmen try *not* to spend money if they can help it. If an appropriation is made and facts later come to light that suggest the appropriation should not be spent, it is the view of the Selectmen that the people of the town should be informed of these facts and given the opportunity to rescind the appropriation. Nothing is more galling to citizens than to see their hard-earned tax money wasted on an expenditure that has proved to be unnecessary.

Now back to the question raised at Town Meeting. As most people in town must be aware by now, the storm of March 17 caused severe damage to a goodly stretch of asphalt on the East Ridge Road. (Details are in the minutes of the March 20 Selectmen's meeting enclosed with this newsletter.) The primary cause was the freezing of two culverts, one by the Dodge Road and one by a woods road downhill from the Dodge Road. The main problem, the culvert at the Dodge Road, had been dug out and freed up earlier in the week by a contractor working for the town. It was actually flowing when Road Commissioner Scott Jamieson and I inspected it on the afternoon of March 17, but it was largely blocked by residual ice and (according to one theory) by ice that had washed down into it from uphill. Even if we had dug new ditches last summer, we would not have replaced this culvert; it is in excellent shape, it is well situated, and no change in the ditch structure itself would make it less susceptible to freezing.

A look at the ditching system on the East Ridge Road will show why the culverts are critical. The system is based on a series of cut-off culverts. That is, water flows along the ditch until it reaches an obstacle (in this case, the Dodge Road). It is then directed into a culvert and sent under and across the road, where it disperses across the slope below the roadway. The purpose of this construction is to prevent the final stretches of

the ditch from having to carry the water accumulated on the entire slope. It's a sound design; but unless the culverts work, the entire system fails.

To some extent this problem was the result of a loss of traditional knowledge about the infrastructure of the road. Since the storm, we have learned that former town officials constantly watched the culverts in March, dosed them regularly with calcium chloride, and dug out the downstream ends. There are many traditions that get lost as governments change, and that is the fault neither of the faithful servants of the town who retire nor of the new servants who take up their jobs. Knowledge is just too easily forgotten in times of change, especially the kind of lore that keeps small towns like Cooper running.

But surely, someone might ask, wouldn't larger ditches have carried off the water off the St. Patrick's Day storm without damage? The answer to that question is negative, and here is why: No ditch, however wide or deep, will carry water if it is full of ice. Take Conant's Hill in Meddybemps as an example. In that same storm, some 400 yards of gravel fill washed out of the shoulders of Rt. 214, even though the ditches had been built to high standards and had been "rocked up" to prevent erosion. And the March 17 storm was truly catastrophic: Emergency Management Authority officials have told me that they are very close to documenting damage on a scale that would make it possible to get a declaration of disaster for Washington County on that date. (If they succeed, we may be able to get Federal funds to pay the cost of reconstructing the East Ridge Road and other damaged roads.)

But to fully understand why the damage to the East Ridge Road occurred that day, it's necessary to know how a ditch should be built. A proper ditch is not just a channel for water to run in; it has a substantial shoulder along the road. That shoulder should be at least two feet wide, and preferably more. The shoulder prevents run-off from getting under the asphalt. The shoulder of the East Ridge Road where the damage occurred (and at many other places on the road) is only about a foot in width. This buffer was immediately eroded by the storm waters, which then tunneled under the asphalt, to emerge about 170 feet farther down—carrying the road base with them.

Well, why can't we just dig new ditches, not only wider and deeper, but with a wider shoulder? Here's the problem: The town doesn't have the easements it needs to do that. When the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) owned the northernmost part of the road (between the sand pile and Crowe Road), it did the legal work necessary and acquired easements from the landowners along the road. The town has a plot plan done by the MDOT at that time showing the book and page numbers of the easements. On that part of the road a wide right-of-way has been established; but it is the more southerly part of the road that is currently causing us trouble. In the stretches where we really need new, broader ditches, we don't have the right-of-way to dig them. This was another reason the Selectmen wanted to try to work with the existing ditch system. It is now clear that we should begin the legal work necessary to establish the town right-of-way in order to get the ditches we need. There is no telling how long that will take.

Another problem with the East Ridge Road is that the base of road is inadequate. A good base would not wash away in a matter of an hour, even in a violent storm. But tearing the entire road out and installing a new base is not an option at this point.

It may seem ironically appropriate that the abbreviation of "East Ridge Road" (ERR) is also a verb that means "to make a mistake." But the condition of the East Ridge Road is not, in my view, the result of mistakes. It is a result of honestly attempting over the years to deal with a real and chronic shortage of money and personnel. The town has always done the best it could with the funds and labor it had available at any given time, and we have to continue to do so, and to continue to cope with the results as best we can.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, March 6, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

Present: Kathy Keen, Robert Von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell

1. No corrections have been received for meeting minutes before the February 26th meeting; the previous minutes are considered approved.

2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, March 20, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

Terry Viselli could not attend the meeting, but she had filed her BMV report early.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. Status of accounts):

Checking 1/31/07\$66,605.94

Savings 12/20/06.....\$146,260.27

Cemetery 2/28/07\$1,160.60

Recreation.....\$478.84

b. Kathy Keen is wrapping up her Treasurer's Report for the Annual Report.

c. The plumbing permit checks have been accepted by the bank, despite being months out of date. Kathy requested a new check from David Lee Construction, and received a replacement within days. (His check was some fourteen months old.)

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #1

BMV	BMV	\$140.00
School Warrant #5	Schools	\$18140.79
Parker Forest Products	----	\$225.00
Public Space Plus for Road Signs	Roads/Supplies	71.95
David Lee for Plowing (March 1 payment)	Roads/Plowing	\$6,375.73
Treasurer, State of Maine	Homestead Reimb. Reconciliation	\$57.00
Mark Smith	---	\$90.00
Washington Co. Assoc. for Retarded Citizens	Third party (authorized in 2006-2007 fiscal year)	\$50.00
Washington Co. Children's Program	Third party (authorized in 2006-2007 fiscal year)	\$50.00
Next Step	Third party (authorized in 2006-2007 fiscal year)	\$100.00
Cathance Lake Assn.	Third party (authorized in 2006-2007 fiscal year)	\$100.00
Dennys River Watershed Council	Third party (authorized in 2006-2007 fiscal year)	\$100.00
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$233.40
Terry Johnson LPI	Plumbing Inspector	\$225.00
Treasurer, State of Maine	AWP (Dog licenses)	\$12.00
Terry Viselli	Reimbursement from State for CVR data entry	\$73.50
	Total	\$26,044.37

It should be noted that the third party recipients on the warrant should have been paid in February (the 2006–2007 fiscal year), but by an oversight were not. [Later note: The Parker Forest Products check was written but not tendered; it was then rendered void.]

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. Stuart and Bob discussed the details of the proposed March warrant. Bob noted that the excise taxes allocated for Administration are also designated for Contingency Expenses. This raises the possibility that small overruns such as we faced for Marion Transfer Station costs at the end of the fiscal year could be paid out of this budget line. Stuart will ask Justin Day if this is an acceptable practice.
- b. Stuart reported on the February Marion Transfer Station news. The construction/demolition debris (CDD) site at Marion has a remaining life of 13.5 months at a closing sideslope grade of 3:1. The life can be extended to 5.97 years if the grade is extended to 2.5:1. This latter option is being pursued.
- c. "Heavy Loads Limited" signs have been ordered.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer meeting scheduled for March 13, 6:30, Pembroke School
- b. Pembroke/Perry/Charlotte combined administration grant meeting, Pembroke Fire Station, Thursday, March 15, 6:30
- b. Workshop on "Writing an Effective Grant Application." 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M., March 28, Waterville Elks Lodge

8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks

Jeff Crowe is out of town this week.

9. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks

Bob discussed the news from a recent recycling workshop he attended. Two points worth noting: it is now illegal in the State of Maine to discard televisions and computer monitors in the normal waste stream; and common fluorescent tubes and bulbs pose a significant mercury hazard and should be disposed of as toxic waste.

**Meeting of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper**

Tuesday, March 20, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Kathy Keen, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz
Jeff Crowe and Scott Jamieson could not attend this week.

1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting

The minutes have not yet been prepared.

2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, April 3, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

- a. Terry presented the biweekly BMV report; there was no IWF this week
- b. There was brief discussion of requirements for the upcoming Town Meeting
- c. Stuart, Terry, and Kathy briefly discussed preparation of materials for the town audit, to take place in April.
- d. Terry presented the results of an inspection of the Grange Hall by an agency in charge of certifying that it is handicap-accessible. This is the first notice we have

had of this inspection, though apparently the town was supposed to make certain improvements by September 2006. If it had done so, it could have been reimbursed for up to 80 percent of the costs. Because this work was not done, the State is threatening to shut down the Grange as a polling place as of July. It is not known where Cooper residents would vote in that case—presumably Alexander, Calais, or Machias. Terry will get estimates and if necessary we can present the options to the Grange and to the voters at the June town meeting.

4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks

- a. The Parker Forest Products check has been voided.

5. Items on Treasurer’s Warrant #2

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$60.50
School Warrant	Schools	\$6843.48
David Lee (April 1 payment)	Road/Plowing	\$6,375.73
Fundy Bay Printing	Administration/Printing	\$1200.46
Swan Printing (Bump signs)	Road supplies	\$35.15
Swan Printing (Road Posting signs)	Road supplies	\$107.35
Cemetery Fund Account	[To be carried on a separate line in the books]	\$1650.00
Scott Jamieson (\$550 gross pay, 27.5 hours times \$20; less \$34.10 FICA, \$7.98 Medicare)	Road/Capital	\$507.92
Mary Dunn (Reimbursement for reflectors, rope, fluorescent tape)	Road/Supplies	\$46.61
Stuart Shotwell (Reimbursement for road salt)	Road/Supplies	\$53.52
	Total	\$16,880.72

6. First Selectman’s Report/Tasks

- a. Stuart gave an update on the status of East Ridge Road after the storm on March 17 and the events behind it. Road Commissioner Scott Jamieson was patrolling the roads and discovered an overflow in the early afternoon. After trying to solve the problem by himself, he called for backup. It took another hour to get David Lee’s backhoe operator on site. (An added complication was that calling on landlines was limited to the 454 exchange because of the storm.) The main cause of the problem was the cut-off culvert at Dodge Road; though it had been thawed early in the week, it refroze before the storm. While we were attempting to create a bypass for that, runoff eroded the shoulder farther down the road and got in under the asphalt, washing away a layer of sand base for up to a foot in depth. The quantity of water running in the ditch was almost unbelievable; it literally would have been possible to run a small boat in the ditch from Dodge Road to the corner near Camp Road. About 175 feet of asphalt on the north lane was undermined in about an hour. The damage was arrested fairly quickly after it was detected, but stabilization efforts continued until late that evening. By eleven the site had been cordoned off with some saw horses, clothesline, fluorescent tape, and Cooper’s collection of battered signs. On Sunday we returned to the site and spent another day on stabilization, culvert work, and refilling the entrance to the Dodge Road, which had to be cut off temporarily on Saturday in an

attempt to stop damage to the asphalt at that point. On Monday, Scott Jamieson oversaw the removal of the undermined asphalt and the filling of the damaged road bed with gravel by contractors Wayne Spear and David Lee. In addition to repaving and ditching work this summer, we will have to repair or replace one to three culverts. [Later note: Costs to date total about \$3600.]

- b. Stuart reported on the March Marion Transfer Station (MTS) meeting. The foremost item of interest at the meeting was the decision of the directors to raise the cost of disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW, or common household trash), from 3 cents per pound to 4 cents per pound for member communities. (Nonmembers already pay 6 cents.) The average cost to the MTS is about 5 or 5.5 cents per pound. (For each pound of MSW it accepts, MTS pays 1.25 cents to run the transfer station, 1.25 cents to truck the trash to New Brunswick, and 2.5 cents to the landfill there as a tipping or disposal fee.) Thus the MTS has been drawing on its reserves to subsidize MSW disposal for nonmembers. In order to ensure the continued financial health of MTS, it seemed wise to cut the subsidy by at least a penny per pound. In other words, the MTS will still be subsidizing the disposal of MSW, but only by 1 or 1.5 cents per pound instead of 2 or 2.5 cents. This means that rates for MSW disposal in the member towns will rise by 30 percent. For Cooper this means a possible rise from \$5200 in 2006 to \$6760 in 2007. Stuart supported this cost increase as Cooper's representative to the MTS board because of the overriding benefit to the town in keeping MTS fiscally sound in the long term.

In other MTS news, Stuart relayed some answers to questions about the proposed CDD (construction/ demolition debris) landfill proposed by MTS for a site in Plantation 14. When it is capped (finished) it will be about 20 yards in height. It will be situated such that if it can be seen at all from outside the buffer area, it will be only distantly visible from one spot on Rte. 86. Its final appearance will be that of a grassy field. The site is about three miles from the nearest existing dwelling on Rte. 86.

Stuart has also been asked why the MTS is purchasing 5000 acres. The site requires only about 90 acres, with an additional 100 acres of perimeter for monitoring wells; but the seller, Haynes, would not sell anything less than the full parcel. There is no intention of turning the site into a vast landfill; the landfill activity is to be limited to the 90 acres for which MTS is currently seeking the permit.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for April 10, 6:30, Pembroke School
 - b. Workshop on "Writing an Effective Grant Application." 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M., March 28, Waterville Elks Lodge
 - c. Annual Town Meeting, Monday, March 26, 7:00 P.M., Grange Hall

(Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting begin on the reverse of this sheet.)

TOWN OF COOPER
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MARCH 26, 2007
GRANGE HALL

7:00 pm: The Cooper Annual Town Meeting comes to order with Teresa Viselli, Town Clerk presiding. The Officer's Return is read.

Article 1: Neal Hallee is nominated and elected unanimously as Moderator for this meeting. Neal Hallee comes forward and is sworn in by the Town Clerk.

Article 2: Teresa Viselli is nominated and elected unopposed as Town Clerk. Teresa Viselli is sworn in by the Moderator.

Article 3: Stuart Shotwell referred the citizens of Cooper to the Selectmen's report in the Annual Report.

Article 4: Stuart Shotwell (23-0), Jeff Crowe (23-0), and Robert Von Rotz (23-0) are nominated and elected unopposed as First, Second, and Third Selectmen respectively. All officers will be sworn in at the end of the meeting.

Article 5: Chris McCormick (23-0), Dan Ackley (23-0), and Lynn Brown (23-0) are nominated and elected unopposed as First, Second and Third assessors respectively.

Article 6: Ann Marie Flood is nominated and elected unopposed as Town Treasurer.

Article 7: Caroline Hatton is nominated and elected unopposed for a three year term as a member of the Superintending School Committee.

Article 8: Teresa Viselli is nominated and elected unopposed as Collector of Taxes for the ensuing year.

Article 9: John Viselli is nominated and elected unopposed as Constable for the ensuing year.

Article 10: The town voted in favor (one opposed) to reallocate the amount of \$899 carried as a reserve under the designation "Waste Disposal Contingency" for payment of Municipal Solid Waste disposal in the next or ensuing years.

Article 11: The town votes (17-9) not to reallocate for general Highways and Bridges expenses the remainder of \$20,000 appropriated at the June 2006 Special Town Meeting for the cost of trimming, ditching and grading the East Ridge Road (about \$6,000). Instead the town voted (26-3) to emend the existing allocation to include maintaining or replacing culverts on the East Ridge road.

Article 12: The town voted (17-12) to reject reallocating \$20,000 reserved from the General Fund at the June 2006 Special Town Meeting for the cost of trimming, ditching and grading the East Ridge Road .

Article 13: The town voted to dedicate FY 2005 general capital upgrade carryovers and FY 2006 Road Assistance funds to general capital upgrades in FY 2007.

Article 14: The town voted to reallocate the remainder of the \$5,500 reserved for equipment at the March 2006 meeting to be returned to the unrestricted general fund at the end of FY 2006.

Article 15: The town voted to raise and appropriate for the Municipal Solid Waste, including the Marion Transfer Station and the maintenance of the closed cooper Town dump \$5700 with any remainder to be drawn from the General fund.

Article 16: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$73,000 for highways and Bridges for the ensuing year.

Article 17: The town voted to raise and appropriate excise taxes plus the balance from the General Fund, estimated at \$23,000, for Administrative and Contingent Expenses for the ensuing year.

Article 18: The town voted to include the costs of mailing the newsletter and minutes to the voters of the Town as part of the Administrative and Contingent Expenses for the ensuing year.

Article 19: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$5,000 plus the balance from the General Fund for Liability and Workman's Compensation Insurance for all Town employees and Town officers.

Article 20: The town voted to raise and appropriate the carry-forward from 2006 (estimated at \$673) and the remainder to the total of \$2500 for maintenance for the Cooper Volunteer Fire department for the ensuing year.

Article 21: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$52.48 per rostered volunteer firefighter for insurance coverage for the calendar years 2007 and 2008.

Article 22: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$500 for the Town Recreation, including maintenance and sanitary services for the Town Beach area.

Article 23: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 plus emergency payment if necessary from the General fund for Town Welfare for the ensuing year.

Article 24: The town voted to pay the Selectmen \$1500, \$750, and \$750 for first, second and third Selectmen respectively for the ensuing year.

Article 25: The town voted to pay the Assessors \$1500, \$750, and \$750 for first, second and third Assessors respectively for the ensuing year.

Article 26: The town voted to pay the Treasurer \$1600 for the ensuing year.

Article 27: The town voted to pay the Town Clerk \$750 for the ensuing year.

Article 28: The town voted to pay \$4500 for the Collection of Taxes for the ensuing year.

Article 29: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$1800 for the mowing of cemeteries for the ensuing year.

Article 30: The town voted for the Selectmen serving in FY 2007-2008 to contract for cemetery mowing for a period of one, two, or three years, at their discretion.

Article 31: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$1000 for the repair and refurbishment of the Town cemeteries at the direction of a committee of citizens appointed by the Selectmen.

Article 32: The town voted (9-1) on a motion not to join the Washington County Council of Governments if the \$250 membership was paid by an anonymous donor. The town voted (one opposed) to join the WCCOG with the \$250 membership to be paid by the town.

Article 33: the town votes to have all taxes due and payable at a certain date, and interest charged on all taxes paid thereafter.

Article 35: The town votes to fix the date for all taxes to be due as December 1 and the interest rate at ten percent.

Article 36: The town voted to close the separate Town Recreation account and make payments of Town Recreation funds out of the regular Town checking account.

Article 37: The town voted with (one opposed) to authorize the Selectmen to sell any real estate on which the Town holds tax liens and on which the liens have been foreclosed.

Article 38: The town voted to direct the Tax Collector and Treasurer, pursuant to Title 36, Maine revised statutes Annotated, section 906, to apply any tax payment received from an individual as payment for any property tax against outstanding or delinquent taxes due on said property in chronological order beginning with the oldest unpaid tax bill; provided, however, that no such payment may be applied to any tax for which an abatement or appeal is pending unless approved in writing by the taxpayer.

Article 39: The town votes that the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Selectmen or a majority thereof, are authorized to borrow from time to time in anticipation of taxes for the taxable year commencing April 1, 2007, a total sum not to exceed \$30,000.

Article 40: The town voted to authorize the Selectmen serving in FY 2007-2008 to contract for winter maintenance for a period of one, two, or three years at their discretion.

Article 41: The town voted to authorize the Selectmen to spend an amount not to exceed 1/12th of the budgeted amount in each budget category of the Town of Cooper during the period from March 1, 2008, to the Cooper Annual Town Meeting.

Article 42: The town votes to accept the categories of funds listed below as provided by the Maine state Legislature.

Education subsidies	\$116,400
Municipal Revenue Sharing	\$7,200
Local Road Assistance	\$12,900
Snowmobile Registration fund	\$50
Gasoline Tax Refund	\$400
Veterans Reimbursement	\$101
Property Tax Relief	\$313
Homestead Reimbursement	\$4,600
Tree Growth Reimbursement	
General Assistance Reimbursement	

Article 43: The town voted to authorize the Tax Collector to accept advance taxes for FY 2008.

Article 44: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$2,250 for emergency services for the ensuing year from Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority.

Article 45: The town voted to authorize the Selectmen to transfer money reimbursed by the State of Maine from Snowmobile Registration to the Breakneck Mountain Snow Riders Snowmobile Club.

Article 46: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for prevention of domestic violence.

Article 47: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 to support the services of the Washington County Children's Program.

Article 48: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$50 to support the Washington County Association for Retarded Citizens

Article 49: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for the Dennys River Watershed Council.

Article 50: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for the Cathance Lake Association.

Article 51: The town voted to raise and appropriate \$100 for the Washington-Hancock Community Agency.

Article 52: The town motioned to vote (14-8) individually to raise and appropriate the following sums to these third parties:

- \$78 for the Down East Aids Network (14-7)
- \$235 for the Calais Free Library (16-8)
- \$100 for the Literacy Volunteers of Washington County (20-2)
- \$500 for Down East Hospice (22-2)
- \$150 for Home and Family Services (12-5)

At approximately 9:45pm the Officers are sworn in as the meeting is adjourned.
Given under our hands this 26th day of March, 2007.

Teresa Viselli, Town Clerk

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
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June 3, 2007

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

This newsletter is about a month behind its intended publication. The following are some other items either not mentioned or not fully discussed in the included Selectmen's minutes (for April and May 2007).

Referendum Day Elections for voting on state referenda will be held Tuesday, June 12.

June Special Town Meeting Postponed We had been planning to hold the Special Town meeting in June as usual, but School Board Chair Callie Hatton has advised the Selectmen that state figures for the forthcoming school year will not be available until July, and probably not until mid-July at that. Without those figures, the Superintendent can't draw up a budget for the voters to approve.

Notes of thanks The town has received expressions of thanks for its donations to the following: Downeast Aids Network, Downeast Hospice, Home and Family Services, Next Step (against domestic violence), Literacy Volunteers of Washington County, and the Washington County Children's Program.

MDOT budgeted work The good news under this heading is that the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has scheduled \$563,700 worth of paving and maintenance work to the North Union road in its 2008-2009 budget cycle (from the junction with Route 191 to the junction with Route 9). Whether this is in any way a consequence of our drawing attention to the condition of the road last spring isn't clear, although at that time the MDOT official with whom we spoke said that no money was being set aside for this purpose. The bad news is that there is no work budgeted for improving or upgrading Route 191, so no substantial work will be done on it for at least another four or five years. Any money to repair disintegration of the road in the meantime will have to be drawn from MDOT contingency funds.

Correction The 600 tons of tires that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is planning to clean up are in Cooper, not over the line in Meddybemps, as mentioned in the last newsletter. A vote yes on the bond issue on June 12 will provide funds for this cleanup.

WCCOG representative needed Cooper has joined the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG). The Council likes to have two members from each town, one an elected official and one a citizen who is not an official. According to the WCCOG information, "The meeting schedule is one Annual General meeting in September, when most towns participate. The Executive Committee meets every two months (we often skip one meeting in the summer), and we move the meetings around the county and from lunch to evening times. This helps to maximize the opportunity for participation." Anyone who would like to get a look at what the WCCOG does is welcome to volunteer; please call Stuart.

WCMESA representative needed The Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority (WCMESA) has requested that the Town send a representative to its periodic meetings. WCMESA supplies emergency ambulance services for our area. The organization is owned and operated by members. If you are interested in helping to support and make decisions concerning this vital community service, please contact the Selectmen and volunteer to be Cooper's representative. The work will require only a little time—a meeting every few months—and the effort to make a brief telephone report to the Selectmen afterward. Some representatives from the other eighteen towns and the Unorganized Territories include Roger Holst (Alexander), Jim Porter (Calais), Dennis Bryant (Charlotte), Wallace Colburn (Crawford), Jimmy Sullivan (Dennysville), Bud Finch (Eastport), Jeff Brown (Meddybemps).

Comprehensive Planning Volunteers are needed to work on a committee to develop a comprehensive plan for land use in Cooper. Please contact the Selectmen.

Appraisals The Assessors have asked Cooper property owners to make an appointment with Brenda Gove, the appraiser who is revaluing Cooper. The visit is painless, and Brenda does not need to see the entire house (that means there's no need to clean the bedrooms). Consider it an opportunity to show features not visible from the outside that *reduce* the value of your house—for example, the lack of a basement. To set up an appointment, leave a message for Brenda Gove at (207) 469-3283.

Possible School Consolidation The town has received information on the school consolidation plan approved by the Appropriations Committee of the State Legislature. (Interested citizens can ask the Selectmen for the Maine Municipal Association analysis.) The plan shows every sign of being hastily conceived; it is vague and self-contradictory in many respects, and it can be demonstrated from the language of the plan itself that the supposed \$36 million in savings will be years in materializing. If approved by the Legislature, the plan will be rushed through the referendum process by January 15, 2008.

Among other things, the plan mandates a complex process for future school budgets that would rob Cooper voters of local control. We could attend a general meeting for the consolidated school district and voice our objections to the school budget there, but if Cooper students were shortchanged in some way, we would have no recourse. Furthermore, it is possible, if not likely, that school choice in Cooper would come to an end by 2008–2009.

Feedback on this plan should be directed to State Representative Howard E. McFadden, 726-4676 or 287-1400 or <RepHoward.McFadden@legislature.maine.gov>; and State Senator Kevin Raye at 287-1505, 853-9406, or <kevinraye@wwsisp.com>. It is critical to comment on this plan in the week of June 4, as the Legislature will be voting on it at that time.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

Further Thoughts: An Administrative Assistant for Cooper

I've been First Selectman for a little over a year now, and during that time, one fact has become very obvious. If Cooper is to survive as a town, it needs to change its form of government to what is called the Town Meeting/Selectperson/Administrative Assistant model. Under this model, most town officials would be elected as before, but they would set policy rather than do paperwork. The administrative assistant would do the following (and possibly more):

- Collect taxes and serve as IFW and BMV agent
- Keep the account books and issue checks
- Interface with the auditor
- Produce the Annual Report
- Field questions about property taxes directed to town officials by real estate agents, title insurance companies, and so forth
- Field questions from state and federal agencies about town business (e.g., Census, IRS, DEP, Forestry, State Revenue)
- Interface with the Maine Municipal Association on insurance and legal matters
- Take meeting minutes and distribute them
- Run the town office (assuming we get one)
- Keep the archives of town records
- File state-mandated assessment, planning, and school board documents
- Provide secretarial support for town committees
- Implement policies of the Selectmen

The administrative assistant form of government should be distinguished from the town manager form of government, in which the manager generally has more power. The administrative assistant is basically an executive secretary, taking orders from the Selectmen and other officials in the town, who continue to make the decisions, ultimately under the direction of the town at the town meeting.

If we had such an administrative assistant, we would have a much more democratic government in Cooper. As things stand, people are terrified to run for the office of Selectman (and other offices), because they involve too much busywork. No one who already works forty hours a week (let alone fifty or sixty) can give town affairs the attention they deserve, and anyone who tries will inevitably break down. Follow-through is what town jobs are all about, and that requires an individual who is paid full-time to follow through. In many towns, believe it or not, the office of selectperson is contested every year. That's the sign of a healthy local democracy. We could actually see people vying to be Selectmen every year in Cooper if they knew they were not going to be crushed by the resulting workload.

A businessman who summers on the lake once said to me that he hoped I was training a successor. It was a very practical suggestion. Every town needs continuity. But who will volunteer to be First Selectman next? Think about it: what happens to Cooper if the First Selectman gets sick or moves away to work elsewhere, or if he simply burns out? This was the dilemma that led to the recent proposals to deorganize. It was an option brought forward by responsible people who wanted to bring in a successor to town government in a responsible way. But it also meant the end of Cooper as a town. If we want to save Cooper as a town, hiring an administrator is the way to do it.

If we look around ourselves, we find that we have fallen behind our neighboring towns in significant ways. Meddybemps has a beautiful community center. Charlotte has a \$150,000 fire department building. Alexander has a school and a combination town office and fire hall, to which the fire department is now adding a new bay with an expensive new fire engine. These buildings were constructed with tax funds matched by substantial grants. One reason we have been unable to write and secure such grants is that the Town Officers are busy doing other chores. I have found myself digging a grave, hauling trash, and (as readers of this newsletter know) coping with overflowing ditches. I know my predecessors did a good deal of the same. I also spend my weekends and a good part of each day ricocheting paperwork back at the State and Federal governments, or talking to random callers on the phone about this or that aspect of Cooper government. One of my great regrets over the damage to the East Ridge Road this past March was that I knew that coping with it would take up all the time I might devote to inching Cooper forward. I can't see an administrative assistant digging a grave or clearing the ice out of ditches, but I could imagine him or her arranging ahead of time so that I didn't have to do that.

Let me take this point a little further: My own to-do list currently looks like this:

- Determine the right-of-way of the East Ridge Road. Possible avenues:
 - Call Dean Preston to see if he has any records on this
 - Search the Registry for a deed (probably from the 1800s) giving the road to the town
 - Check record in Washington County Commissioners Office, Vol. 3, page 303
 - Hire legal search service
- Call contact at the MMA about the LD 1 spending limit to clarify article for Special Town Meeting
- Write up Warrant for Special Town Meeting
- Revisit the Grange to present the proposal about the Town making a cooperative agreement with the Grange; get (a) an agreement to allow Town use of the Grange for elections during the depreciation period of the disability improvements, so that we can be reimbursed by the state; and (b) approval to begin joint consideration of plan for long-term cooperative use of the Grange as both Grange Hall and Town Office; put an article on the Special Meeting Warrant to get town approval to explore this option
- Call Bureau of Elections about whether we can get the required legal agreement with the Grange after the upgrade to the polling place is done
- Get predeterminations of 1099 status for cemetery mowers and other contractors from the state so that the town can save on Workers' Comp and Liability Insurance
- Get contractors to list us on their liability insurance to save the town money
- Reconvene Beach committee
- Convene Cemetery committee
- Convene Comprehensive Planning Committee; contact WCCOG about doing orientation
- Touch base with Town Emergency Manager on the town's Emergency Management Policy (towns are now being required to file these)
- Order road safety equipment and culvert thawer
- Write up plan of attack for the East Ridge Road:
 - List which culverts need to be replaced at south end of road; write specs; get bids

- Write up specs for culvert job at north end of road (smooth wall plastic 44 feet long); get estimate; notify citizens on roadway of date and time of road closing
 - Get bids on digging new ditches, provided four-rod right-of-way can be established.
 - Get bid for repaving road
 - Get plowing contract for 2007–2008.
 - Get the following road work items done:
 - Get bus stop sign near Terry Little’s moved to either North Union or Rt. 191 on Cooper Hill
 - Get sign for Murphy Pt. Road and Beach Road put up; get sign for East Ridge Road where it splits from other road (Gilman Dam?)
 - Seal the long cracks on East Ridge Road hill near Crowe Road
 - Put new asphalt or cold patch on bad spot between Justin Day’s blueberry field and McMahon’s
 - Get the gravel roads in town graded
 - Arrange for mowing the town roadways
 - Get more gravel laid down for eroded spots on the shoulders of the East Ridge Road; grade up existing gravel as necessary
 - Find out who is responsible for eroded culvert at the end of Grove Pond Road
 - Do the following in order to utilize Small Community Grant from the DEP:
 - Get an easement from the landowner
 - Record the signed easement form at the Registry of Deeds
 - Collect the owner’s share of the cost of the new septic system
 - Obtain plumbing permit for the new system
 - Post bid using the standard DEP bidding documents
 - Send bid results to the DEP per their specifications
 - Get DEP approval for the bid
 - Arrange for inspections of the system at appropriate stages of construction
 - Arrange for the contractor to do the work; arrange to pay the contractor
 - Collect the seven items of paperwork required to get DEP payment
 - Arrange to have the old dump mowed
 - Send flood insurance material to Planning Board for recommendation
 - Find out from Maine Forestry Service/Conservation if the \$9,000 reserve is enough to cover our “deductible” if there is a forest fire in Cooper
 - Call MEMA about getting document to show exemption from flood hazard in Cooper so that we can apply for grants
 - Apply for State Homeland Security Grant Program—deadline October 12
 - Apply for CommUnity Impact grant
- Not urgent:**
- Find out what the education reserve fund is for so the town can actually use this money instead of letting it go to waste
 - Get agreement with PAWS or some other pound to take animals picked up in Cooper
 - Make list of employees and how treated on 941 / 1099; develop job descriptions

A lot of these items have been on this list a long time, and the fact is that many aren’t likely to get done at all, not as long as I have to continue earning a living, and as long as I have zero assistance. An administrative assistant could handle many of these tasks with the guidance of the Selectmen. The Selectmen would make the decisions, in accordance with the will of the town as expressed at the town meeting; and the administrative assistant would carry those decisions out. This system would also give

the Selectmen time to apply for grants. Currently they are too busy fussing with the East Ridge Road to do that.

One reason that Alexander is more successful than Cooper is that it has a full-time employee who handles many of these administrative duties. Some seventy towns in Maine have this kind of administrative assistant. Even though Cooper has remained a small town, and one could argue on that basis that the government it has had for the last 185 years should suffice, the fact is that the burden on that government has become greater as state laws and mandates have multiplied over the years. Towns in Maine started moving to the administrative assistant or town manager form of government as early as 1917, so we're nearly a century behind the curve.

Of course this administrative assistant is going to cost money. The way I picture the position, it should pay a good living wage and include health insurance; otherwise it is not going to attract and keep a dedicated and competent individual. The contract should be on a three-year basis, with an option for dismissal for nonperformance at the discretion of the Selectmen.

Where would this money come from? About \$10,000 of it could come from a reduction in the salaries of the existing officials, depending on what mix of duties the administrative assistant picks up. But the lion's share would have to come from voter's pockets. If we are going to bootstrap ourselves into the twenty-first century—if we are going to remain a viable town—then we need to make this allocation of our resources. We could also cut costs by sharing this administrative assistant with other towns. Pembroke, Charlotte, and Perry have just received a \$100,000 grant to set up an interlocal agreement under which they will share several employees to take care of the town business in all three towns. We might be able to do something similar. And in the long run, this administrative assistant will help us pull in grant money that will more than pay the salary of the position.

Let's face it: we're all too busy to run this town properly. But if we all chip in, we can hire someone who can do it. Let's not get stuck in the same model our forerunners in Cooper were using 185 years ago. Let's move on.

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, April 3, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

4 / 3

Present: Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Kathy Keen, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. The minutes of the March Selectmen's Meeting and the Town Meeting were handed out for reading and approval at the next meeting.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, April 17, 2007
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - A. Progress toward collecting audit materials (deadline: April 15) was discussed.
 - c. Stuart offered a reminder that appointments must be recorded, per 30-A MRSA §2526.

d. Terry will be sworn in as Registrar by a notary; she will swear in Carolyn Hatton, Jim Slowe, and the new member of Planning Board when that member is decided upon.

e. Terry will do a recap of election officials and do a swearing in of those whose terms have expired, most likely on Election Day in June.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. The new Treasurer, Ann Marie Flood, was welcomed and the Treasurer's function in the meeting was explained.

b. There was a brief discussion of the process of changing over bank accounts over to Ann Marie Flood as signatory, as well as the consolidating of the Recreation Fund into General Fund.

c. Kathy Keen presented the April 941 forms (federal and state), which she was very kind to complete for us before handing over the keys of the treasury to Ann Marie. She also turned over the materials for the audit.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #3

a. It was decided to get in sync with other towns, which make 3rd party payments in the spring, rather than waiting until February, when such payments are likely to be overlooked.

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$215.00
School Warrant	Schools	\$16405.91
David Lee (May 1 payment)	Road/Plowing	\$6,375.73
WCEMSA	Third Party	\$2,250.00
Breakneck Mt. Snowmobile Club	Third Party	\$13.24
Wayne Spear	Roads/Capital	\$2,208.00
David Lee Construction	Roads/Capital	\$960.00
IFW	IFW	\$54.00
Grange for Rent	Admin/Rent	\$100.00
Neal Hallee (Moderator)	Admin/Salaries	\$25.00
Fire Department (for 2006-2007 fiscal year)	Third Party	\$2,500.00
IRS (941)	941	\$2050.21
Hartford Life Ins.	Firefighter Ins.	\$682.24
Washington-Hancock Community Agency	Third Party	\$100.00
MTCCA dues for Ann Marie Flood	Admin/Dues	\$15.00
Next Step	Third Party	\$100.00
Washington County Association for Retarded Citizens	Third Party	\$50.00
Dennys River Watershed Council	Third Party	\$100.00
WHCA	Third Party	\$100.00
Downeast Aids Network	Third Party	\$78.00
Calais Free Library	Third Party	\$235.00
Literacy Volunteers of Washington County	Third Party	\$100.00
Down East Hospice	Third Party	\$500.00
Home and Family Services	Third Party	\$150.00

Scott Jamieson	Roads/Capital	\$166.23
	Total	\$35,533.56

[Later note: The payment to Cathance Lake Association was overlooked; it should be paid on the next warrant.]

b. The Town has received a \$25 donation from Joanne McMahon “to help defray newsletter expenses.”

6. First Selectman’s Report/Tasks

a. A discussion was held considering options for repairing and maintaining the East Ridge Road. Bob Smith described the problems caused by the road base and detailed possibilities for improving the ditching system. He also explained why the road receives such tremendous runoff: skidder paths upgrade from the road provide a path for water that overflows the higher heath to descend rapidly to the barrier presented by the road. This flood water then is forced to flow along the road until it can escape through one of the culverts and continue on its course to the lake. There was general agreement on the immediate need to begin obtaining easements to increase the Town right-of-way along the East Ridge Road from approximately the Crowe Road south. A plan of that section of the road, indicating the existing culverts and integrated with a plot of the land lots, would be an extremely useful tool. Bob was asked to consider how to spend the small budget the Town approved for slowing the disintegration of the unpaved portion of the road.

b. The timetable for joining the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG) was discussed. Their membership year runs from October to October. Stuart was to confer with the WCCOG to see if an exception can be made in this case.

c. Stuart reported on the Selectmen’s meeting with the Grange. (See the Selectmen’s Newsletter of April 7, 2007, for details.)

d. Stuart noted that the Selectmen have received notice of prospective amendments to the much-criticized Significant Wildlife Habitat Protection Rules. They have been forwarded to the Planning Board. The state is planning workshops to implement the new rules, details to be announced.

f. Scott Jamieson appointment as Road Commissioner was renewed. Bob Smith was appointed RC also, though it was felt that the Commissioners should work together, rather than have distinct “territories.”

g. The appointment of the new member of Planning Board was deferred pending news from Callie Hatton on whether Doug Pelletier would be willing to continue to serve.

h. Terry Viselli was appointed Registrar.

7. First Selectman’s news (announcements requiring no decisions)

a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, April 10, 6:30, Pembroke School

8. Second Selectman’s Report/Tasks

a. Jeff, Scott, and Bob Smith spoke of the need for some filling on the East Ridge Road: Along the shoulder down the hill from Kriders’; over the culvert at the end of Crowe Road; and (temporarily, to protect the road surface) in the hollow between heaved sections of the road on the southern side of the intersection with the Crowe Road. The weather has been so snowy that there has been little point in attempting to get these areas filled yet.

9. Third Selectman’s Report/Tasks

- a. Bob Von Rotz described a meeting he and Stuart had with the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) about the stretch of road by John Johnson's house. The MDOT does not have any money to upgrade the road, though they agreed it was in need of a complete rebuild. For the time being the MDOT will post hazard signs at 200-foot intervals. The MDOT recommended that we start a Rt. 191 Corridor Association to lobby for money to upgrade the road. The MDOT representatives also suggested that we work through our local legislative representatives to try to put pressure on the legislature to increase funds available for this area.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, April 17, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

4 / 17

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. Minutes of April 3 Selectmen's Meeting were handed out for approval. No corrections of the previous minutes having been received, they are considered approved.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, May 1, 2007
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry Viselli handed in her collected materials for the audit of the 2006-2007 fiscal year. Stuart will take the audit materials to the auditor in Ellsworth on Thursday, April 19.
 - c. Terry presented a copy of the recordings of officers and appointments.
 - d. Terry will arrange to swear in Carolyn Hatton and Doug Pelletier at Planning Board meeting on May 1, the first Tuesday. (Jim Slowe won't need to be sworn in until June.)
 - e. Terry has been sworn in as Registrar and has notified the Secretary of State.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie Flood has changed the signatories on the bank accounts.
 - b. The Recreation Fund has been consolidated into the General Fund.
 - c. Ann Marie has been getting up to speed on other matters, but is hoping to get the accounts computerized and print town checks from the computer.
 - d. We had a correction to Treasurer's Warrant #3, where a third-party payee should have read WCCP instead of WHCA. We omitted the Cathance Lake Association payment, but we can put that on Warrant #4 (below).
 - e. Stuart will give Ann Marie the Federal form 941 information he has.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #4
(TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$119.00
School Warrant	Schools	\$11017.72
Patrick Dineen	--	\$175.00
Fundy Bay	Admin/Copies	\$14.60
Postmaster Meddybemps	Admin/Postage	\$100.00
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$418.00

Washington County Council of Governments	Admin/Dues	\$250.00
Cathance Lake Association	Admin/Dues (appropriated at 2007 March Meeting)	\$100.00
Treasurer, State of Maine	AWP (Dog license)	\$3.00
	Total	\$12197.32

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. There was a discussion with Road Commissioners Scott Jamieson and Bob Smith about tackling the East Ridge Road. Bob Smith suggested staking out the right of way as a preliminary step. Others thought that this might be alarming to landowners unless they had prior warning. There was agreement that we need a plot plan of the road, however rough, with a specific program of what needs to be done when. Stuart will look into the right-of-way issue. He has requested but not received the Maine Department of Transportation manual on ditches. He handed out wallet-sized cards with the phone numbers of Selectmen, Road Commissioners, and contractors to facilitate communication in emergencies.
- b. There was a discussion of possible representatives to the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG). We need an elected official and a citizen who is not an official. [Later note: We have been informed that we can send two elected officials if necessary. A volunteer would be the best option. The council has a main meeting in the fall and the executive committee meets less frequently in various locations around the county.]
- c. Stuart has been in correspondence with Steve Verrill, Master of the State Grange, concerning the proposal for an agreement between the Town and the Grange. Mr. Verrill writes: "There are some Granges that have these types of arrangements. Basically, the State Grange has to approve the arrangement and sign any leases or deeds. You may want to look further into the CDBG [Community Development Block Grant] to determine whether or not the town must own the building in order to get the grants. We as a state Grange would want to see language that would basically give the Grange unrestricted use of the building at no charge, except for your office space and that the town would cover all expenses associated with the maintenance of the building. There could be some provision to buy out the Grange if the Grange should ever surrender its charter. Discuss with the local Grange what the most desirable arrangement would be for them and the town and I could have our lawyer draw up the agreement." The question Mr. Verrill raises about CDBG was occasioned by the fact that Stuart's contact with him came through a state official who runs the CDBG program. In fact, CDBG funds cannot be used for town halls. However, we might want to make our arrangement with the Grange to use the building as a community center (to which Block Grants can be applied), and refer to the adjoining building (yet to be built) as the town office. Other towns have this connection between a building that is used for CDBG-eligible purposes (a fire station or community center) and the town office; Alexander would be an example.
- d. Stuart had been going to recommend a written policy on dealing with road emergencies, but after a brief discussion, there seemed to be a good understanding on this subject.
- e. Doug Pelletier was reappointed to the Planning Board with appreciation for his willingness to "re-up."

- f. Stuart attended the April Marion Transfer Station (MTS) Meeting. Items discussed included:
- The relationship between the MTS and Unorganized Territory (UT). The UT rents heated garage space to the MTS; at the urging of UT director Dean Preston, the MTS directors voted to terminate the existing rental agreement and make the agreement an annual one. The new rental rate would reflect an improvement the UT has made in the facility and the increased costs of supplying heat. Preston raised the issue of making sure that the MTS surplus is invested in such a way that it can continue to provide a subsidy to member towns for the disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW), or household trash.
 - The current projection for a ruling by the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) on the proposed construction demolition debris (CDD) landfill in Township 14 is sometime in June.
 - The directors voted to put the Lilac Disposal Service on a pay-as-you-go basis because Lilac is now in bankruptcy. An extra meeting was held Monday, April 16, to reexamine the Lilac Disposal issue, as the bankruptcy trustee wants to keep Lilac operating, but would find it difficult to do so unless payment were made on a weekly rather than per-load basis. He has pledged that bills will be paid within 48 hours. An arrangement was worked out that probably will be satisfactory to both sides: Lilac must pay up all bills as of each Monday in order to continue hauling to MTS.
- g. The Marion Transfer Station has requested a letter from the Selectmen indicating the officials designated by the town to represent the town at the Board of Directors meetings. These would be the Selectmen. Stuart also proposes that Dan Ackley be listed as an alternate, as he is familiar with MTS issues from attending previous meetings.
- h. Stuart proposed the creation of an ad hoc advisory committee to work on a comprehensive plan for the town. Although the Planning Board will review and approve the plan when it is drawn up, an ad hoc advisory committee will allow us to include both planning board members and outside advisors—in short, this format will give us more person-power.
- i. There is some urgency in getting an agreement with the Grange to allow changes for accessibility. We have to submit final bills for finished work as of June 29, though Terry reports that per her conversation with the State, there may be some funds available after that date on a first-come-first-served basis. The great news is that Lawrence Tibbetts of Cooper has offered to donate his time to making the necessary repairs to the Grange. He is a contractor who has done disability access improvement on several facilities in the area. He knows and has worked with Jim Slowe, our Code Enforcement Officer, so he will be able to coordinate with him to get approval of the improvements. If we will be reimbursed by the state, it may also be possible to pay Mr. Tibbetts for his time. The State official with whom Terry spoke advised her that the amateurs who did the audit on a contract basis for the state took many incorrect measurements and some towns have found that some disability improvements were not needed. Considering the nature of the problems listed in our audit, we probably won't get so lucky.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for May 8, 6:30, Pembroke School
- b. Transfer Station Operators Training Program. Core Training Session #3, Hazardous and Special Waste. Sessions on May 10 (Portland), May 24 (Jeff's

- Catering, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer), May 31 (Augusta). 8:15 registration; 9:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M. Registration \$25, before May 4.
 - c. Labor and Employment Law Seminar. The Senator Inn, Augusta, May 1, 8:30 A.M.–3:00 P.M.
 - d. Maine Municipal Association “Front Porch” Meetings: May 2, Washington County Community College; May 3, University of Maine at Machias. Agenda topics: MMA Annual Convention, Coordinated Regional Meetings, Electronic Communications, Enhanced Electronic Transactions, Financial Management Training and Assistance.
8. Second Selectman’s Report/Tasks
Jeff was unable to attend.
9. Third Selectman’s Report/Tasks
a. Stuart loaded Bob von Rotz with a batch of paperwork to examine and either discard or fill out.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, May 1, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

5 / 1

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen’s Meeting and Town Meeting
No corrections to the minutes of the meetings through April 3 having been received, they are declared approved.
2. Date of next Selectmen’s meeting: Tuesday, May 15, 2007
3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry received a notice of bankruptcy filing from United States District Court in Delaware in the matter of a subprime lender. We’re asking a couple of people in town if they have any advice on what ought to be done about this.
 - b. Terry left the meeting early to go to the Planning Board meeting and swear in two members.
4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks
 - a. There was some discussion of the necessity of getting a signed copy of the School Warrant to Ann Marie Flood before payments are made on it. The Selectmen did not receive a signed School Warrant, so it could not be paid on this Treasurer’s Warrant.
 - b. The question of the Town’s liability for foreclosed property has arisen. The Selectmen will have to consult the Maine Municipal Association on this matter.
5. Items on Treasurer’s Warrant #5

Payee	Category	Amount
Bureau of Motor Vehicles	BMV	371.00
Inland Fish & Wildlife	IFW	186.00
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	407.20
	Total	964.20

[Later note: the IFW amount shown above is corrected from the initial erroneous amount shown on the warrant, \$86.]

Received at Stuart's address: A check from the state for a building permit fee, \$35.

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. We have joined the Washington County Council of Governments and can schedule an orientation on comprehensive planning with the director there.
- b. Other projects have been stalled because of explosion of work at Stuart's day job. He hopes to have some free time to give to Town issues later this week.
- c. Lawrence Tibbetts has made a list of materials he will need to bring the Grange up to the standard for disability access. He has obtained a quotation from Sprague's; it totals \$1003.18 for materials, but does not include the cost of the required signs. Stuart will have to consult with the Grange to get permission to make these changes. Unfortunately, it seems we will have to wait for town approval at the June meeting. Stuart will look into the contingency nature of this expense, to see if it is possible to take it from the Administrative and Contingency line of the budget. We will also have to get an estimate to have a small area of the Grange parking lot paved as part of the disability access requirement. (Once again it is worth noting that Lawrence is contributing his labor to the town.) Meanwhile the State has cautioned us that the freelancers they sent out to do the audits on polling places were amateurs and made many mistakes in measurements.
- e. The County Assessment is \$27,222 this year. Last year the full amount levied was \$26,242, so our cost has gone up almost \$1000, or almost 4 percent. It is interesting that there is no longer a provision to save on the assessment by paying early. We took advantage of this last year and saved \$524.84.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for May 8, 6:30, Pembroke School. Stuart will attend.
- b. Transfer Station Operators Training Program. Core Training Session #3, Hazardous and Special Waste. Sessions on May 10 (Portland), May 24 (Jeff's Catering, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer), May 31 (Augusta). 8:15 registration; 9:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M. Registration \$25, before May 4.
- c. Maine Municipal Association "Front Porch" Meetings: May 2, Washington County Community College; May 3, University of Maine at Machias. Agenda topics: MMA Annual Convention, Coordinated Regional Meetings, Electronic Communications, Enhanced Electronic Transactions, Financial Management Training and Assistance.
- d. Meeting of the Perry/Pembroke/Charlotte interlocal governmental agreement at Pembroke Firehouse, 7 P.M., May 3. Stuart will attend.

8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks

Jeff Crowe was working shut-down and could not attend.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, May 15, 2007, 7:00 p.m. 5 / 15
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting and Town Meeting

No corrections to the minutes of the meetings through May 1 having been received, they are declared approved.

2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, June 6, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

Terry filed her BMV and IFW report and distributed some correspondence.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. A resolution was signed authorizing Ann Marie to move \$50,000 to the checking account from the Money Market account.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #6

(TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	326.00
School Warrant #9	Schools	2,561.92
Tim Ketchen (Chub Cove Road)	Recreation	100.00
Brenda Gove	Reappraisal (1st payment on contract, per March 2006 Town Meeting)	6,000.00
James Slowe, CEO	Admin/Salaries	400.00
Meddybemps P.O.	Admin/Postage	100.00
Civil Engineering Services	Admin/Copies	149.75
Maine Municipal Association	Insurance/Worker's Comp	653.00
School Warrant #10	Schools	18,456.08
Town of Whiting	Admin/Copies	10.00
Registrar of Deeds	Admin/Copies	5.18
Registrar of Deeds	Admin/Registry	13.00
	Total	28,774.93

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

a. Stuart's day job has prevented him from compiling a schedule of summer road work projects.

b. Status of inquiry into right-of-way on East Ridge Road: Stuart spent an afternoon at the Registry of Deeds but could not find corroboration that the East Ridge Road is a four-rod road for its entire length (that is, that the Town right-of-way is sixty-six feet wide). We have clear evidence that the first mile of the road has such a right-of-way, and a hint that the end of it does too, but more research is required in the Registry and the County Commissioners office to establish the status of the most problematic section.

c. The upgrade to the polling place required for disability access has been stalled pending approval for the expenditure at the town meeting. (The Grange will also have to give its permission.)

d. Final 2006 audit documents have been submitted. Among other weird facts that had to be collected was the amount of Cooper's share of the county debt. The total county debt (incurred for the county jail) is \$172,492, of which Cooper owes .006199 percent, or \$1069.28.

e. Stuart met with an inspector and looked at the problem septic system in Cooper that is a candidate for a small community grant. The inspector seemed to think the system was a shoe-in to receive the money. [Later note: the grant has been received.]

f. The three-year mowing contract with the Kriders mentioned at the March Town Meeting was approved by the Selectmen.

- g. The Assessors have encouraged town officials to set an example by making appointments for inspections by Brenda Gove appraiser.
- 7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for June 12, 6:30, Pembroke School
 - b. Transfer Station Operators Training Program. Core Training Session #3, Hazardous and Special Waste. Sessions on May 24 (Jeff's Catering, 15 Littlefield Way, Brewer), May 31 (Augusta). 8:15 registration; 9:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M. Registration \$25 was supposed to be made before May 4.
 - c. Sixteenth Annual Highway Congress, hosted by the Maine Chapter of the American Public Works Association, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Thursday, June 7, 2007, 7 A.M. to 3 P.M.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff stopped by earlier in the day to discuss acquisition of necessary road equipment, including cones, Road Work Ahead signs, and some barriers. Stuart passed along to him some information about a culvert thawer.
- 9. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Bob report that the town does not have any liability for the property that was foreclosed on lien last year because it has not taken possession of the place. This agreed with the information Stuart found on the matter.
- 8. Road Commissioners Report/Tasks

The Road Commissioners did not attend.

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
 15 Cathance Lane
 Cooper ME 04657
 454-1487
 sshotwell@earthlink.net

July 2, 2007

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

At the back of this newsletter is a copy of the Warrant for the **Special Town Meeting to be held Monday, July 9, 2007**, at 7 P.M. at the Cathance Grange. Minutes for the last two Selectmen's meetings (June) are also included immediately after the newsletter.

There are several items on the Warrant that require further explanation.

Explanation of Article 2 The purpose of this Article is to ensure Cooper's compliance with LD 1, a law passed in 2005. The purpose of LD 1 is to reduce Maine's property tax burden by placing spending limits on the amount of property tax dollars municipalities can raise for services before needing special permission from the voters. (This can be seen as a less unwieldy version of the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights [TABOR] that appeared on the referendum last fall). The idea is that a limit is set for the amount of tax that can be raised from property. If the voters choose to spend more than that amount, they also have to vote for a special "override" article in order to keep the Town tax commitment legal. We were supposed to begin computing the LD 1 limit and adhering to it two years ago, but the Town never got around to it. (It probably didn't matter.)

It does not seem that Cooper will exceed the limit this year. In fact, we are currently almost \$18,000 under the limit (which does not include school spending). But we don't know how much the state is going to be giving us in contributions. If the state gives us less than it has promised, we could exceed the limit. Then we'll have to hold another

Special Town Meeting just to pass the override. Passing Article 2 now will not mean more spending; it will just help us avoid another Town Meeting to pass the article later.

Here's an example using very simple numbers. Let's say that after we have held the March and July Town meetings, it turns out that we are going to spend \$20. And let's say we believe that the State is going to give Cooper \$10. So each of our taxpayers would have to pay their share of \$20 minus \$10, that is, \$10. And let's imagine that our property tax levy limit is \$15. That means we can't raise taxes of more than \$15. But that's all right, because the \$10 we are planning to raise is well under our property tax levy limit of \$15. Now imagine the State says, "No, we're only giving you \$2." All of a sudden, our taxpayers have to cough up \$18 instead of \$10, and we're over our property tax levy limit of \$15. We haven't voted to spend any more money, but because the State has welched on us, our taxes would be higher.

For those who want the real numbers, here they are: Our current municipal appropriations are about \$93,995. We expect to get about \$31,733 in state aid. We would have to raise about \$93,995 minus \$31,733, or \$62,222. Our property tax levy limit is \$80,182, so we are currently \$17,960 under our limit (\$80,182 minus \$62,222). (The figure mentioned in the explanation on the warrant is \$17,400 because of the rounding of various figures used to compute it.)

Explanation of Articles 3, 4, 5 The wording of these articles can be a little confusing. Here is one explanation. Consider the following four amounts indicated by roman numerals:

I. Amount of the funds appropriated for schools under the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act that Cooper expects to actually contribute.....	\$123,132
II. Additional funds Cooper will appropriate for schools	\$20,199
III. Fund balance.....	\$10,000
IV. Expected support from the State	\$128,298

Article 3 is to set the amount given by I above (\$123,132).

Article 4 is to set the amount given by II above (\$20,199).

Article 5 is to set the total school budget, given by I + II + III + IV above (\$281,629)

Flag Grant The Town has received an offer for a matching grant of 24 American flags. That is, we can get 24 flags free if we purchase another 24 from a supplier of our choice. We have to promise to "properly display the flags from at least late May through Labor Day for a minimum of two years or until the flags are unserviceable." Certain other specifications as to size of flag and type of pole have to be met as well. If the Town does not keep its promise, the 24 donated flags must be returned to the donor, the Galen Cole Foundation. If anyone would like to donate 24 flags to the Town and undertake to install all 48 flags and take care of them, please let the Selectmen know. This arrangement is probably what has prompted the display of flags in towns such as

Franklin and Cherryfield, where American flags are installed on many of the utility poles.

Vocational training info The Town has received notice of a program offering free vocational training for 16- to 24-year-olds. Call Sarah Chaffey at 328-4212, or ask Stuart for a photocopy of the training information.

Fire insurance forms received The Town has received claim forms and other materials relating to the firefighters' insurance. Firefighters should file a claim as soon as possible after any injury.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen 6 / 5
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, June 5, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting
 No corrections to the minutes of the meetings through May 15 having been received, they are declared approved.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, June 19, 2007
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. BMV and IFW report per item 5 below.
 - b. Terry will attend a July meeting of the Planning Board to swear in Jim Slowe.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Additional audit items have all been sent in.
 - b. There was some discussion of what to do with the donation to Cooper cemeteries by a third party. It was decided to create a new subdivision in the Cemetery Trust Fund for general use. This payment and the \$100 payment by the same party last year (Ewal Walker) would be included in that subdivision, but could be drawn on for general repairs to the cemeteries.
5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #7

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$220.00
IFW	IFW	\$257.00
School Warrant	Schools	\$11,004.30
Jim Slowe	Admin/Salaries	\$400.00
Town of Alexander	Documents Grant Account (per Article 53 of the 2006 Town Meeting Minutes)	\$1500.00
Marks Printing House	Admin/Supplies	\$28.75
Scott Jamieson (5 hours x \$15 = \$75, less \$4.65 Social Security and 1.09 Medicare =\$69.26)	Road/Capital Upgrade	\$69.26
	Total	\$13,479.31

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. There was a general discussion of the East Ridge Road issues.

- b. There was a discussion of potential shoreland zoning violations on Chubb Cove Road and Arbuckle Road. The Code Enforcement Officer will be looking into these issues.
- 7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for June 12, 6:30, Pembroke School
 - b. Sixteenth Annual Highway Congress, hosted by the Maine Chapter of the American Public Works Association, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Thursday, June 7, 2007, 7 A.M. to 3 P.M.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks

Jeff Crowe was working and could not attend the meeting.
- 9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks

RC Scott Jamieson reported on various tasks completed, including installing the signs for Murphy Pt. Road and Beach Road.

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen 6 / 19
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, June 19, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Von Rotz

- 1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting

Stuart handed out the minutes of the June 5 meeting for review.
- 2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, July 3, 2007
- 3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

Terry was not able to attend the meeting because of a mix-up about the date (Stuart's fault). We neglected to pay the election workers or the Grange; these will have to go on the next warrant.

 - b. There was no report on the bounced registration check.
- 4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

Ann Marie brought the Selectmen's copies of the Treasurer's receipts up to date. She had no problems to report.
- 5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #8

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$311.50
School Warrant # 13	Schools	\$12,549.28
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$606.00
Mary Dunn, reimbursement for copies of ERR road plan	Admin/copies	\$2.05
The Office (for cartridges)	Admin/Supplies	\$54.10
	Total	\$13,522.93

- 6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. The school budget has been received and the Town meeting has been set for Monday, July 9, at 7 P.M.
 - b. The Code Enforcement Officer has informed the Selectmen that there have been two shoreland zoning violations, one on the Chub Cove Road and one on the Arbuckle Road. We are awaiting a copy of the notice of violation before we proceed.
 - c. The Planning Board will be proposing a land use ordinance concerning the construction of towers; it is to be included on the Town Meeting Warrant.
 - d. Stuart created a three-page plan of the East Ridge Road on large sheets of paper, with an accompanying description of the work to be done. He also

- contacted County and Lane for estimates, but County never sent its estimate to the Town. In discussion, the Selectmen decided that this year the Town should focus on repairing the damaged culverts, the damaged roadway below the Dodge Road, and improving the ditches on the stretch about 0.7 miles long from the “red rock” field to the curve before the Camp Road. Reditching past the three-rod limit would be too expensive in any case because of the extensive logging that would be required, so the question of the right-of-way is to some extent moot, as the road is at least a three-rod road. We need to find personnel willing and able to work for the town marking the three-rod limit and cutting the trees out of the right-of-way on the east side of the road on this stretch.
- e. The Selectmen agree that they would ask David Lee for an estimate for the plowing contract for next winter.
 - g. Jeff seconded Callie Hatton’s assessment that a purchase of the same quantity of salt as last year would meet the winter requirements for 2007–2008. The Town has received a preliminary (nonbinding) quotation for salt at about \$58 per ton.
 - h. Stuart is still looking for a convener for the Comprehensive Planning Committee.
 - i. The need for a new gate at the old town dump was discussed; this, too, is a matter of getting personnel to go out there and do it. Perhaps one of the Road Commissioners would be willing.
 - j. There was a dog bite in town—a child received two bites from a rambunctious young dog. The owner volunteered to have the dog put to sleep after the rabies incubation period has passed. Animal Control Officer mileage costs are expected.
 - k. There is news that Ohio Brook Disposal (726-9581) is offering replacement service for the defunct Moose Island service. Someone in town has suggested that the town look into hiring Ohio Brook to do townwide trash pickup as a way of saving costs. Stuart checked into the numbers last year and at that time it seemed unlikely that the difference between the actual poundage taken to the dump and the amount shown as delivered there under the current 100-pound-per-customer flat rate would be enough to persuade a hauler to take on the town contract. It should be looked into more closely, however.
 - l. Stuart reported news from the June Marion Transfer Station (M.T.S.) meeting: Dean Preston, manager of the Unorganized Territory (U.T.), made a push for Universal Waste Program and recycling. He noted that during a recent hauling problem in the U.T., he found that recycling increased when people were obliged to pay by the pound to drop off their trash and came to an end when a new hauler was found and people could put anything in the trash to be dumped at the expense of the U.T. ¶ The records of the M.T.S. are available for public inspection by appointment at the law offices of Dennis Mahar. ¶ The Land Use Regulation Commissioners’ decision about the new demotion debris site in Township 14 is expected in July or August.
 - m. Quoddy Bay LNG has submitted its application for the LNG facility and the pipeline to the Federal Energy Regulation Commission and the State Department of Environmental Protection. It also sent a copy to all the affected towns, including Cooper. No sooner had we received the application, in two thirty-pound boxes (containing about a dozen massive loose-leaf notebooks), than Quoddy Bay called us asking to remove some of the information. They refused to say what the material was that they wanted to remove, saying they would send someone to retrieve it. This didn’t seem to us like proper

procedure for amending a public record, and we refused to let them do it. The attorney at the Maine Municipal Association seconded this decision, saying that it would actually be illegal for us to allow it. We're currently negotiating with Quoddy Bay concerning this matter. In the meantime, the other towns in the area have let Quoddy Bay alter the record without opposition.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for July 10, 6:30. This is the yearly dinner meeting; it will be held at the New Friendly Restaurant. Stuart will not be able to attend (see item 7b below), so it would be good if we sent a backup for this.
 - b. The regional school consolidation meeting will be held in Calais on July 10 at 6:00 P.M.
 - c. Town Meeting is scheduled for 7:00 P.M., Monday, July 9, at the Grange.
 - d. A special meeting of the Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority is scheduled for 6:00 P.M., Friday, July 13, in Meddybemps Community Center.
 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. The Selectmen went through a catalog and made up a list of necessary road equipment, including reflective cones, "Road Work Ahead" signs, and reflective barriers.
 - b. The culvert thawer was discussed but no recommendation has been made yet.
 9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
The RCs did not attend. This is the list of known items, exclusive of major work to the East Ridge Road:
 - a. Get bus stop sign near Terry Little's moved to either North Union or Rt. 191 on Cooper Hill
 - b. Seal the long cracks on East Ridge Road hill near Crowe Road; fill sinkhole in front of Dodge Road with cold patch
 - c. Get the gravel roads in town graded as necessary, including the bad sections of the Crowe Road
 - d. Arrange for mowing the town roadways
-

**WARRANT
FOR SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
Town of Cooper, Maine**

TO: Citizens of the Town of Cooper in the County of Washington, State of Maine.

GREETINGS: In the name of the State of Maine, you are required to notify the inhabitants of the Town of Cooper, qualified to vote, to assemble at the Grange Hall in said town on Monday the 9th day of July, 2007, at 7 p.m., to vote on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1. To choose a moderator to preside at said meeting.

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax levy limit of \$80,182.18 by State law in the event that the municipal budget approved at the 2007 Town meetings will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit.

Explanation: The Town is estimated to be \$17,400 *under* the current property tax levy limit at this time. The Selectmen and the Assessors recommend passage of this article, however, because State allocations to the Town are not certain. (According to law, voting on this article must take place by paper ballot.)

ARTICLE 3. State/Local EPS Funding Allocation. To see what sum the Town of Cooper will appropriate for the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act (Recommend \$293,791) and see what sum the Town of Cooper will raise as the Town's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688. (Recommend \$123,132)

Explanation: The Town's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act is the amount of money determined by state law to be the minimum amount that the Town must raise in order to receive the full amount of state dollars.

ARTICLE 4. Additional Local Funds. To see what sum the Town of Cooper will raise and appropriate in additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690. (Recommend \$20,199)

Explanation: The additional local funds are those locally raised funds over and above the Town's local contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and local amounts raised for the annual debt service payment of non-state funded school construction projects and the non-state funded portion of school construction projects that will help achieve the Town's budget for educational programs.

ARTICLE 5. Total School Budget Summary. To see what sum the Town of Cooper will authorize the school committee to expend for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008 from the Town's contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, non state-funded school construction projects additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690, unexpended balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy, and other receipts for the support of schools. (Recommend \$281,629)

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town of Cooper will authorize the School Committee to enter into a tuition contract with Alexander.

ARTICLE 7. To see whether the Town will raise and appropriate \$2,500 in funds to bring the Cooper polling place up to disability access standards, with any remainder to be drawn from the General Fund and any amount reimbursed by the State to be returned to the General Fund.

Explanation: Larry Tibbetts has volunteered his time to make the necessary changes. Materials are estimated at about \$2,500 (of which \$1200 is for paving). The Bureau of Elections may reimburse up to 80 percent. The State is threatening to bar use of the Grange as a polling place if these changes are not made.

ARTICLE 8. To see whether the Town will authorize the Selectmen to negotiate and conclude an agreement with the Grange to allow Town use of the Grange as a polling place during the depreciation period of the improvements described in Article 7.

Explanation: This agreement is necessary before the State will reimburse the Town for the improvements.

ARTICLE 9. To see whether the Town will authorize the Selectmen to negotiate and conclude an agreement with the Grange for long-term cooperative use of the Cathance Grange as both Grange Hall and Town office.

Explanation: This is separate from the agreement specified in Article 8. Under this arrangement, the Town would become the owner of the Grange and would be responsible for maintenance of the building and other costs associated with it. In return, the Grange members would continue to have use of the building for Grange activities.

ARTICLE 10. To see whether the Town will authorize the Selectmen to undertake the legal work necessary to establish easements or right-of-ways for ditching the East Ridge Road, with legal costs to be paid out of the Legal/Winter Maintenance Reserve (current balance \$495) and any remainder from the General Fund.

ARTICLE 11. To see whether the Town will raise and appropriate a further contribution to the joint Alexander/Cooper/Alexander-Crawford Historical Society (ACHS) archive facility being built this summer in Alexander.

Explanation: The town has already given \$1500 for this purpose, but Cooper and the ACHS have given \$5,000 each, and the State has supplied \$10,000.

ARTICLE 11. Shall an ordinance entitled "Communication Facility Ordinance of the Town of Cooper, Maine" be enacted?

Explanation: This ordinance is to allow the Town control over communication towers. It is too long to print in this warrant, but copies have been posted and are available from the Town Clerk.

Given under our hands this 28th day of July, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Shotwell
Selectmen, Cooper, Maine

Jeffrey Crowe

Robert von Rotz

Selectman's Newsletter

September 3, 2007

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
Cooper ME 04657
454-1487
sshotwell@earthlink.net

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Enclosed are minutes from the Selectmen's meetings in July and August. The minutes of the July Special Town Meeting are also included. The following are some items not fully covered in the minutes.

Grange Ramp Completed Larry Tibbetts has completed the improvements to the Grange Hall that will allow the Town to comply with State and Federal disability access requirements. His labor was generously contributed to the Town. Still remaining is some paving work to provide a smooth travel surface for wheelchairs.

New Assessment Notices Due Soon Brenda Gove, the independent appraiser who has been evaluating Cooper properties, will soon be mailing out notices of each property owner's new assessment. The Assessors would like to remind taxpayers that what ultimately matters is not what your new assessment is, but how it stands in relation to all the new assessments. For example, if the valuation of your house goes up, you may not wind up actually paying more taxes, because the valuation of many houses in the Town may also be going up. Cooper is not *spending* any more than usual, so it isn't raising more tax than usual; the new assessments will only change the way the tax burden is divided up around the Town.

Brenda will supply an *estimated* tax for the upcoming year. Your *actual* tax may vary when you get your bill later in September, but the amount on the notice will give you an idea what it will be.

An assessment informational meeting will take place in mid-September to answer questions, go over valuations, and correct errors. If you are unable to attend the meeting in person, a phone will be available so that you may call. The meeting will probably take place at the Grange Hall. The date, time, location and phone number to call during the meeting will be noted on the valuation letter each tax payer receives.

Some may wonder why there is a necessity for this kind of reassessment. Over the years, inequalities creep into the tax system. Imagine two identical houses, House A and House B. If House A was given a value in 1980, and House B was given a value in 2005, obviously House B is going to be assessed for more, because values were higher overall in 2005 than in 1980. This is the kind of unfairness that the new assessment is intended to eliminate. The point of the reassessment is to make taxes reflect the actual value of properties throughout the Town at the same time. Ordinarily, Assessors cannot undertake a complete reassessment in any single year—it takes an enormous amount of work and time; thus the need for the independent appraiser.

Planning Board Changes Carolyn Hatton (Chair for sixteen years) and Pat Green (member for nine years) have resigned from the Planning Board. Their long tenures have been a remarkable instance of service to the common good of the people of Cooper. Callie has given assurances that she will continue as Chair of the School Board, where she is skillfully piloting Cooper through the school district consolidation plan.

The new members on the Planning Board are Betty Tibbetts and John Viselli; continuing members are Doug Pelletier, Joyce Myckleby, and Dan Ackley; and Lynn Brown is an alternate. The new chair is likely to be Dan Ackley. The Board is seeking another alternate member.

On this subject, it is worth reminding property owners that permits are required for a wide variety of building changes. There have been a couple of recent cases of building in the Town without the proper permits. It's easier to check with the Planning Board to be sure you have the proper permit than to dismantle a structure after it is built because it doesn't conform to ordinances.

Rumor about Camp Foundations There is a rumor going around Washington County that a new law or regulation will soon prevent property owners from putting foundations under their camps; it has set off a rush to get permits for such work in Washington County. The Maine Board of Environmental Protection reports that this "new regulation" is a myth.

Call for Town Records If you or members of your family, past or present, have records relating to Town business from previous years—minutes of Town meetings, committee meetings, etc., please let the Selectmen know. According to the State Archives in Augusta, all Town records previous to 1900 were destroyed in a fire. However, the whereabouts of other Town records even since that time is largely unknown.

September 18 Meeting Date May Change The Selectmen may not meet on the third Tuesday of September, as the Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority (WCEMSA) is scheduled to hold its annual meeting on that date. Please check with the Selectmen if you wish to attend the Selectmen's meeting that week.

East Ridge Road Ditching Work The voters have indicated their desire for better ditching on the newly paved portion of the East Ridge Road in not one but two Town meetings. As the events of last winter demonstrated, the critical portion of this roadway is the part extending from Hunnewell's field (the "red rock" field) to the corner before the Camp Road, about 3600 feet in length. Specifically, both the ditch and the shoulder along this stretch need to be improved.

In order to increase the width of the shoulder, the vegetation must be cut back. "Vegetation" is a tame word for what is growing there. Some of the trees are very large and stand on the very edge of the berm above the ditch; if they were undermined and fell during ditching, they would easily take out the power lines on the opposite side of the road. It would be highly dangerous to cut this growth by hand. The obvious solution is to bring in a mechanical shear; but the working room required on the berm by such a machine exceeds the width of the Town's right-of-way. Another difficulty is that the Town only has a right-of-way to cut the vegetation and to ditch the road frontage; the actual timber and biomass remain the property of the landowners. For this reason, the Selectmen decided to move slowly, obtaining clear permission from the landowners on the disposition of the timber and biomass. It will likely take two seasons to cut the vegetation back and get the shoulder built up to the optimal width along this critical stretch.

As of this writing, the lower portion of the area targeted for improvement has been cut back. We accomplished this by bringing in a forester with mechanical harvesting equipment (shears and skidder, etc.). Even the mechanical shear was almost toppled over by one of the trees, and another was so large that the forester did not even attempt to use the shear to cut it. Normally a forester would do cutting of this kind for free in exchange for the wood and biomass; but because this material did not belong to

the Town, we had to actually pay the forester to do the cutting. The landowner was agreeable to our doing the work, but of course did not want to give away the value of the wood and biomass. He was also kind enough to allow us to cut the vegetation back far enough to allow the shear to operate on the berm, and in fact worked with us in a very positive manner so that both his requirements and the Town's could be met.

In another development on the East Ridge Road, this past summer there were numerous complaints from taxpayers about the condition of the unpaved portion. Thanks to Road Commissioners Bob Smith and Scott Jamieson, who worked with contractors David Lee and Hollowell Construction, this part has been much improved, though it still requires more trimming, new culverts, and better ditching.

Follow-up to LD 1 Vote at the July Special Town Meeting One of the warrant articles passed at the July meeting provided for increasing the "property tax levy limit." Some people were left with the impression that this obscure article gave the Selectmen the right to either raise or spend (or both) at will up to or beyond the limit mentioned. As this article is now required by law and will be a regular feature of the Town Meeting Warrant for the foreseeable future, it is worth trying to explain it again.

The article is like a second lock on a safe. What it does is to allow *the Town voters* to approve spending that exceeds the set limit *if they want to*. Unless the *voters* approve this special, separate article, *not even they* can spend money beyond that limit. This is the type of article that is typically called an "override," because it overrides a limit set by law.

Whether the article is passed or not, the Selectmen can never raise taxes or spend money that the voters have not directly approved.

It's worth adding that ultimately the Town did not approve taxes in excess of the property tax levy limit. In fact, our overall appropriations in 2007 declined by \$1700— not much, but a sign that the Town is holding the line on taxes.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

Parting Thoughts

In response to an article on the July Special Meeting Warrant, the officers of the Cathance Grange recently signed a letter indicating their willingness to explore an lease or purchase agreement with the Town. As explained at that Town Meeting, under this arrangement, the Town would take over the Grange Hall and maintain it as a Community Center, and the Grangers would retain the right to use the building for their meetings. (As a community center, the Grange Hall would be eligible for Community Development Block Grants.) The further hope is that a small Town office can be attached to the Grange Hall that would include facilities that would be useful for Grange members as well as those attending Town meetings.

There is much to be done before the agreement is complete. Once the overall terms are ironed out, the Master of the State Grange must have the State Grange lawyer draw up the legal document. The Town, meanwhile, has to develop some estimate of how much it would cost to maintain the building. This would include some assessment of the condition of the structure and the upgrades that might need to be done in the near term. The Town also should plan for the office component, just to be sure that such an addition is feasible. And the original grant of the Grange land should be checked to be sure that it does not contain conditions that could complicate matters.

Assuming all these difficulties can be resolved, the voters would be presented with the facts and figures in advance of the Annual Town Meeting next March 24. At that meeting, they would decide whether to go forward with the plan or not.

If they do so, Cooper would immediately have a central place to hold its committee meetings. If we could muster our strengths and talents, we could go on to build a Town office, possibly in the summer of 2008, though considering the glacial pace at which Town business gets done, that may be too optimistic. A central office would give us a place to keep records. It would provide a place to which *all* Cooper mail could be directed (instead of being scattered across the Town as under the present system). More than that, it would mean working space for an administrative assistant who could do all the things that Kathy Hull and Terry Viselli and previous Town clerks have done—for example, collect taxes, conduct Bureau of Motor Vehicle and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife business—as well as something new: provide administrative support for all of the Town’s committees.

I wrote in the June 1 newsletter about the necessity for an Administrative Assistant. The response that I heard was positive. Since that time many people have asked me if the Selectmen had hired such an Assistant, which is either wishful thinking or jumping the gun. Two Cooper residents have expressed an interest in the job. Others have asked about the next step. This process seems much like that of adopting the Grange Hall as the Town Office. The Selectmen have to find out the pay scale of comparable positions in our area, as well as look into the cost of a benefit package that includes health insurance, which we can obtain through the Maine Municipal Association. Whatever we do, we want to make the position sustainable, not only for the Town but for the person we hire.

Once these facts and figures have been assembled, they have to be presented to the voters of the Town for approval. I’m hoping that the cost can be kept low and will ultimately be offset by grant monies coming into the Town. An dedicated and energetic Administrative Assistant could make possible a new era in the Town of Cooper.

Stuart Shotwell

MINUTES
OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING 7/9/07
Town of Cooper, Maine

ARTICLE 1. Neal Hallee was nominated and elected moderator.

ARTICLE 2. The Town voted 18 in favor and 3 opposed to increase the property tax levy limit of \$80,182.18 by State law in the event that the municipal budget approved at the 2007 Town meetings will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit.

ARTICLE 3. State/Local EPS Funding Allocation. The Town voted unanimously to appropriate \$293,791 for the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and voted to raise \$123,132 as the Town’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688

ARTICLE 4. Additional Local Funds. The Town voted unanimously to raise and appropriate \$20,199 in additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690.

ARTICLE 5. The Town voted unanimously to authorize the school committee to expend \$281,629 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008 from the Town’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from K to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, non state-funded school construction projects additional local funds for school purposes under the

Maine Revised Statues, Title 20-A, section 15690, unexpended balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy, and other receipts for the support of schools.

ARTICLE 6. The Town voted with one opposed to authorize the School Committee to enter into a tuition contract with Alexander.

ARTICLE 7. The Town voted unanimously to raise and appropriate \$2,500 in funds to bring the Cooper polling place up to disability access standards, with any remainder to be drawn from the General Fund and any amount reimbursed by the State to be returned to the General Fund.

ARTICLE 8. The Town voted unanimously to authorize the Selectmen to negotiate and conclude an agreement with the Grange to allow Town use of the Grange as a polling place during the depreciation period of the improvements described in Article 7.

ARTICLE 9. The Town voted unanimously to oppose article as written. It then voted all in favor to authorize the selectmen to negotiate an agreement with the Grange for long-term cooperative use of the Cathance Grange as both Grange Hall and Community Center.

ARTICLE 10. The Town voted unanimously to authorize the Selectmen to undertake the legal work necessary to establish easements or right-of-ways for ditching the East Ridge Road, with legal costs to be paid out of the Legal/Winter Maintenance Reserve (current balance \$495) and any remainder from the General Fund.

ARTICLE 11. The Town voted all in favor to raise and appropriate \$1,500 to the joint Alexander/Cooper/Alexander-Crawford Historical Society (ACHS) archive facility being built this summer in Alexander.

ARTICLE 12 The Town voted all in favor for an ordinance entitled "Communication Facility Ordinance of the Town of Cooper, Maine" to be enacted.

The business stipulated in the Warrant having been concluded, the meeting was duly adjourned on a motion from the floor.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper**

Tuesday, July 3, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

7 / 3

Present: Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli, Robert Von Rotz

1. Approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting

Minutes of meetings through June 19 have been made available; no corrections having been received, the minutes are considered approved.

2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, July 17, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

a. BMV and IFW report as shown in the Warrant below.

b. The bounced registration check was made good immediately after Terry contacted the individual in question.

[Later note: Balance of Town accounts as of 7/03 was as follows: Money Fund, \$98,280.71; Checking, \$40,422.22]

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. The Federal and State 941 forms will be due at the end of the month, so we should figure out the charges and get the amounts on the July 17 Treasurer's Warrant.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #9
(TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$336.00
IFW	IFW	\$552.00
School Warrant # 14	Schools	\$25,088.18
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$647.20
Cathance Grange	Admin/rent	\$50.00
Arline Flood (11.5 hours x \$6.75)	Admin/elections	\$77.63
Ralph Flood (11.5 hours x \$6.75)	Admin/elections	\$77.63
Leonard Dodge (11.5 hours x \$6.75)	Admin/elections	\$77.63
Eastern Maine Electric	Admin/electricity	\$50.00
Treasurer, State of Maine	CWP	\$25.00
Maine Municipal Association for risk insurance (1st intallment)	Admin/Insurance	\$2,258.00
Meddybemps Post Office	Admin/Postage	\$100.00
AWP (dog license)	AWP	\$3.00
	Total	\$29,342.27

[Later note: The above is the corrected version of the Warrant. On the original Warrant, the Marion Transfer Station charge was erroneously listed twice, and the total was accordingly too large. Also, the Grange was underpaid for rent; the payment should have been \$100 total. This will be made up on the next warrant.]

Deposit received by Stuart: \$35 in cash for CWP fee.

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. The Selectmen have received a copy of the shoreland zoning violation issued to a resident of Chub Cove Rd. Another violation of the shoreland zoning elsewhere in the Town may be pending, but no copy of the notice has been received. Stuart suggested that we ask the Planning Board for their recommendation on the amount of the fine.
- b. Stuart has begun work on implementing the Small Community Grant and sent paperwork to the landowner to be filled out and returned.
- c. Stuart mentioned the flag grant described in his recent newsletter. No action will be taken on this unless someone wishes to donate the matching number of flags required (24 flags that are a minimum of 3 x 5 feet, with spinning poles) and care for them.
- d. Stuart reported that Ralph Flood has spoken to the State Grange about possible transfer of the Grange building to the Town of Cooper. Ralph said that the official was not very forthcoming with information, but did acknowledge that this type of thing has been done elsewhere. Further discussion is pending the vote at the Town meeting on this topic.
- e. Stuart will contact Carleton Hatton about mowing East Ridge Road.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Monday, July 9: Town Meeting scheduled for 7:00 P.M. at the Grange.
- b. Tuesday, July 10: Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for 6:30 P.M. (but participants should give prior notice and arrive at 5:30). This is the yearly

- dinner meeting; it will be held at the New Friendly Restaurant. Stuart will not be able to attend (see item 7c below).
- c. Tuesday, July 10: The regional school consolidation meeting will be held in Calais on at 6:00 P.M. Stuart will attend.
 - d. Thursday, July 12: Planning Board Meeting at Callie Hatton's. Stuart will attend.
 - e. Friday, July 13: Special meeting of the Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority is scheduled for 6:00 P.M. in Meddybemps Community Center. Stuart will attend.
 - f. Saturday, July 14: A member's-only meeting of the Cathance Lake Association is scheduled for 9:00 A.M. at Peggy Hallee's. Dean Bradshaw will speak. Stuart will attend.
8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
- a. Jeff has looked at prices from several suppliers. He will arrange to get the material dropped off at Cathance Variety if the Hulls are willing.
 - b. There was further discussion of the East Ridge Road work. Terry Little is to begin cutting soon, but many of the trees are too tall to be removed by hand.
 - c. Jeff will purchase a compressor for use in cleaning damaged road surfaces prior to patching and sealing. This includes the long cracks on the hill by the Crowe Road prior to filling.
 - d. Jeff will put a cable across the entrance to the old dump.
 - e. The gravel portion of the East Ridge Road was reported to need grading from Bob Smith's to Day Road. Jeff will look into getting this grading done when the Crowe Road is regraded, which should be done before school opens and the bus starts running again. If necessary we might put a few loads of gravel into the damaged areas in question to give the grader something to work with.
9. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks
- a. There was a discussion of a temporary patch for the sinkhole in the middle of the East Ridge Road in front of the Dodge Rd; Bob will take care of this.
10. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
- Current road work items:
- a. Get bus stop sign near Terry Little's moved to either North Union or Rt. 191 on Cooper Hill

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**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, July 17, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Bob Smith

This meeting could not take place as scheduled because neither Jeff Crowe nor Bob von Rotz could attend. Stuart, Scott, and Bob Smith discussed road issues for about an hour. Bob explained the various problems with the lower end (dirt end) of the road, including overgrown vegetation, potholes, broken, collapsed, and filled culverts, and other items. There were, however, bills to pay at this meeting and in the subsequent weeks, and warrants had to be approved by the Selectmen after the fact. The following is a report of those warrants:

Treasurer's Warrant # 10

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$100.00
School Warrant # 15	Schools	\$2,567.69
Larry Colarusso (mileage reimbursement 38 km = 23.56 miles @40¢)	Admin/ mileage	\$9.43
Grange Rent	Admin/ Rent	\$70.00
Town of Alexander	Archive (per July 9, 2007, Special Town Meeting Warrant)	\$1,500.00
IRS	941	\$39.02
Scott Jamieson (\$8 hours \$15 and 1 hour @ \$20 for total pay of \$140, less \$7.44 SS and \$2.03 Medicare = \$130.53)	Roads	\$130.53
	Total	\$4,416.67

The Selectmen authorized the transfer of \$50,000 from the Money Market to Checking with this warrant.

Treasurer's Warrant #11, July 20, 2007

Payee	Category	Amount
Lab Safety Supply	Roads/Supplies	\$1196.98

Treasurer's Warrant #12, August 2, 2007

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$83.00
IFW	IFW	\$661.00
School Payroll Warrant issued 7/26/07	Schools	\$493.22
School Accounts Payable Warrant issued 7/26/07	Schools	\$83.38
Carleton R. Hatton	Roads/Noncapital	\$375.00
	Total	1695.60

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper

8 / 7

Tuesday, August 7, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Dan Ackley, Lynn Brown, Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Doug Pelletier, Stuart Shotwell, Bob Smith, Bob von Rotz

- Minutes of the previous Selectmen's Meeting were distributed; no corrections for the minutes through the July 3rd meeting (including the Special Town Meeting of July 9) having been received, the minutes were declared approved.
- Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, August 21, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

Terry was not able to attend, but she did supply her BMV report. She reported her excise totals for FY 2007–2008 to date as \$13,240.30 for autos and \$855.00 for boats.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. Ann Marie brought a report of current totals in the two main Town bank accounts: Checking, \$70,148.12; Money Fund 48,280.71.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #13

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$190.00
Preston's (June, July, August @ \$90)	Recreation	\$270.00
James W. Wadman CPA	Admin/ Accounting	\$2,985.50
Stuart Shotwell (reimbursement for \$60 cash paid to Robert Smith for gasoline for road work.)	Road/ Capital	\$60.00
MTS	MSW	\$882.00
Calais Ace Home Center	Roads/Supplies	\$210.67
Washington County Treasurer	County Tax	\$27,222.00
David Lee	Road/ Lower ERR	\$1,755.00
David Lee	Road/ Capital/ Crow Rd.	\$1,080.00
Scott Jamieson/ Reimbursement for gasoline	Road/ Capital	\$25.00
Scott Jamieson	Road/ Capital	\$131.59
Bob Smith	Road/ Capital	\$1,941.65
Karen Walker	Road/ Capital	\$914.26
Bob Smith/ Reimbursement for gasoline	Road/ Capital	\$110.87
		\$37,778.54

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

a. The Selectmen concluded a contract with David Lee for plowing for the 2007–2008 year.

b. The Selectmen agreed to take David Lee's estimate for work ditching and installing culverts on the East Ridge Road. It was \$15,960, which was about half of the nearest estimate. Stuart reported that Lyle Hamilton could not do the cutting on the right of way, as his shears were both in use elsewhere. We will see if Randy Brown of Dennysville will do the work instead.

c. The dog bite incident has been closed; the dog was put down. The Town has not yet received its copy of that certificate, however.

d. Report of Marion Transfer Station news: (1) The Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) has approved the petition for the construction and demolition debris (CDD) landfill. (2) Stuart has sent a letter to the MTS Board of Directors on investment matters and has declined his election to vice president.

e. Report on Planning Board: (1) Callie Hatton and Pat Green have resigned from the board. (2) The two notices of violation to shoreland zone owners are on administrative hold pending the swearing in of new members. (3) The Planning Board members present reported that John Viselli and Betty Tibbetts have volunteered to serve on the board. Terry Viselli will need to swear them in.

- f. The board that will oversee the state-mandated school regionalization is Callie Hatton, Kathy Keen, and Bob von Rotz.
- g. Stuart reported on his visits to two informal meetings on ambulance service. The board of directors is struggling to elect new officers, but the current head refuses to convene a meeting for that purpose. The actual quality of service seems to be unaffected by the disagreements on the board of directors, however.
- h. The Dennys River Watershed Council has offered to area towns the loan of a road grader. It has to be attached to the plow hitch of a pickup. The offer was reviewed and declined.
- i. Stuart reported that Larry Colarusso's estimate to mow old dump is \$100; Bob von Rotz will find out what John Johnson's estimate is.
- j. Stuart reported that he had received a complaint of accumulated trash at an Arbuckle Rd. camp, and that he has arranged with a relative of the owner to remove the trash.
- k. The residents of Cove Road have request a new sign, as the current sign is twisted and riddled with bullet holes. The Selectmen approved.
- 7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for August 14, 6:30, Pembroke School. Stuart will not be able to attend.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Part of the road equipment order has been received (cones, "Work Ahead" signs), but we will want to mark the cones, etc., with "Property of Town of Cooper" before they are put in service.
- 10. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks

There was a discussion of various matters, including the following:

 - a. Sealing the long cracks on East Ridge Road hill near Crowe Road
 - b. Getting the gravel roads in the Town graded
 - d. Scott will install the new gate at old Town dump reusing the existing hardware; Bob Smith will provide the cedar.
 - e. MDOT has been notified of problem with the shoulder at top of Cooper Hill and has partly corrected it. [Later note: some cold patch has been added to the broken asphalt that improves the safety here somewhat, though the shoulder could use more fill.]
 - f. It was noted that the \$5,000 figure for lower East Ridge Road work (the dirt portion) has been almost completely exhausted in the purchase of gravel and in brushing and grading the roadway. Stuart will look at the capital upgrade funds to see if anything more can be spent, as some culverts are badly needed.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, August 21, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

8 / 21

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Stuart Shotwell, Bob Smith, Bob von Rotz

- 1. Minutes of the previous Selectmen's Meeting of August 8 were distributed; no corrections for the minutes through the July 17th meeting having been received, the minutes were declared approved.
- 2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting: Tuesday, September 4, 2007

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

Terry was not able to attend, but she did supply her reports.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

- a. Ann Marie reported the arrival of a revenue sharing check in the amount of \$1266.54.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #14

Payee	Category	Amount
Neal Hallee, Moderator	Admin/Salary	25.00
R.B. Logging, for cutting on shoulder of East Ridge Road in preparation for ditching	Roads/Capital	10,590.00
Scott Jamieson, reimbursement for repair hardware for gate of old dump	MSW	15.70
Scott Jamieson, work on gate of old dump	MSW	131.59
Scott Jamieson, work on ERR	Roads/Capital	20.77
School (Report 41)	Schools	493.22
School (Report 43)	Schools	2452.96
Robert Smith	Road/Capital	124.67
Terry Viselli, reimbursement for postage for lien mailings	Admin/Postage	109.41
BMV	BMV	86.00
	Total	14,049.32

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. The Town has received an entrance permit issued by the MDOT for access to logging on the east side of 191 (next to the old Town dump).
- b. Stuart mailed a reply to the Maine Board of Environmental Protection's (MBEP) request for comment on the Quoddy Bay LNG pipeline application. In addition to relaying some of the concerns of the Cooper Planning Board, he pointed out the need for automatic shut-down valves at close intervals on the pipeline. The Town has received a notice that the State Board of Environmental Protection has voted "to assume jurisdiction over, and hold a public hearing on," the Quoddy Bay application. The deadline for petitions to intervene is August 31, 2007, at 5:00 P.M.
- c. The Town has received notice that the Marion Transfer Station (MTS) has received unanimous approval for its proposed zone change in Plantation 14 for the purpose of building a landfill for construction demolition debris (CDD). This will mean that the MTS will next turn to obtaining a permit for operation from the MBEP.
- d. Cooper has received its completed audit for fiscal year 2006-2007. Copies are available for examination by the public upon request, and a reduced version will be printed in the annual report as usual.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for September 11, Tuesday, 6:30, Pembroke School. Stuart will attend.
- b. School regionalization meeting, September 13, Thursday, 6:30, Charlotte School. The Cooper school regionalization committee will attend.
- c. September 18, Tuesday, 6:00, Calais City Hall. Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority meeting.

8. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. Bob von Rotz reported on the meeting of the Marion Transfer Station that he attended on August 14. He made a pitch for improved recycling and treatment of universal waste. John Pope was elected VP after Stuart declined the election. There was discussion about obtaining financing for the new demolition debris dump from the Farmer's Home Administration. At the same meeting the Superintendent of the Unorganized Territories, Dean Preston, handed out a letter from the Washington County Commissioners "in opposition of [sic] the proposed CDD landfill in its current configuration." The Commissioners cite three factors in the reversal of their support of the project: "First the track record of the MTS, Inc., management team in operating the current CDD landfill. A facility designed for twenty years which will be filled in approximately six years due to a major change in the organizations' business plan after permitting was completed. Secondly, the siting of the proposed project in proximity to water tables and significant water bodies. And last but not least, the lack of reinvestment and investment strategies from the current facility revenues." In discussion, Stuart suggested sending a request to voters soliciting their opinion of the new dump, providing both information about the proposed facility and a reply card. The response could be the basis of any future votes the Selectmen make concerning the new landfill at meetings of the Board of Directors of the MTS. Although such a postcard poll would not be a formal vote, it would be at least some indication of Town opinion, which is currently unknown.

10. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks

- a. The cutting work on the shoulder of the East Ridge Road above the Dodge Road has been done, with the exception of one very large poplar tree that was too big for the shear. Bob Smith will see to it that the logger, Randy Brown, takes that down with his skidder.
- b. Bob Smith will stake out the proposed ditch prior to work there.
- c. There was discussion of contacting the other landowners on the road frontage so that the width of the shoulder on the upper stretch (i.e., opposite Krider's) could also be increased.
- d. The Selectmen and Bob Smith discussed the advantages of Cooper's having its own front-end loader/backhoe. Obviously a new machine is far beyond our means, and permission for a used machine of this type would have to be submitted to the voters at Town meeting, but a week's rental might be justifiable if it could be shown that money could be saved in the current highway work. Another issue is that the sicklebar method currently used to cut the East Ridge Road doesn't seem to be able to reach down into the ditches and cut back the new growth. Tractors with boom mowing heads are available that can do this type of work; they can even trim growth on trees along road right-of-ways.
- e. The dirt portion of the East Ridge Road will be regraded on Saturday, August 25.
- f. There was a discussion of the pumper truck behind the fire house, though this is in the jurisdiction of the Fire Department, not the Town. Stuart has received an offer from an interested individual wishing to undertake the work to convert the truck and its pump to make it a functional piece of firefighting equipment, and Bob Smith voiced his willingness to do the same. Stuart will relay these offers to the Fire Department.

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
Cooper ME 04657
454-1487
sshotwell@earthlink.net

November 4, 2007

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Enclosed are minutes from the Selectmen's meetings in September and October. (Please note that some of the minutes have not yet been approved.) To prevent any further delay in their distribution, the newsletter will be limited this month. In any case, most of the news is given in the minutes; there are only three items not fully covered there.

Circuit Breaker Program The Assessors have asked for mention of the fact that town residents may qualify for the Property Tax and Rent Refund Program, also known as the Circuit Breaker Program. Terry Viselli has applications, and they may also be downloaded from the internet at <<http://www.maine.gov/revenue/taxrelief/tnr.htm>>. (Another way to find the form is to Google "Maine" and "property tax relief.") Last spring, the newsletter included information about the Veterans and Homestead exemptions, and the outside appraiser, Brenda Gove, talked to residents about the Veteran and Homestead Exemptions whenever they would be applicable.

Clyde Russell Scholarship Fund The Town has received information about the Clyde Russell Scholarships. These scholarships range from \$10,000 (for a college student in any of various fields) to \$2500 (for a community college student). Ask your high school counselor or Stuart Shotwell for an informational brochure, download the application from www.clyderussellscholarshipfund.org, or write to P. O. Box 2457, Augusta, ME 04338. These scholarships are limited to citizens of Maine. There is also a specific scholarship for those in a teacher's preparation program.

Results of the Landfill Poll To date, 54 voters out of 135 have responded to the poll (a 40 percent response). Of the 54 respondents, 15 (40 percent) were in favor of the landfill, and 39 (60 percent) were opposed. After discussion in which the Selectmen were unable to come to a consensus, and in consideration of the fact that any decision would be merely a vote of confidence and not a binding determination, the Selectmen merely communicated these results to the MTS Board without stating either their approval or disapproval.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, September 4, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)** **9 / 4**

1. Terry Viselli noted that the 8/21 minutes were incorrect; they omitted her name from the list of those present. No other corrections were received, and the minutes through August 21 were considered approved.
2. The date of next Selectmen's meeting will be Wednesday, September 19, since Stuart has to attend the WCEMSA meeting in Calais that on Tuesday.

3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks

a. Terry reported on a possible use of MRSA 36 841:3 to resolve a longstanding tax collection issue.

4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks

a. Ann Marie submitted reports showing an ending balance in the savings of \$48,405.42 and \$22,989.76 in the checking.

b. The computer still seems to be showing double deposit entries. Stuart will look at the computer records with Ann Marie to see if we can ferret out the problem.

c. Ann Marie had a question about a possible tax amount received in 2005. Stuart will retrieve the audit materials and look for this record.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #15

Check # 3986, payable to R. B. Logging, was refused by Machias Saving Bank and returned to the payee's bank "for proper endorsement."

The Town has received a dividend check of \$207 from the MMA Property & Casualty Pool.

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$146
School Payroll Warrant (#49)	Schools	\$506.62
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$206.08
Public Space Plus	Roads/Supplies	\$40.45
James W. Wadman	Admin/Accounting	\$175.75
MTS	MSW	\$896.80
IFW	IFW	\$130.00
Meddybemps P.O.	Admin/Postage	\$100.00
Hallowell Construction	Roads/noncap	\$650.00
Robert Smith	Roads/capital	\$164.54
Robert Smith/reimbursement for supplies	Roads/supplies	\$67.30
	Total	\$3083.54

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

a. The town needs an MMA Annual Business Meeting representative. It is unlikely that anyone will be able to go to the annual meeting on October 4, but Stuart will send in his name.

b. There have been new developments concerning the new Marion Township landfill; as these were reported in the last newsletter, they will not be repeated here. There was a discussion about polling the voters to gather their opinions on the landfill. Bob von Rotz suggested that the poll be used for more than just soliciting just a simple yes or no vote; that is, for sparking broader thinking about waste issues.

c. There was discussion of remaining obstacles in the ditching and paving of the East Ridge Road, as well as paving the polling place (Grange) parking lot. Bob Smith described a plan for a straight, uninterrupted ditch from the top of the hill to a holding pond at the bottom near the curve by Camp Road. He also suggested holding repaving costs down by using cold patch for the shim or fill layer of the washed-out area. Considering the difficulty we are having getting a paver to the site, we might have to consider a patch of some kind for this season.

d. The 2007 budget has been transmitted to the Assessors; it is printed at the end of these minutes [last page of newsletter], with some items still to be determined by the Assessors (TBD). The overall tax to be raised is slightly lower than last year.

- e. The auditor's report for the year ending February 28, 2007, has been received. Interested parties can view a copy at the Selectman's house or wait until it appears in the Annual Report next March.
- 7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for September 11, Tuesday, 6:30, Pembroke School. Stuart will attend.
 - b. School regionalization meeting, September 13, Thursday, 6:30, Charlotte School. The Cooper school regionalization committee will attend.
 - c. September 18, Tuesday, 6:00, Calais City Hall. Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority meeting. Stuart will attend.
 - d. Film and discussion of the new Marion Township Landfill, September 14, 7 P.M., at the Cobscook Community Learning Center.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff was working and could not attend the meeting.
- 9. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Any issues.
- 10. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff, Bob Smith, and Scott Jamieson have to coordinate on getting sealer for the cracks in pavement on East Ridge Road. There are more now than ever, but hopefully we can seal some.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Wednesday, September 19, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

9 / 19

Present: Stuart Shotwell, Bob Smith, Bob von Rotz

- 1. The minutes of the previous Selectmen's meeting were distributed but not yet approved.
- 2. The date of the next two Selectmen's meetings: October 2 and October 16.
- 3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - Terry could not attend because of the change to Wednesday night, but she brought over her BMV report.
- 4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie Flood was not able to attend due to the birth of a grandchild. She sent various items, including the school expenditures indicated below, the registry of deeds charge, and payment to the State of Maine for permits for Wilson, Hallee, and James.
 - b. Stuart has received a town check for \$3,474.00 for "Homestead First Payment" and "Mandate Homestead First Payment."
- 5. Treasurer's Warrants
 - At the insistence of Terry Johnson, a check was sent to him by the Town and made out to the Town for the sum of \$100 for the permit to be issued in accordance with the DEP Small Community Septic Grant. Terry will send the check back, and we will then pay the state \$25 and Terry Johnson \$75. The auditor advised us to do this more sensibly by just cutting Terry Johnson a check for his portion, but he insisted on being issued our own check for \$100 made out to the Town.
 - Items on Treasurer's Warrant #16 (final version)

Payee	Category	Amount
Town of Cooper	Small Community Grant for septic permit	\$100.00

Items on Treasurer’s Warrant #17 (preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	71.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$506.62
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$142.45
Registry of Deeds (\$26.00 for discharge of liens; \$169.00 for liens from Tax Collector)	Admin/Registry	\$195.00
Treasurer, State of Maine (for permits for Wilson, Hallee, James)	Plumbing	\$50.00
EBS Building Supplies	Polling place improvements	\$888.05
Calais Advertiser (for legal advertisement)	Small Community Grant for septic permit	\$36.00
Fundy Bay Printing	Admin/Copies	\$94.18
The Office	Admin/Supplies	\$1.80
Scott Jamieson (\$80 gross wages less \$4.96 social security, less \$1.16 Medicare = 73.88)	MSW/Old Town Dump	\$73.88
MMA for Planning Board Training	Admin/Training	\$40.00
Fundy Bay Printing	Admin/Copies	\$18.00
Robert Smith	Roads/Capital	\$401.73
	Total	\$2518.71

6. First Selectman’s Report/Tasks

- a. The town has received a map captioned “Significant Wildlife Habitat, Inland Wildfowl and Wading Bird Habits Only.” Like the map previously issued, it shows no restricted habitat areas directly on Cathance Lake; but many streams and small bodies of water in the town fall under this designation. The Selectmen have given a copy to the Assessors and the Planning Board. It is particularly important for the Planning Board to be aware of the areas that fall within this new zoning, as building in these areas is severely restricted.
- b. Stuart reported on the last Marion Transfer Station meeting. The board renewed its lease of garage space with the County, at a higher rental rate but on a shorter lease term. The meeting was attended by Barbara Lapham, a Marion Township citizen opposed to the Township 14 demo landfill. At the November meeting she will make a presentation of an alternate plan to the board of directors. Dean Bradshaw proposed forming a committee to increase public awareness of facts about the landfill, and the directors approved. The manager of the transfer station, Milan Jamieson, reported on steps that have been taken to improve the recycling facilities at the landfill.
- c. There was brief discussion of the need for preparation for paving the polling place parking lot; it has to be paved at the same time as the East Ridge Road.
- d. The town has received a letter from the DEP addressed to the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) concerning the alleged infraction of the land use ordinances on Chub Cove Road. It was passed on to the CEO and the Planning Board for their consideration.

- e. Stuart reported on the recent meeting of the Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority (WCEMSA). The organization elected a new board of very devoted, intelligent, and knowledgeable individuals who are dedicated to rewriting the by-laws and keeping the operations of the board of directors open and even-handed. The meeting represented the commencement of a new chapter in this vital organization.
 - f. At the WCEMSA, Stuart was approached by a member of the Dennysville Fire Department. The Dennysville people would like to donate their fire engine to the Town of Cooper. It's a 1977 FMC, with an 800-gallon tank and two pumps, one of which pumps 1000 gallons per minute, and the other of which—the high-pressure pump—was disconnected because it put out far more pressure than would be needed except in urban firefighting. Although the truck is by no means new, it is fully operational, and according to Sullivan, it would be a big improvement over the current truck. All the Town would need to do would be to add the vehicle to its insurance policy. The Dennysville representative also recommended that the Cathance Lake Association sponsor the purchase of a floating pump capable of putting out 500 gallons per minute. It would cost about \$2200, but one such pump could make the difference in stopping the spread of fire along the lake shore. (There are surprisingly few places that a truck could effectively pump water from the lake.) Bob Smith noted that such a pump could also be dragged across the ice during the winter time.
 - g. Brenda Gove, the outside appraiser, has recommended that the Town purchase a fire-proof two-drawer file cabinet for storing the property cards, transfers, and deeds. The Selectmen approved this purchase in order to protect the Town's investment in the new records generated in the recent reappraisal of the Town.
 - h. The Assessors have reported that the notice of assessments will go out this week. There will be two public meeting times for those with questions about their assessments: Friday, September 28, from 4 to 8 P.M., and Saturday, September 29, from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M. The meetings will be held at the Grange. Those who cannot attend will be able to phone in; the number will be given on the notices.
 - i. The Selectmen confirmed the appointment of Dan Ackley to Chair of the Planning Board, and of Tim Ketchen as alternate.
7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for October 9, Tuesday, 6:30, possibly at the East Machias Town Hall. Stuart will attend.
8. Third Selectman's Report/Tasks
- a. Jeff was working and could not attend. He has been working back-back twelve-hour shifts at the mill for two weeks.
9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
- a. Bob will pick up the asphalt patch material and work either with Scott or Terry to seal the cracks in pavement on East Ridge Road
 - b. The next episode in the endless discussion of ditching and paving the East Ridge Road played out. Stuart called two other companies seeking someone who might finally do the paving work. One refused to even consider the job; the other offered an estimate of \$15,000, more than \$5,000 over Lane's estimate. Lane has been laying down asphalt by the mile on Route 9 and Route 1 and has not had time for replacing 200 feet on the East Ridge Road in little Cooper, but their rep promised Stuart that they would get to the job before the plant is shut down for the season.

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen 10 / 2
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, October 2, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Terry Viselli, Robert von Rotz

1. Distribution/ approval of Minutes of previous Selectmen’s Meeting
2. Date of next two Selectmen’s meetings: October 16 and November 6, 2007.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks
 - a. The IFW has contacted Terry about an oversight on her very first report as collector; there is \$198 owed them.
 - b. Envelopes for tax bills have been purchased; the bills should go out this week.
 - c. Terry will move forward on her abatement request so the Town doesn’t have to go through endless tax paperwork for the property that it has acquired through a lien.
4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie has sent the CD with the Town books to the Auditor; “the ball is in the Auditor’s court.” At some point she and the Auditor will coordinate their data; hopefully the Auditor will be able to resolve some issues Ann Marie has with the software.
 - b. We now have check-printing capability.
5. Treasurer’s Warrants

Checks received through the Selectmen’s Office

Payer	Category	Amount
State of Maine	Sept 2007 Ed Subsidy Payment, G.P.A. State Allocation	\$10,691.49
State of Maine	Tree Growth 06	\$10,435.00

Items on Treasurer’s Warrant #18 (preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	113.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	1823.26
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	93.85
Stuart Shotwell, Reimbursement for payment to Registrar of Deeds for Septic Grant	Small Community Septic Grant	\$16.50
Machias Valley Publishing Co., for legal notice	Small Community Septic Grant	\$26.00
Robert Smith—Correction of payment of bill submitted on Warrant 15	Road/Capital	\$40.94
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	589.20
McBee	Admin/Supplies	280.76
Hutchins Bros	Admin/Supplies	39.44
Ann Marie Flood,	Admin/Postage	2.56

reimbursement for postage to Wadman		
Brenda Gove for revaluation contract	Final payment on contract per 3/06 Town Meeting	22,000.00
IFW correction for missed sticker payment in 2006	IFW	198.00
Terry Viselli, reimbursement for envelopes for tax bills	Admin/Supplies	22.06
Calais Ace, patch and sealer	Roads/Supplies	178.68
Robert Smith, reimbursement for gasoline	Roads/Supplies	23.00
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Capital	200.86
Robert Smith	Roads/Capital	217.02
	Total	\$25,865.13

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. Stuart attended the meeting of the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG) on Thursday, September 27. Among the items of interest:
 - Towns have combined to purchase and use the rather pricey but very useful TRIO software for maintaining Assessor and Tax Collector records (Perry and Pembroke, for example). Cooper might be able to find a partner for similar cost-sharing.
 - The recent AXIOM Inc. effort to get a grant to improve broadband access in Washington County, including an upgrade to the Cooper Hill facility and the purchase of a radio sending unit in Cooper (worth about \$12,000). AXIOM received over 100 letters of support for this grant, including one from the Cooper Selectmen.
 - The Town Manager of Millbridge (pop. 1275) reported on significant cost savings obtained by buying a used trash truck and having Town employees haul MSW to Penobscot Energy. Costs dropped from \$2000 to \$1000 per week, and in the first year the Millbridge's total MSW tonnage delivered at Penobscot Energy dropped from 840 tons to 639 tons, evidently because other towns' MSW was being passed off as originating in Millbridge. Millbridge also has an aggressive recycling program, collecting nearly 346 tons of cardboard, newspapers, plastics, mixed paper, tin, and glass. Their "white goods" pickup (washing machines and similar appliances) yielded 40 tons. They actually show a small profit from recycling (\$2,200 per year). They now have a facility near the town offices where citizens bring their own recyclables; it is very well used. He also reported saving \$0.80 per gallon by buying truck fuel in bulk.
 - Several towns have culvert steamers, including Millbridge and Perry/Pembroke. Judy East, the director of WCCOG, cautioned that it's necessary to get an interlocal agreement before borrowing such equipment so that it will be covered by the Tort Claims Act. The agreement is a one-page form, however, which she can provide. On this point it was also noted that coordination among the towns using the steamer is required, because towns tend to need them at the same time.
 - A spokesman from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) explained some regulations on protecting wildlife habitat. He pointed out that development in such areas is not necessarily prohibited—in fact, it is likely to be allowed; it is just that it requires a permit from the DEP and has to follow their regulations. The DEP will do a "field determination" at any time, for anyone; the number is 287-3901 or 1-800-452-1942. Of special interest to Assessors is the fact that the DEP can provide a larger map of the Significant Wildlife Habitat.

- The DEP spokesman also noted that a Town can impose its own cutting rules within Shoreland zones; for example, some towns have a 40 percent cutting rule. Towns sometimes do this because timber harvesting in these zones (as opposed to cutting on a small scale by private landowners) is specifically exempted from the DEP regulations.
- Pembroke, Perry, and Charlotte are developing a joint office to provide shared service to their citizens. Other towns will be able to use their tax collection and other similar services for a total of \$15,000 per year. In discussion, it was observed that the payment to the tax collector is fairly high in the three towns in question (\$27,246, \$7,500, and \$7,000 respectively) as is the salary of the Treasurer (\$5,434, \$6,500, \$4,016 respectively) and the Town Clerk (\$1,108, \$2,700, \$3808).
- At the WCCOG meeting, the First Selectman of Alexander said that Alexander was very interested in coordinating with Cooper to save tax dollars by sharing services. In a side discussion with Stuart, he noted that Alexander currently pays \$50,000 per year to get rid of its trash (compared to Cooper's \$5300). In discussion at the Selectmen's meeting, the idea of creating an interlocal agreement among Alexander, Cooper, and Charlotte was mentioned.
- b. The Cooper Fire Department has accepted the new fire engine offered by the Dennysville Fire Department. The report is that it needs a tune up but is a big improvement over the old truck.
- c. The DEP has contacted the towns of Cooper and Meddybemps to inform them that in spite of the successful bond issue for this purpose, the money raised will not be used to remove the 150,000-plus tires in the Smiths' junkyards in Cooper and Meddybemps. The DEP letter says that "this decision is based primarily on handling costs. To date, no decision has been made for future removals."
- d. A letter has been received from the DEP appointing intervenors in the application of Quoddy Bay LNG, Inc. to build LNG facilities in Washington County.
- e. Requesting status of land use violations from the Planning Board
- f. Stuart has retrieved the 2006–2007 FY audit materials from the auditor.
- 7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for October 9, Tuesday, 6:30, possibly at the East Machias Town Hall. Stuart will attend.
 - b. Washington County Emergency Medical Service Authority meeting on October 9, Tuesday, 6:00, Meddybemps Community Building. A representative is needed for this organization.
 - c. Washington County Council of Governments meeting, October 28.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff Could not attend the meeting.
- 9. Road Issues Discussion
 - a. Scott will try to obtain free cold patch from the MDOT yard to fill the cracks in the pavement on the East Ridge Road. All agreed that the method previously tried was ridiculously expensive. It was unanimously agreed that any compressor the town could afford for this type of work would be underpowered and was not worth it. Scott and Bob Smith pointed out that the total lack of underlayment on the road makes it better to actually leave the compacted sand and other material in the cracks rather than blow it out. You could blow sand out of the cracks all the way down to China if you wanted.
 - b. The ditching of the East Ridge Road for this season is finally complete; David Lee will continue on to the placement of the new culverts.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Wednesday, October 17, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

10 / 17

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Terry Viselli, Robert von Rotz, (Dan Ackley at conclusion)

1. The minutes through October 2 were distributed.
2. Date of next Selectmen’s meetings: The first is scheduled for November 6, 2007; the scheduled November 20 meeting might be better moved to another date; perhaps Monday, November 19.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry will get the abatement request notarized and submit it.
4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie has sent the Auditor (Wanese Lynch of James Wadman, Inc.) the disk copy of the account books and confirmed with her that the problem of double booking of entries is occurred. She wants to make sure she has the problem ironed out, either through a phone conference in which both Wanese and she are looking at the same copy of the accounts, or through a visit to the Auditor in Ellsworth.
 - b. Ann Marie has begun printing checks out of the computer program.

5. Treasurer’s Warrants

No state checks received through the Selectmen’s Office in this period.

Items on Treasurer’s Warrant #19 (preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$215.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	506.62
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	273.99
Stuart Shotwell reimbursement for postage	Admin/postage	\$28.46
Postmaster Meddybemps	Admin/postage	\$100.00
David Lee Construction for East Ridge Road	Roads/Capital	\$14,800.00
David Lee Construction	Admin/Grange Upgrade	\$900.00
U. S. Treasury—941 payment	941	\$672.82
Terry Viselli, Reimburse postage	Admin/Postage	44.03
Total		\$17,540.92

6. First Selectman’s Report/Tasks

- a. The Selectmen discussed the Assessors’ request for an excise schedule for taxing tractors. Stuart had discussed with Janet Scanlon, the Tax Collector of the Town of Pembroke, the fees used there; she said they charge a tax of \$5 for old tractors and \$20 for new tractors (less than ten years old). It is virtually impossible to collect these taxes, as they cannot be the basis of a lien; the clerk is required to go to small claims court to collect. As the entire excise system seemed arbitrary and unfair, the Selectmen declined to do anything about setting a fee pending further information from the Assessors. [Later note: Stuart spoke with Brenda Gove about this issue and will bring better information to the next meeting.]

- b. Stuart mentioned the legal necessity of holding “hearing” to approve the Welfare schedules. He’ll look into this further and set it up to occur at the end of a regular Selectmen’s meeting. It will be *pro forma*.
 - c. The Town and Tim and Kelly Ketchen have jumped through all the many paperwork hoops in their progress toward installation of the septic system to be paid for by DEP grant. The only thing left is the most important part—namely, getting the system built. The bid was awarded to Hanson, who has not begun work yet.
 - d. There was discussion of installing smaller “override” culverts through the flow diversion dams on the new ERR culvert. These would keep water from overflowing the ditch and cutting into the shoulder. It was agreed to get an estimate on these and install them if possible; five 12” plastic culverts would be needed, including the replacement for the small culvert at “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” which has rusted through at the bottom. David Lee has two of the culverts taken out of the ERR during recent ditching work. [Later note: Stuart called him and said we might want to incorporate these in further road work.] Stuart and Scott had a conversation with David Hunnewell, following up on a talk Hunnewell had with Bob Smith, about the effect of the ERR drainage system on his land. It was agreed that it would be a good thing to have a ditch on the west side of the road to lead water past Hunnewell’s driveway if possible, though this would have to be planned for later years. Stuart mentioned the possibility of applying for a Homeland Security Grant for this work.
 - e. Cooper was under the LD 1 Property Tax Levy Limit by \$13,722.58.
 - g. The Selectmen signed an application for eligibility to receive Federal surplus property.
 - f. Stuart reported on the last Marion Transfer Station meeting. It was held in East Machias. The MTS Board of Directors has requested member towns to provide a letter of approval for the new landfill. The Selectmen decided to take a poll to assess feelings about the project in town.
7. First Selectman’s news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Washington County Council of Governments meeting, October 28.
 - b. MDOT “Working with Geotextiles” workshop, October 31, Whitneyville, Hill Grove Community Center, 42 South Main Street (Town Office), duration 2–2 1/2 hours; prior reservation required.
 - c. Meeting of the Marion Transfer Station Board of Directors with the Washington County Commissioners, November 1, 2007, Washington County Courthouse, Machias.
 - d. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for November 13, Tuesday, 6:30, at the Whiting Town Hall. Stuart will attend.
8. Second Selectman’s Report/Tasks
- a. The Town has a better compressor, an upgrade to the one that broke and was returned.
 - b. The Town has purchased a cheap (\$59) electric pole saw to cut back brush on Town roads.
9. Road Commissioner’s Report/Tasks
- a. It was decided to buy seed and hay to prevent erosion to the new culverts and to the new fill on the exposed clay cap at the old Town dump.
 - b. Bob Smith reported that he is getting his pulp truck operational to use in cleaning up brush cut along East Ridge Road.

2007–2008 Town of Cooper Budget		
Appropriations:		
Support of Schools		\$143,331
Highways & Bridges		\$73,000
Municipal Solid Waste		\$5,700
Administration (Excise Tax Monies plus bal. from General Fund)		
Cemeteries		\$2,800
Fire Department (includes Firefighter's insurance)		\$2,509
Liability & Worker's Comp Insur.		\$5,000
Town Welfare		\$50
Recreation		\$500
Polling place		\$2,500
Archive facility		\$1,500
Third Parties:		
	WCEMSA	\$2,250
	DV	\$100
	WCP	\$50
	WCARC	\$50
	DRWC	\$100
	CLA	\$100
	WHCA	\$100
	DEAN	\$78
	CFL	\$235
	LVWC	\$100
	DEH	\$500
	HFS	\$150
County Tax		<u>\$27,222</u>
	Total Appropriation	\$267,925
	Less State Revenue	<u>\$16,342</u>
	subtotal	\$251,583
	Less Tree Growth Reimbursement	*- <u>\$10,435</u>
	subtotal	\$241,148
	Plus Overlay	* <u>9,654.44</u>
	subtotal	
	Less Homestead Exemption	<u>4,135.40</u>
	Total Amount to	
	Tax:	*246,667.04

[Asterisked items supplied after the meeting.]

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
 15 Cathance Lane
 Cooper ME 04657
 454-1487
 sshotwell@earthlink.net

December 16, 2007

<p>The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.</p>
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Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Enclosed are minutes from the Selectmen's meetings from November 6 through and December 6, 2007. (Please note that some of the minutes have not yet been approved.)

Update on Tractor Excise Tax The Assessors send the following note: "In order to comply with the Maine Department of Revenue, if tractor owners do NOT pay an excise tax on their tractors, the town must charge personal property taxes on them. Since tractor owners will save money by paying an excise tax on their tractors rather than paying personal property taxes on them, we urge tractor owners to contact Terry Viselli as soon as possible. The deadline for excising the tractors is January 15, 2008. We hope that we are correct in assuming that people will not rush to Terry's house, but hope that they will take care of it in a timely fashion after the holidays." The excise tax is \$20 per tractor for tractors ten years of age or less, and \$5 for tractors older than ten years. To give an example: An owner of a tractor less than ten years old and worth \$10,000 would be charged \$116 for property tax, but only \$20 for excise tax. The point of setting this excise tax is to give farmers a way to avoid the higher cost of personal property taxes.

Free Heating Oil Citizens Energy, a non-profit energy company, works in partnership with CITGO and thousands of oil heat dealers and local fuel assistance agencies in 16 states to provide deliveries of home heating oil to those in need. This year the Oil Heat Program will provide eligible families a one-time delivery of 100 gallons of home heating oil. They helped many people in Washington County last year. There are three ways to apply:

1. Call the Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program's toll free hotline, 1-877-JOE-4-OIL (1-877-563-4645,) or
2. Apply online to complete an application at <http://www.citizensenergy.com/english/pages/13/individual-households>; or
3. Go to the website and download, print, fill in, and mail the application.

The process goes much more quickly if the applicant calls or applies on line as opposed to applying by mail. Citizens Energy Oil Heat Program will notify households by mail on their application status. To receive a delivery during the 2007-2008 winter season, Citizens Energy must receive all applications and requests for processing by February 29, 2008. (In the interests of full disclosure: CITGO is a Venezuelan-owned oil company.)

Marion Transfer Info On the last page of this mailing, after the minutes, is a copy of a recent information sheet from Marion Transfer Station showing hours of operation and charges for various items. Users of the Transfer Station are asked to keep it for further reference.

Building Materials Exchange In the box at the top of the next page is a Building Materials Exchange fact sheet for those interested in obtaining low-cost building materials. Unfortunately, the only outlets are in Lisbon and Sanford.

The Maine Housing and Building Materials Exchange (BME) Fact Sheet

What is the BME?

The BME was established in 1990 to seek donations of new and used building materials and sell them at low cost to homeowners. Anyone may shop at the BME, but qualifying low-income homeowners (called "members") benefit from even lower prices, and full access to materials needed to keep a house safe, warm, and weathertight. Like a Marden's or a Goodwill, the BME's inventory changes all the time, but almost always includes new insulated windows, floor tile, interior and exterior doors, lighting and plumbing fixtures, and miscellaneous hardware supplies. Hot water heaters, furnaces, lumber and insulation are sometimes available as well. Call ahead to find out if we have what you need in stock. If we don't, we maintain a "wish-list" and will notify you if we find what you need.

How Do I Become a Member?

You can qualify as a member if your household income is at 80% or less of median income in Cumberland County, adjusted by family size (using the 2000 Census). For example, the income limit for a one-person household is \$27,150, a two-person household is \$31,050, and a three-person is \$38,800. Members are charged a fee of \$10 per year. To become a member, simply bring proof of your income, and a deed that shows you own your home. If your household income is over the BME limits you may choose to become a "Supporting Member." Supporting Members pay \$25.00 per year, which enables them to receive notification when new materials arrive, allows them to add items to the Supporting Member "Wish List," gives them notification of sales, and provides some breaks on pricing. However, anyone can shop at the BME regardless of income and without becoming a member.

Where Does the BME Find its Products?

The BME seeks donations of used building materials from individual homeowners and from contractors, and in some circumstances will deconstruct buildings to get needed materials. We also get donations of overstocked, mis-measured, or closeout products from suppliers and manufacturers throughout New England. To obtain items that are in great demand by members, such as lumber or insulation, the BME will occasionally negotiate a bargain price for a bulk purchase.

Where is the BME Located? The BME has two, fully staffed retail warehouses, located in:

- Lisbon, ME at 102 Lisbon Street (Rte. 196) (636-7670)
- Sanford, ME at 72 Emery Street (324-4574)

The warehouses are open Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday, 8:30 am - 4 pm., and Wednesday & Friday, 8:30am - 6 pm. For more information about the BME, call Dave Zimmerman, Executive Director, at 666-8427, or check online at www.mainebme.org.

More Results of the Landfill Poll The results of the poll on the proposed demo landfill in Marion Township currently stands at 15 citizens approving and 43 disapproving.

General Assistance Ordinance Hearing There will be a *pro forma* hearing on the new welfare ordinances and their yearly appendices, to be held at the conclusion of the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Wednesday, January 3, 2007. Interested members of the public are of course invited to comment on the proposed ordinance, but this is just a formality to fulfill the letter of the law concerning General Assistance.

Request from Cooper Mail Carrier If you have been collecting the rubber bands that bundle your mail, the mail carrier will gladly take them back for reuse.

Respectfully submitted to the residents of Cooper by Stuart Shotwell

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, November 6, 2007, 7:00 p.m. 11 / 6
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

Present: Jeffrey Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Bob von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell

1. Minutes through October 17 have been distributed and will be approved at the next Selectmen's Meeting.
2. The next Selectmen's meeting will be MONDAY, November 19. This will replace the regular Tuesday night meeting.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
Terry could not attend because she was at the polls. She sent in her BMV report and various other bills.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie reported that she will be having a telephone conference with Wanese Lynch at James Wadman, Inc., on Friday to clarify the long-standing QuickBooks issue. She is looking into some options for getting feedback from Tammy Smith in Meddybemps as well, but she will wait to see if that is really necessary. The computerized checkprinting is going well, and once we get completely past the last glitch with QuickBooks, we'll have a smoothly functioning system.
 - b. There was \$67,118.59 in checking as of 10/31/07 and about \$28,534 in the savings account.

5. Items on Treasurer's Warrant #20

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$190.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$506.62
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$384.28
Larry Colarusso	Admin/Salaries	\$300.00
MMTCTA, dues for Ann Marie and Terry	Admin/Fees	\$30.00
Lane Construction, for Paving	Roads/Capital	\$12,232.00
Lane Construction, for Paving	Grange Upgrade	1,300.00
David Lee	Roads/Plowing	\$6,711.09
Skip James, for 20 bales mulching hay	Roads/Capital	\$60.00
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$589.60
Public Space Plus, signs for disability parking	Polling place upgrade	\$57.95
Calais Ace Home Center, for trim saw	Roads/Equipment	\$59.99
James Slowe, CEO, Advance for October-December 2007	Admin/Salaries	\$400.00
Terry Viselli, Reimbursement for safe purchased for Assessors	Admin/Equipment	\$37.96
Cathance Grange, rent for November elections	Admin/Rent	\$100.00
Ralph Flood, elections	Admin/Elections	\$84.00

Arline Flood, elections	Admin/Elections	\$84.00
Leonard Dodge, elections	Admin/Elections	\$84.00
William Krider	Cemeteries	\$1800.00
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Capital	\$96.97
Scott Jamieson	Grange Upgrade	\$13.85
The Office	Admin/Supplies	\$51.46
	Total	\$25,219.31

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. The Selectmen revisited the Assessors' request for an excise schedule for taxing tractors. Stuart had talked to Brenda Gove since the last meeting, and she had explained that the excise tax for tractors was intended to provide an alternative to personal property taxes for those who own tractors. For example, if someone owned a tractor worth \$25,000, it is supposed to be declared as personal property and taxed at the same rate as real estate; at the current mil rate, this would result in a tax of nearly \$300. The Selectmen, after some protest about the general unfairness of the current personal property tax system, decided to set an excise tax of \$20 per tractor for tractors ten years of age or less, and \$5 for tractors older than ten years.
- b. The Planning Board did not report any recommendations on pending actions to be taken for violation of the town land use ordinance. The Selectmen will try to get a recommendation for the next meeting.
- c. Stuart recently spoke with Carl LaFrance at the Maine Surplus Property bureau (287-2922). Among other things, LaFrance said that because of a law passed by the Legislature the Cooper Fire Department could get a new (Pentium 3) computer with all the accessories for \$35. He gave the following as examples of the equipment they had recently sold to towns or to public bidders: a 1980 John Deere Grader with 4266 hours (but a new engine) for \$25,000; one Case backhoe for \$7,000, one for \$7,200; a 2002 four-wheel-drive backhoe for \$17,000. He said that front-end loaders usually go for \$25,000 to \$28,000, though he is having trouble getting Federal surplus because of the war. The way this works is that the equipment gets listed with a flat price at which any town can buy it during a viewing period ten days before the public auction. Anything not bought by the towns goes up for auction, and anyone can buy it then. The Case backhoes mentioned, for example, were sold for those prices to the public. The next auction is December 1. The bureau and warehouse is located at 85 Leighton St., Augusta, near Commercial Tire, Nissan, Charley's Auto, etc. There is also a huge amount of surplus office equipment—desks, tables, chairs, computers, etc. LaFrance mentioned that they had just received seven pallets of shelving; Stuart relayed this information to the Archive committee in Alexander. In discussion of this information, there was general agreement that the town obviously has no interest in creating a fleet of vehicles and machines including plow trucks, dump trucks, grader, etc. It might be useful for the town to have a front-end loader/backhoe combination if one could be purchased for \$7,000. The way this would have to be done would be to get authorization in advance at a town meeting to spend a set amount and no more if an appropriate machine became available at that price.
- d. Stuart gave a report of the meeting between the Marion Transfer Station's Board of Directors' and the County Commissioners. The meeting was an example of the kind of public information session that the MTS should be holding to acquaint citizens with the project and get feedback. The current tally of the landfill poll is 15 approvals and 40 disapprovals.

- e. The Grange Hall disability access renovations have been completed (though Scott is going to raise the parking space sign when he gets the time). Reimbursement for the project, which totaled a little over \$3,000, has been filed for.
 - f. Scott Jamieson will get a copy of the agreement between the Machias Grange and the Bee Hive Collective; it may serve as a model for an agreement between Cooper and the Cathance Grange. Stuart spoke with Charlotte Selectman Dennis Bryant and found that the Charlotte Grange simply deeded the building over to the Town of Charlotte when that Grange dissolved. This solution is obviously not applicable to our situation.
 - g. Animal Control Officer Larry Colarusso has requested a pay increase (he is currently paid \$300). The Selectmen turned this down, as there have been no actual animal-capture incidents in Cooper in Larry's tenure.
 - h. Stuart showed a MDOT Road Drainage workshop brochure. It looks like a good workshop; perhaps someone can attend the December session in Belfast.
 - i. Stuart mentioned that he is at work trying to get MEMA funding for East Ridge Road improvements. This may require a signature from the Selectmen on a letter of intent at the next meeting.
 - j. Bill Krider dropped off his invoice for the past year's mowing (\$1800), with a request for an additional \$75 as a fuel increase. The Selectmen had previously said that they would entertain such a request, but since the exact amount of the cemetery mowing expense was \$1800, they could not spend more money on the contract without going back to the Town. It was decided to put the request for the fuel increase on the 2008 Town Meeting Warrant.
7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Archive Committee meeting, November 7, 6 P.M., Alexander Town Hall. Stuart will attend.
 - b. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for November 13, Tuesday, 6:30, at the Whiting Town Hall. Stuart will attend.
 - c. Regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, November 29, 6 P.M. Jeff will try to attend.
8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
- a. There was discussion of the purchase and storage of calcium chloride for keeping the culverts clear. Jeff will take care of this.
9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
- a. Jeff is going to get a propane torch so that cold patch can be reheated to heat the cracks in the pavement on East Ridge Road hill before Crowe Road.
 - b. Bob Smith has fired up his old pulp truck; it might be useful for cleaning up brush cut along East Ridge Road.
 - c. Hay will be purchased to slow erosion in the ditch on the East Ridge Road. some of the seeded grass is already coming up.
 - d. David Lee still needs to smooth out the fill on the clay cap at the old Town dump before it can be seeded.
 - e. Scott pointed out that there is very poor flowage between the last two culverts on the paved part of the East Ridge Road. This was the part that David Lee did not work on. It would be worthwhile to get that cleaned out before winter, or the ditch could easily overflow onto the curve. This job could possibly be piggy-backed on another that David is going to give an estimate for. It will only be very late that he gets to it, however, as he still has to put up the salt and sand for the winter.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Monday, November 19, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

11 / 19

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Bob von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell

1. Having received no corrections of the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting through October 17, the board considered them approved. Minutes of the November 6 meeting were distributed.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meetings: December 4 [later changed to December 6] and December 18
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry was working this evening, but handed in her BMV report.
 - b. There was some glitch with the BMV; it claimed not to have received a report since 10/23. Terry and Ann Marie straightened this out; the BMV auditor was just jumping the gun.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie talked with Wanese Lynch at James Wadman, Inc., about the double posting problem in QuickBooks.
5. Treasurer's Warrants
 - a. No state checks received through the Selectmen's Office in this period.
 - b. There was an error in the total on Warrant #20; it should have been \$25,173.77, not 25,173.15. Stuart keyed some of the data into Excel incorrectly.
 - c. By an oversight, the 10/26 School Warrants were not entered on the last Treasurer's Warrant. Because of the resolution passed in Town Meeting in 2006, it was legal for the Treasurer to pay them, but they do need to appear on the Treasurer's Warrant; thus the double charges shown below.

Items on Treasurer's Warrant #21 (preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$155.00
School Payroll Warrant 10/26	Schools	\$506.62
School Accounts Payable Warrant 10/26	Schools	\$18,203.31
Marks Printing House	Admin/Supplies	\$7.50
Cargill, bill for 98.62 tons salt	Roads/Stockpile	\$5,892.54
Cargill, bill for 32.53 tons salt	Roads/Stockpile	\$1,943.67
Cargill, bill for 33.58 tons salt	Roads/Stockpile	\$2,006.41
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Capital	\$110.82
Robert Smith	Roads/Capital	\$170.85
	Total	\$28,996.72

Cargill has thus billed for 164.73 tons out of a projected 220 tons of salt, charged at \$59.75 per ton. (The bills can be paid with a single check.)

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. We still have not received recommendations from the Planning Board about code violations. Bob von Rotz will again convey our request to the Planning Board. On a related point, the Selectmen's office has received DEP guidelines for a restoration plan for Shoreland Clearing violations. This may be of interest to the

Planning Board. The Legislature recently (September 20, 2007) enacted a law on this topic.

- b. Stuart attended the Marion Transfer Station's Board of Directors' meeting in Whiting. Several opponents to the landfill also attended and there was considerable discussion about recycling, particularly the challenges the MTS faces doing recycling alone. It takes its "Universal Waste" (monitors, computers, florescent light bulbs, etc.) to Machias. Its metal scrap is picked up at irregular intervals at a small (hundreds of dollars) profit to the MTS, which is contributed to a local charity. Its collected paper and cardboard is also picked up. Years' worth of gathering recycled glass yielded only a few tons, too little for any recycler to pick up; it was disposed of in the demo landfill. The board of directors also heard from Barbara Lapham, a resident of Township 14 who is opposed to the proposed landfill, although she supports the municipal solid waste (household trash) part of the MTS operation.
- c. Stuart is looking into getting a FEMA grant for further East Ridge Road work.
- d. Stuart reported on the Archive Committee meeting in Alexander on November 7. The Alexander folks (three of them in particular) have built a great little addition to the firehall, at the back of which will be the archive space. As of this time the siding needs to be purchased and installed. Out of the \$23,000 in grants and funds from the town and the Alexander-Crawford Historical Society, the Archive committee has spent \$12,000. One major cost will be the heating system (\$4,320). The Alexander Fire Department, which will use the front of the space, has spent \$7,877 of its own funds out of the \$9,000 budgeted. While Stuart was there he saw the new fire truck—a real beauty. It's a 2006/2007 International, pumping 1260 gallons per minute, with a foam system and 1000 gallon tank.
- e. The following note was received in the mail from an East Ridge Road resident:

To Cooper Selectmen,

I wanted to send my thanks for all your efforts in repaving the East Ridge Road. I'm sure it was not an easy task and required many hours of volunteer time from many people.

Please extend my thanks to all those involved.

The note was read aloud to the Selectmen and Road Commissioners and was greeted with considerable surprise and appreciation.

- f. The Selectmen have received notice that Cooper's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance must be amended before July 1, 2008. The Planning Board should make a recommendation so that this ordinance change can be included in the next Town Meeting Warrant (March).
 - g. Bob Smith requested a raise in his winter plowing rate to \$800. Stuart will look into the financials and a decision will be made at the next meeting. Bob observed that the regular plowmen gave raises annually, and he and Chris McCormick have not received raises since they began plowing.
7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. 57th Maine Transportation Conference, Thursday, December 6, 2007, Augusta Civic Center.
 - b. Marion Transfer Station meeting scheduled for December 11, Tuesday, 6:30, at the New Friendly Restaurant.
 - c. Regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., Tuesday, November 27. Jeff will attend if possible.
 - d. M.D.O.T. Drainage Conference, Tuesday, December 4, Belfast, Hutchinson Center, Rt. 3

- e. Washington County Council of Governments Executive Committee meeting, Wednesday, November 28, 5–7 P.M. Downeast Heritage Museum Theater. Stuart will attend if possible.
- 8. Second Selectman’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff could not attend the meeting, but did report that the propane wand has been obtained. He will drop it off at Scott’s house tomorrow.
- 9. Third Selectman’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Any issues.
- 10. Road Commissioner’s Report/Tasks

There was some discussion of outstanding items, including cleaning up brush cut along East Ridge Road and putting hay in ditch on East Ridge Road. It has not been possible to seed the new fill on the old Town Dump, because David Lee has not had a chance to get back to it and spread the dirt. We have actually paid him for this along with the Grange job, so we will have to remember to nag him about it next spring.

Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen **12 / 06**
Town of Cooper
Thursday, December 6, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)

Present: Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Robert von Rotz

- 1. Minutes of previous Selectmen’s Meetings were approved through November 6; the minutes of November 19 were distributed for reading and approval at the next meeting.
- 2. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, December 18. Since the first Tuesday of January is New Year’s Day, it was decided to make the next meeting Wednesday, January 2.
- 3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks

Terry could not attend because of the changed meeting date, but she sent in her report.
- 4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks

Ann Marie could not attend because of the changed meeting date, but she sent in her school warrants and will pick up the Treasurer’s Warrant. The balance of the checking account as of 11/30 was \$150,727.37, on target for this time of year.
- 5. Treasurer’s Warrant #22

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$130.00
School Payroll Warrant, weeks of 11/21 and 12/07	Schools	\$1,013.24
School Accounts Payable Warrant, weeks of 11/21 and 12/07	Schools	\$38,108.21
David Lee, plowing contract	Roads/Plowing	\$6,711.09
David Lee, stockpile	Roads/Stockpile	\$13,875.00
MTS	MSW	\$519.20
Cargill, bill for 64.36 tons salt	Roads/Stockpile	\$3,845.51
The Office	Admin/Supplies	\$31.67
Registry of Deeds, 3 lien discharges	Admin/Registry	\$39.00
Wadman, James	Admin/Training	\$62.50
Scott Jamieson, 5 hours ERR @	Roads/Capital	\$92.35

\$20 = \$100; \$6.20 for SS; \$1.45 for Medicare; leaves \$92.35		
Scott Jamieson, 1 hour @ \$15; \$0.93 for SS; \$0.22 for Medicare; leaves \$13.85	Grange Upgrade	\$13.85
Leonard Dodge, Refund for overpayment of excise	Excise Overpayment Refund	\$28.20
Robert Smith, ERR plowing for 2007–2008, \$500 total, less Medicare and SS	Roads/Plowing	\$461.75
	Total	\$64,931.57

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. The Planning Board has worked out agreements with several property owners who had outstanding violations of the Shoreland ordinance. Where the trees that have been cut on Chub Cove, replanting will be required; the Planning Board will issue a letter setting out the terms of this agreement. Bob von Rotz is going to communicate the Selectmen's concern that the Planning Board ought to consider requiring interim stabilization of the hillside there, which is very steep. At the very least a run-off barrier should be installed.
- b. Stuart met with a FEMA representative to show him the site of the proposed work on the west side of the East Ridge Road. It is highly unlikely we will have the money to do this ourselves, but we might be able to get a special type of grant for pre-disaster mitigation that would allow us to remove the berm that extends for much the length of the west side of the road (opposite the new ditch) and to ditch that stretch. This would allow better drainage from under the road. Stuart also had extensive conversations with the Maine Emergency Management Agency representative about submitting the application. It's a massive amount of paperwork, however, and whether it can be done before the December 31 deadline is dubious.
- c. The Ambulance Authority meeting on November 27 was very useful. Stuart expressed great confidence in the Ambulance board as good, dedicated, hard-working and caring members of the Downeast Community. The Authority is in good hands.
- d. The Town has received a Forest Operations Notification from the Department of Conservation indicating that Lakeville Shores (H. C. Haynes, Inc.) is going to be harvesting 350 of their 800 acres north of Birch Point (basically the mainland portion of their property, the part not directly on the point), including a good deal of shorefront land. [Per later information, it seems that a lot of this harvesting has already been done.]
- e. The consideration of a request for an increase in plowing fee for Bob Smith was put off pending discussion with Chris McCormick, who plows the Vining Road. Bob was paid his 2007–2008 plowing fee in advance to allow for fuel purchase. The Selectmen figured that he was "good for it."
- f. Cargill has billed for 228.72 tons of road salt, charged at \$59.75 per ton. We had ordered 220 tons, but the salt was coming in 32-ton loads, so fine-tuning the amount was not an option. It should be a hot mix, at any rate.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, December 11, Tuesday, 5:30, at New Friendly Restaurant.
- b. The next regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., last Tuesday in January (January 29).

c. The next regular Washington County Council of Governments meeting, Saturday, February 2, Bluebird Restaurant, Machias.

8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks

Jeff was called to work overtime at the last minute and could not attend the meeting. It was understood that he has not had time to look into purchase of calcium chloride. It was suggested that perhaps some of this material could be kept at the fire house if the fire department is amenable.

9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks

- a. Further repair of the cracks in the pavement on East Ridge Road will have to wait until next spring.
- b. Some cleanup of brush cut along East Ridge Road has been done.
- c. The hay was not put in the ditch on East Ridge Road before the recent snow storm; there was some concern the hay itself might clog the culverts if it was scattered loosely on the bottom of the ditch at a time when grass germination was not possible. The alternate plan, to insert staked bales to slow the water flow, could not be implemented in time.
- d. Seeding new fill on old Town dump will have to wait until next spring.
- e. Scott has made the final installation of the disability parking sign at the Grange (the sign had to be raised up above high enough to be seen even when the lot has a car parked in it).

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
Cooper ME 04657

January 16, 2007

Dear Cooper Voter,

Three years is a good minimum term in office as a Selectmen, and nine years is probably a good maximum. I had expected to reach at least one of those limits, or something in between them; but it is now clear that I will not. Some people resign positions for of reasons of health or because they want to spend more time with their families. While I probably *should* resign for those reasons, the compelling reason is that I am going to lose my job if I don't stop working for Cooper.

I work as a freelance editorial consultant on a project that is publishing a large series of translations. The project, which I've pledged to complete, was originally scheduled to end in 2012. At its current rate, completion will not take place until 2049. I will be ninety-six years old at that time.

As if this wasn't bad enough, because of the time I've spent on Town work in the past two years, I've lost 20 percent of the annual hours I had previously devoted to the project, more than four working months over two years. My income has shrunken by the same amount.

My client and I have had a series of difficult discussions about this situation over the past few weeks. I've been working for this outfit for twenty years and they know that if I do something, I try to give it 100 percent. They know that if I work for the Town, they'll never have my 100 percent, which is now desperately needed if the project is not going to fail.

The upshot is that from this time forward I will have to work exclusively for the project. That means shutting down the other business I own and discontinuing my work for the town. I've agreed to this course of action because this is the best contract I've ever had or am likely ever to have. The job offerings for Latin scholars are not particularly numerous.

My client has agreed, however, to my continuing to work for the Town until the March meeting. Thereafter, per the terms of our agreement, I can serve at one volunteer position as long as it requires no more than one regular meeting per month. And if the Town wants me to, I can complete the paperwork for the Small Community septic grant when it resumes after the end of the winter.

Considering that the position of First Selectman is looked on in Cooper almost as a “presidency for life,” this puts a big question mark after Cooper’s immediate future. It would be presumptuous of me to tell the people of Cooper how to meet this situation, and yet it would also be a dereliction of duty not to propose some course.

What I think we ought to do

It should be no surprise to anyone who has read my newsletters that my assessment of the job of First Selectman, as it is currently structured in Cooper, is that it cannot be properly performed without a greater commitment of time than can be carved out of nights and weekends. Selectmen in other, larger towns can fulfill this office, but it’s my impression that they have support that Selectmen in Cooper do not. Alexander is an example. In addition to a very competent and hard-working full-time Clerk and general assistant, there is a larger pool of active citizens to draw on for various projects. For instance, the current archive building project was spearheaded by John Dudley, who is not on the Board of Selectmen there, and the actual building work was done by a team of several firemen.

When I say that the office cannot be “properly performed,” I mean performed in a way that “gets the Town ahead.” Here are some of the goals that (in my opinion) an active town government in Cooper should try to accomplish. Most of these items could be achieved with little expense to the town if the town government aggressively pursued grants or used State and Federal surplus material and equipment.

- Establish a town office in conjunction with a community center (for instance, the Cathance Grange), and improve it using Community Block Development (CBD) grants
- Defend the right of citizens to have the maximum say in the education of their children
- Continue to update the assessment of the town so that taxation remains as fair as possible
- Keep taxation as low as possible
- Apply steady political pressure on the Legislature to upgrade Rt. 191 and ultimately to take responsibility for maintaining it
- Apply for FEMA grants to upgrade the problem areas on the East Ridge Road and Vining Road
- Assist the fire department in achieving the highest possible certification for its size and resources
- Develop a comprehensive plan
- Build a sand and salt shed with CBD grants
- Purchase a used loader/backhoe and maintain it for town use (roadwork, winter culvert clearing, digging graves)

Where to go from here

There are four options for town government in Cooper, as I see it:

1. Continue to “tread water.” This is government from a minimalist point of view. Such a government would do only what is necessary to keep Cooper together as a town and to keep State agencies from taking us to court for neglecting our duties. This option is easiest on the Selectmen and other town officials, but does not allow us to tap

into grant money or achieve any of the goals I have outlined above. (In spite of my intentions to the contrary, “treading water” is about all I have been able to do in the past two years.) Pros: Cooper could remain a town and limp along until our population increases to the population “tipping point” for a viable, active municipal organization, which is probably about 300 people. This may not take very long; many homes around the lake have been winterized in recent years, and many “from-away” summer residents plan to move here on retirement. However, we may be entering another recession, which tends to make people defer retirement. Cons: Obviously we would remain “asleep” as a town while other communities around us are improving their situation.

2. Hire an aggressive, proactive town manager or administrative assistant who deeply believes in getting the town ahead. The Selectmen would then serve only an oversight position to make sure town management remains on track. The salary should be high enough to attract and keep an honest, energetic, and intelligent individual. In order to be competitive, it should offer health insurance, which is available through Maine Municipal Association at about \$7,700 for an individual annually. (Insurance for the Manager’s family is also available through the MMA, but that added cost should be borne by the Manager.) Although the Selectmen would be responsible for hiring and firing the Manager, the people of Cooper would set the Manager’s salary in the Town Meeting, and it seems best not to propose a figure for at this point. I do believe it should be generous, however. (A survey of wages for other managers in town around Maine shows that salaries vary so widely that they are not useful as a comparison.)

If I had known from the outset that I would have only two years in office, I would have pursued this option for the Town from the start. (To make one point perfectly clear: I will not serve as this manager.) The downside is that taxes would go up by the amount the Town voted to pay the Manager. However:

- An aggressive manager could probably earn back a good part of his or her salary in grant money over time.
- It is also legally possible for a Manager to hold the offices of Clerk, Tax Collector, and Treasurer, which would mean that the amounts currently paid to those officials could be used to offset any tax increase.
- Furthermore, we could combine with other towns to share the services of a Town Manager.

To sum up, the pros are: We could remain a town and accomplish our goals. The role of Selectmen would become something that any citizen could easily manage in a few evenings a month. Cons: Taxes would go up to pay for the Manager’s salary.

3. Deorganize. Pros: As I’ve said before, I don’t see any advantages to this route, except that no one would have to serve in town offices—if that is in fact an advantage. The income from town offices can be useful to people who live in Cooper, and government by people who live in Cooper will always be better than government by bureaucrats working for the Unorganized Territory. Cons: The command to uproot and destroy Maine’s existing school systems that was handed down last year by the Legislature and the Governor (school consolidation) is in my opinion just one example of an ongoing assault on the rights of citizens and towns. If we deorganize, we are completely at the mercy of state bureaucrats. We need to keep our small town alive to defend ourselves against big government. It’s that simple.

4. Join forces with Alexander to share the costs of governing the town. The benefits of this option include getting better government overall, but there would likely be some increase in cost. In my view this is a great option for Cooper, if the citizens of

both towns can be convinced of it. Alexander's government has expressed an interest, but neither Board of Selectmen has found time to do anything about it.

How to get there

At the upcoming March Meeting the voters of the Town can discuss a Warrant article concerning which form of government they would like to pursue. The Selectmen elected at that time would be charged with presenting a complete proposal to the June Special Meeting. In the case of a town manager, if that option is chosen, the proposal would include the duties of the job and the cost to the Town—salary, insurance, and other costs.

By law a change to a town manager system must be adopted at least 90 days before the Annual Meeting at which it takes effect. The Selectmen could, however, hire the Manager to serve in the role of an administrative assistant until the next March Meeting, provided the Town voted the funds for doing so.

Respectfully submitted to the Town of Cooper

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
Cooper ME 04657
454-1487
sshottwell@earthlink.net

January 16, 2008

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Enclosed are minutes from the Selectmen's meetings from December 18 through and January 15, 2008. (Please note that some of the minutes have not yet been approved.)

College Goal Sunday The Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) is offering free help in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on Sunday, January 27, at 2 P.M. Call FAME at 1-800-228-3734 or visit www.collegegoalsundaymaine.com. Parents and students will need to bring their most recent tax information. The nearest locations are Washington County Community College and University of Maine at Machias, but a complete list is on the website.

Comprehensive Planning Orientation Judy East of the Washington County Council of Governments will be meeting with citizens of Cooper on Tuesday, January 22, at 7:00 P.M., at the home of Stuart Shotwell and Mary Dunn at 15 Cathance Lane, Cooper. Judy will give an orientation lasting about 20 minutes on the process of developing a comprehensive plan for the Town. The question period afterward will probably end by 8:00 P.M. at the latest.

Factoid In the past two years, the Selectmen's office has received 1181 emails and sent 966 in the course of doing Town business.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, December 18, 2007, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

12 / 18

Present: Ann Marie Flood, Robert von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith

1. The minutes of the Selectmen’s Meetings have been approved through December 6, 2007.
2. Date of next Selectmen’s meetings: Wednesday, January 2; Tuesday, January 15. (A reminder: there is no meeting on the fifth Tuesday of months that have one, so there will be no meeting on January 29.) After that the likely meeting dates are February 5 and 19, and March 4 and 8.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Reports
 - b. The application for abatement.
4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks
 - a. The bounced check for \$44.21 from Michael Lovley.
 - b. Checking account balance as of 12/10/07: \$191,175.76.
5. Treasurer’s Warrant #23

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$75.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$1659.04
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$16314.39
Maine Municipal Association, second installment of liability insurance	Admin/insurance	\$2,258.00
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Noncapital	\$69.29
	Total	\$20,375.72

6. First Selectman’s Report/Tasks
 - a. The Selectmen’s office has received a fax from Ken “Bucket” Davis, First Selectman of East Machias, advising us that towns “can call for a special town meeting to appropriate money from surplus or legal fees to support” a petition for repeal of the school consolidation law. The fax reads: “We have written a legal opinion, which Bryan Dench, Attorney at Law, has authorized . . . that there is no statutory prohibition on contributing to P.A.C.S. and that he does not see any problem if towns have a special town meeting to appropriate money to support our efforts. The Town of Stonington approved \$5,000 and East Machias approved \$3,500. If your town needs assistance in calling a special town meeting to appropriate existing funds, please call Bucket Davis. We need to work together to obtain the needed signatures to defeat the School Administration Consolidation Law.” Although the fight against the consolidation law is an excellent cause, the Selectmen were not keen on recommending any appropriation of any money, as it was not clear how such funds would be spent. Stuart will call Bucket Davis and inquire into this.
 - b. Stuart attended the December meeting of the Marion Transfer Station. Drilling is finished on the test holes for the site of the proposed landfill. The pump tests will be done in January. Dean Bradshaw described the pump test as a process in

which water is drawn from one well and the relative water level is checked at perimeter wells. This helps establish the amount and direction of subsurface water flow.

- c. Cooper has received its registration cards for buying Maine State Surplus Property. Included with the cards was a rather shocking list of equipment to be sold at the next sale, which is to take place on January 12, including the following: Pentium IV computers with monitor, keyboard and mouse, \$300; 21-inch monitors, \$10; printers, \$25; telephones and cellphones, \$5; metal and wood tables and desks, \$25–\$50; metal and wood bookcases, \$15–\$25. A particularly odd item is the night stands for \$5.
- d. Stuart reported that the septic system for which the grant was obtained was not built before the snow fell. He will inquire into the carry-over status of the funds.
- e. There was discussion of a plowing increase for minor contracts. Bob Smith has never received an increase and is still receiving only \$500, whereas Chris McCormick’s pay has been increased to \$1200 over the years, though he has tougher terrain to plow.
- f. Stuart spoke to Barry, our school superintendent, about the necessity of holding a referendum to approve school consolidation, which was at one point part of the consolidation process. Barry said that the only way a referendum comes into play is that school budgets can no longer be approved in Town Meeting; they have to be approved at a regular election. This means we would hold a public hearing about the budget sometime in May, fewer than ten days before the referendum vote, and then approve it at the election in June. Barry and Stuart were agreed in viewing this change in procedure as a turn for the worse. As of this writing, there is a movement in the Legislature to postpone this requirement until 2009.
- g. The Assessors have solicited an estimate from Brenda Gove, the independent appraiser who recently completed the reappraisal of Cooper, to update the appraisal on an annual basis. This would include “maintaining assessing records, appraising new developments, responding to citizen inquiries/complaints, submitting necessary reports to the State, as well as other related duties, under the supervision of the local board of assessors.” Her charge for this would be \$5,000 annually. The Assessors have spoken of taking a reduction in their own stipends to offset this cost. In the opinion of the Assessors and the Selectmen, this is an excellent price for a service that makes tax assessments far more equitable on an ongoing basis and puts the job of the Assessors within reach of ordinary citizens with full-time commitments elsewhere. The Selectmen will recommend to the Town at the Annual Meeting that this offer be accepted.
- h. Deanne Greenlaw of the Alexander Town Office pointed out a classified advertisement in the November Maine Townsman that reads as follows:
FOR SALE BY BID—The Town of Embden has the following GE Capital Modular Space Office trailer for sale by bid:
 - 12 x 60 fully self-contained trailer.
 - Two 12 x 12 offices
 - One 12 x 34 office
 - One handicap bathroom
 - Central heat and air
 - New exterior doors with T-111 siding, well insulated
 - Two commercial fiberglass steps with aluminum railings
 - Good condition, new skirting, good wheels, tires, and tongue.

“This modular office is presently serving as the Town Office for the Town of Embden and will be available in March, 2008. . . . Bids will be accepted until 12:00 P.M. on Friday, February 29, 2008.”

7. First Selectman’s news (announcements requiring no decisions)
 - a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, January 8, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
 - b. A special WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., January 8, Tuesday, to give approval for accepting a grant. This conflicts with the MTS meeting (see [a] above), so Stuart will need some backup for one meeting or the other. [This meeting was later changed to Monday, January 7, 2008, 6:00 P.M. at Charlotte.]
 - c. The next regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., last Tuesday in January (January 29).
 - d. The next regular Washington County Council of Governments meeting, Saturday, February 2, Bluebird Restaurant, Machias.
8. Second Selectman’s Report/Tasks
 - a. Jeff was working and was unable to attend.
9. Road Commissioner’s Report/Tasks
 - a. The Road Commissioners were authorized to purchase a dozen bags of calcium chloride, since there seems to have been a delay in this.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Wednesday, January 2, 2008, 7:00 p.m. 1 / 2
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

Present: Scott Jamieson, Robert von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli

1. The minutes of the previous Selectmen’s Meeting (December 18) were distributed but not yet approved.
2. Date of next Selectmen’s meetings and Town Meeting: Tuesday, January 15. After that the likely meeting dates are February 5 and 19, and March 4 and 19, with the Annual Town Meeting to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24, the day after Easter.(A reminder: there is no meeting on the fifth Tuesday of months that have one, so there will be no meeting on January 29.)
3. Clerk/Tax Collector’s Report/Tasks
 - a. The application for abatement seems to have fallen between the players; Terry will check on it.
 - c. Stuart mentioned the need to wrap up year-end figures by March 7 at the latest so that they can be printed in the Annual Report.
 - d. A check was received at the Selectmen’s office on December 31 for payment of taxes by L. Adams. It was accompanied by the slip reporting the preliminary estimation of taxes, not by the stub of the actual tax bill. Terry will check to make sure the amounts are the same.
4. Treasurer’s Report/Tasks

Ann Marie could not attend.
5. Treasurer’s Warrant #24 (preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$115.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$507.60
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$2363.69
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$411.60

Eastern Maine Electrical Cooperative	Admin/ Electricity	\$50.00
MMA for Workers Compensation	Admin/ Insurance	\$954.00
Robert Smith (\$80 gross)	Roads/ Noncapital	\$73.88
Robert Smith (\$46 gross)	Roads/ Capital	\$41.56
Meddybemps Postmaster	Admin/ Postage	\$100.00
IFW	IFW	\$300.25
Alden Keith	Assessors' Abatement	\$638.00
Scott Jamieson (\$100 gross)	Roads/ Noncapital	\$92.35
	Total	\$5647.93

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. On the ongoing issue of plowing the dirt end of East Ridge Road: David Lee provided an estimate of \$2500 to keep this stretch open to Bob Smith's house for the rest of the winter, though he said he would prefer not to do it because of the likelihood of damage to his equipment. He said breaking open the current impasse there now would be a separate charge; it might now require a bulldozer. We thought this figure high, though understandable from David's point of view, as he charges \$3000 per mile for paved roads. Bob Smith will try to find someone else who can fill in and we'll see if we can work with him. (We have paid Bob \$500 for plowing for the year, but we already owe him for work on the dirt part of the East Ridge Road in August and September of 2007, as follows: 16 hours @ \$20 = \$320, 15 hours @ \$15 = \$225, for a total of \$545. We could consider the previous payment of \$500 to go towards that payment, and pay him another \$45 to clear that obligation.)
- b. The Selectmen have received a discount card through Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative that is worth 10 percent off at Calais Ace. We'll try to use this to purchase the calcium chloride.
- d. The Selectmen have received a notice from the State BEP to the effect that the deadline for updating the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance has been extended to July 1, 2009. There probably is no reason that Cooper cannot update these ordinances in 2008 and get it over with, however. Stuart has passed this info along to the CEO and the Planning Board.
- c. Sheriff Donnie G. Smith of the Washington County Sheriff's Office has written to the Selectmen inviting feedback on his first year of office.
- d. The Selectmen have received a copy of the brief in support of petition for review of final agency action filed by Barbara Lapham of Marion Township against the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC), asking the court to review the decision by LURC to rezone part of Township 14 for the proposed demolition landfill.
- e. It was decided that action to collect overdue taxes on the Bartlett property should be commenced.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, January 8, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
- b. A special WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Charlotte Town Hall, 6 P.M., January 7, Tuesday, 6:00, to give approval for accepting a grant. Stuart will attend.
- c. State of Maine Surplus Property Sale, 85 Leighton Road, Augusta, 8:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M.
- c. The next regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., last Tuesday in January (January 29).

- d. The next regular Washington County Council of Governments meeting, Saturday, February 2, Bluebird Restaurant, Machias.
- e. MMA Basic Municipal Budgeting Workshop, at "Spectacular Events," 395 Griffin Road, Bangor, February 8, 2008, 9:00–3:00.
- 8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
Jeff was working again and could not attend.
- 9. Third Selectman & Road Commissioner's Tasks
 - a. Bob von Rotz and Scott will get together to purchase calcium chloride, as Jeff has not been able to. Justin approved storing it in the fire house.

**Hearing
on Adopting General Assistance Ordinance Appendices**

1. The hearing was called to order at approximately 7:28 P.M.
2. A call was made for interested members of the public to comment on the proposed ordinance appendices. No members of the public were present and none commented. Stuart explained that these appendices concern minimum rates for rent, food, housing, and other assistance, and that if other appendices are used, Cooper is required to conduct surveys and file different paperwork with the DHHS, etc.
3. The hearing was closed.
4. On a call for a motion to vote on adopting the ordinance as written, a motion was duly made, a vote was held, and the appendices were adopted.
5. The notification of acceptance of appendices was then signed by the Selectmen. The hearing ended at approximately 7:30 P.M.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, January 15, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

1 / 15

Present: Scott Jamieson, Robert von Rotz, Robert Smith, Terry Viselli

1. The minutes of the January 2 meeting was not made, as they are to be sent out with the newsletter.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meetings and Town Meeting: February 5 and 19, and March 4 and 19, with the Annual Town Meeting to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24. (A reminder: there will be no meeting on January 29.)
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. There was no Bureau of Motor Vehicles activity this week. A first!
 - b. Terry handed in the application for administrative abatement; Bob will get it notarized and bring it back.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
Ann Marie could not attend the meeting, but sent in the School and 941 amounts.
5. Treasurer's Warrants
Because we left David Lee's payment off the last warrant, we had to have a special Treasurer's Warrant to cover it, #25.

Payee	Category	Amount
David Lee Construction	Roads/Plowing	\$6,711.09
	Total	\$6,711.09

Treasurer's Warrant #26

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	0
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	507.60
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	5964.71
Federal 941	941	\$239.83
MMA Membership	Admin/Dues	\$1,026.00
Calais Ace Home Center for calcium chloride	Roads/Supplies	\$189.90
James Slowe, advance for January–April, 2008	Admin/Salary	\$400.00
Robert Smith	Roads/Noncapital	78.50
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Noncapital	110.82
	Total	\$8,517.36

At this time last year we had a total in our checking and savings of about \$236,000; we now have about \$188,000. This \$48,000 difference is probably due in large part to payments from the General Fund for the revaluation of the Town (\$18,000 from the General Fund) and for ditching the East Ridge Road (\$20,000 from the General Fund). Increases in administration and municipal solid waste disposal have also taken a bite. We should know the exact cause of the decrease when we do the year-end financials.

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. David Lee was asked to plow back the Vining Road after the last major storm and to break open the dirt portion of the East Ridge Road. Bob Smith has reported that he is purchasing a plow, so he may be able to take on the plowing of that stretch of the East Ridge Road after all.
- b. Stuart attended the recent Marion Transfer Station meeting. No quorum for business was obtained, but those directors who did show up participated in an informal information session. The test wells at the proposed new demo site have been drilled, with the exception of some small-bore wells that require tracked drills. The five holes drilled with the conventional drill used 865 feet of casing among them. It was also reported that the MTS had received letters of provisional support for the new demo site from the Select Boards of nine member towns (out of sixteen).
- c. The board Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority, d.b.a. Downeast EMS, had a special meeting on January 7 to authorize signing of USDA document for grants and loans toward the purchase of monitoring equipment. The total amount was \$108,613.59. The board also reviewed response to its requests for proposals (RFPs) for an audit. Douglas Hollingsworth & Associates was selected. A revised audit was received from RHR Smith for the recent financial period.
- d. There was a discussion of the slate of officers for town government next year.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, February 12, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
- b. The next regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., last Tuesday in January (January 29).
- c. The next regular Washington County Council of Governments meeting, Saturday, February 2, Bluebird Restaurant, Machias.

- d. MMA Basic Municipal Budgeting Workshop, at "Spectacular Events," 395 Griffin Road, Bangor, February 8, 2008, 9:00–3:00.
- 8. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
 - a. Bob Smith has rigged a plow and has been plowing the lower East Ridge Road again. The Selectmen will take up the matter of compensation for this year's plowing at a later date.

Selectman's Newsletter

Stuart Shotwell
15 Cathance Lane
Cooper ME 04657
454-1487
sshotwell@earthlink.net

March 19, 2008

The Selectmen meet every first and third Tuesday of the month, 7 P.M. Citizens are welcome to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizens of Cooper,

Enclosed are minutes from the Selectmen's meetings for February and March, 2008. Please note that the March minutes have not yet been approved.

Town Meeting on March 24 This coming Monday, the day after Easter, the Annual Town Meeting will be held at 7 P.M. at the Grange Hall. Aside from the usual elections and budget considerations, there are a couple of unusual items:

Article 5 asks if the Town will hire an Assessors' Agent. This would be essentially a paid contractor to keep the Town's property valuations up to date and to compile the necessary tax assessment paperwork. Brenda Gove, who did the revaluation last year, has submitted a proposal to do this work for the bargain price of \$4,000 per year, plus \$1,000 to maintain her Trio software license for Town use. She would not need the \$1,000 license fee if the Town purchased its own Trio software, but the software is extremely expensive, and for the time being it may be better to license it through her. Another option would be to go in on a purchase of the software with another town. (The Washington County Council of Governments has applied for a small grant to study the most effective purchase and sharing of this type of software, and we should be getting the results of that study soon.)

The Assessors wholeheartedly endorse the hiring of an Assessors' Agent. This would put the valuation of the Town solidly in the hands of a competent employee widely respected in the profession. The Assessors would continue to maintain oversight of the process, to address the concerns of citizens, to act as liaison between other State and town officials and the Assessors' Agent, and to review, approve, and sign the necessary documents generated by the Agent. In order to facilitate the hiring of the Agent, the Assessors have stated that they would be willing to forego their current salaries, which total \$3,000. This means that the Assessors' Agent would be even more of a bargain, costing the Town only \$1,000 more than current assessment salaries, plus a further \$1,000 for the software license.

Another advantage to having an Agent is that the Town's entire tax listing has now been entered into Trio. If we do not use an Agent with Trio, we will have to back out all the data and use another general database program (for example, Excel), which will not be as effective as a dedicated program. Ultimately it would be best for the Town to own Trio in order to "own its own data." For the time being, however, using the Assessor's Agent and piggybacking on her license is a good way to go. The Assessors have

volunteered to step aside if anyone would like to take over and go back to doing assessment the old-fashioned way, but if they are going to continue in their positions, they will need to have the assistance and expertise that Gove and her software provide.

Article 21 asks if the Town will pay for writing of a Comprehensive Plan. This is essentially a more complex version of a land use ordinance, written to specifications set out by state law. Only about 100 of Maine's 492 municipalities have not developed a Comprehensive Plan. As of 2003, all ordinances adopted to control land use based on geographic features within a town must, by state law, be in compliance with a town's Comprehensive Plan. We can't pretend there is such compliance when no Comprehensive Plan exists.

Here we are in somewhat the same position we are in with valuation. Considering the complexities of this task and the enormous amount of time involved, it seems best to have an experienced professional do the work for us. The staff of the Washington County Council of Governments has written several Comprehensive Plans for towns in the county; they have estimated that they could write one for us at a cost of \$12,500.

One way to fund this cost is to draw against the \$10,000 reserve established in 2004 for legal and advocacy representation to reduce the tax burden. Although the reserve was a good idea and there are reasons for maintaining it, in four years no one has actually figured out how to use it to reduce the tax burden. Perhaps the best way to use this money for the purpose for which it was intended would be to *spend it* to avoid \$10,000 in taxes. But this is a difficult question, to be debated and resolved by the voters at Town Meeting. Alternatively, the Town could keep \$2,000 in the reserve and raise additional funds to cover the cost of the Comprehensive Plan.

Article 29 asks for an ordinance to be passed putting a six-month moratorium on subdevelopments within the Town. This is just to give the Planning Board a little breathing room to study the issues involved and formulate some rules that the Town would then approve or disapprove. With two large subdevelopments in the offing within Town borders, the matter is pressing. The proposed ordinance is printed at the back of the Annual Report (in the inside of the cover).

Article 30 asks the voters to approve some updated bylaws for the Marion Transfer Station. The MTS is currently operating under a set of bylaws that is inadequate. In fact, they are contained in the interlocal agreement that was superseded when the MTS incorporated some years ago.

Essay Contest On a matter not related to the Town Warrant: A two-acre lot in Cooper (on the town line as you're driving south on Route 191, across the highway from the lake) is the prize in an essay contest. The property has a drilled well, three-bedroom capacity septic system, and 249 feet of road frontage. There are two old buildings on the property, a small house and greenhouse, but they are teardowns only. For further information, go to <http://www.landessaycontest.com>, or write to "Maine USA Land Essay Contest," PO Box 265, Eddington, Maine 04428. A \$50 entry fee is required, and the owner reserves the right to cancel the contest and return the entry fees if fewer than a stated minimum of entries are received. According to the website, essays must be 200 (English) words or fewer (preferably typed, but that is not required) and must start with the words "I want to own this land because . . ." The site goes on to say: "Essays will be judged on content only; format, punctuation, and spelling will have no impact on the judges' decision. Entrant's name must not appear on or in the essay." (This notice is

informational only; the Selectmen make no representation as to the legality of this contest.)

Respectfully submitted to the citizens of Cooper,

Stuart Shotwell

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, February 5, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

2 / 5

Present: Scott Jamieson, Robert von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell, Terry Viselli

1. The previous minutes had been distributed by mail.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meetings and Town Meeting: February 19, March 4 and 19, with the Annual Town Meeting to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry has done some preliminary reconciliation of tax accounts to be ready for the close of the year on February 29.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie was ill and could not attend, but she supplied amounts for items on the warrant.
5. Treasurer's Warrant #27
(preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$190.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$507.60
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$9592.22
David Lee Construction	Roads/Plowing	\$6,711.09
David Lee Construction, extra plowing on Vining and East Ridge Roads	Roads/Plowing	\$320.00
Marion Transfer Station	MSW	\$410.40
Registrar of Deeds	Admin/Registry	\$39.00
IFW	IFW	\$66.00
Animal Welfare (Dog license)	AWP	\$3.00
Ramsey	Assessors' abatement	\$257.52
Terry Viselli, reimbursement for safe purchased for Assessors' records	Admin/Supplies	\$47.13
	Total	\$18,143.96

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. There was brief discussion of the Maine Department of Transportation Improvement Needs Questionnaire. Obviously in filling this out we will be focusing on trying to get improvement of Rt. 191. However, it will not affect MDOT priorities until 2010 at the earliest. (The North Union Road is scheduled for an upgrade this coming summer.)
 - b. There was discussion about extending the contract for David Lee for two more years at this time if possible. (This possibility was provided for by an article in

the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, but because of uncertainty about the price of sand in future years, a contract was concluded only for 2007–2008.) The argument against doing so is that that Selectmen who take over in the next year will be stuck with two years' worth of a contract they didn't make; the argument in favor of doing so is that if no Selectmen are found to take over, the Town will at least have a contract in place to provide for plowing. Considering the danger of the latter scenario, it was decided to extend the contract, though Bob von Rotz had reservations. It was noted that there is wide variation in perception about the job David is doing, but the consensus of the meeting was that considering the repeated, even continuous storms we have had, David has done very well, or at least as well as the plowmen in the other towns along Rt. 191. Short of using liquid calcium chloride as the MDOT does on their plowing routes, there is no way to get much better results on roads as badly damaged as Rt. 191 in Cooper. The current state of the stockpile, which is seriously depleted, gives an objective measure of the severity of the challenge David has faced. There was unanimous agreement that clearing the East Ridge Road culverts should be part of the contract.

- c. Stuart gave a very brief update on the last Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority (WCEMSA) meeting. It was decided at that meeting to keep stipends (fees paid by towns) the same in the coming year, though there was discussion about setting them according to actual number of calls from each town; in which case Cooper's fee would go down. Overall the Authority seems to be moving forward and putting its recent governmental problems behind it.
 - d. The meeting of the Downeast Coastal Corridor Management Plan Advisory Committee will be held February 28 (see item 7b). This looks like the committee we have needed for a long time; it could be the place where we could get our concerns about Rt. 191 addressed. Bob suggested giving a copy of our report on the use of Rt. 191 to the committee as well as to our legislators.
7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, February 12, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
 - b. The next regular WCEMSA (ambulance authority) meeting, Meddybemps, 6 P.M., last Tuesday in January (January 29).
 - c. The next regular Washington County Council of Governments meeting, Saturday, February 2, Bluebird Restaurant, Machias.
 - d. MMA Basic Municipal Budgeting Workshop, at "Spectacular Events," 395 Griffin Road, Bangor, February 8, 2008, 9:00–3:00.
 - e. Downeast Coastal Corridor Management Plan Advisory Committee meeting at Clipper Lounge, UMM, February 28, 10:00 to 12:00.
8. Second Selectman's Report/Tasks
- a. Jeff was again called back to work for plowing duties and was unable to attend.
9. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
- a. Scott discussed recent work by him and Bob Smith to keep the East Ridge Road ditches clear. It's increasingly obvious that the cut-offs that redirect water under the road (in the stretch from Kriders' south to the curve) are causing ice jams and that the outflows on the downhill ends of the pipes are not graded steeply enough to carry away the water—water was actually backing up onto the road from the *downhill* side in a recent storm. We need to put smaller overflow culverts through each cut-off dam so that excess water in the ditch can continue flowing along the ditch on the uphill side, and we need to improve the ditch on the downhill side of the road so that water can move away from the outflow end of the culverts.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, February 19, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

2 / 19

Present: Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Stuart Shotwell, Robert Smith, Robert von Rotz

1. Minutes of previous meetings through January have been distributed; as no corrections have been received, minutes are considered approved as presented. Minutes for the February 5 meeting were distributed for approval at the next meeting.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meetings and Town Meeting: March 4 and 11, with the Annual Town Meeting to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry could not attend, but did file her reports as usual.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Stuart and Ann Marie briefly discussed preparing to close the books for the year. Gathering the audit materials can wait until after the Treasurer's Report for the year has been completed for the Annual Town Report.
 - b. The Selectmen authorized the placement of \$50,000 in the Money Market Account.
 - c. There was a discussion about a Cooper resident whose property is about to be foreclosed because of a debt to the town of some \$40 for leftover interest and fees from a previous year. Stuart has asked him to contact Ann Marie Flood, but he has not done so. Stuart will give Ann Marie his cell number.
5. Treasurer's Warrant #28
(preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$100.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$507.60
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$5408.86
Ackley, Dan	Admin (Second Assessor)	\$692.63
Brown, Helena	Admin (Third Assessor)	\$692.63
Crowe, Jeffrey	Admin (Second Selectman)	\$692.63
Flood, Ann Marie	Admin (Treasurer)	\$1,477.60
Flood, Arline	Health Officer	\$50.00
Hatton, Carolyn	Planning Board Chair	\$100.00
Jamieson, Scott*	Road Commissioner	\$200.00
McCormick, Chris	Admin (First Assessor)	\$1,385.25
McCormick, Chris	Roads (Plowing Vining Rd.)	\$1,200.55
Shotwell, Stuart	Admin (First Selectman)	\$1,385.25
Smith, Robert	Road Commissioner	\$184.70
Smith, Robert	Roads (Plowing ERR)	\$461.75
Viselli, John	Constable	\$100.00
Viselli, Teresa	Admin (Clerk, Collector)	\$4,848.38
Viselli, Teresa	Agent Fees	\$573.00
von Rotz, Robert	Admin (Third Selectman)	\$692.63
Bunny's Septic Service	Third Party	\$300.00
Breakneck Mt. Snowmobile	Third Party	\$59.58

Club (per 2007 Annual Meeting Warrant Article 45)		
Maine Municipal Association	Admin/Training	\$35.00
Registrar of Deeds for Gallway lien discharge	Admin/Registry	\$13.00
The Office	Admin/Supplies	\$54.64
Robert Smith (reimbursement for fuel)	Roads/Supplies	\$60.00
Robert Smith	Roads/Noncapital	\$198.58
Scott Jamieson	Roads/Noncapital	\$221.64
	Total	\$21,695.90

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. We have received a bill from Bunny's Septic for 2006 (\$300) and 2007 (\$300). We will have to get one of these amounts on the upcoming warrant. Apparently we did not pay in one year, so we were carrying a surplus on the books. Instead of raising and appropriating yet another \$300 last year, we determined to just pay with the surplus. However, Bunny's has caught up with its billing, and it seems we do owe them not only \$300 for the upcoming year, but \$300 for a previous year.
- b. Our ACO, Larry Colarusso, has a chipper than can handle up to 9-inch brush—something to keep in mind for future road clearing.
- c. Stuart attended the Marion Transfer Station (MTS) meeting, where among other things there was a discussion of setting the tipping rate for the upcoming year. It was decided that the directors don't have the full data to determine the average cost; presumably this would happen at the next meeting.
- d. The Town has received a request for the Selectmen to participate in a "Mayors for Meals" Day, on which they would help prepare and deliver Meals on Wheels in Cooper. There was a resounding lack of enthusiasm for this suggestion.
- e. Stuart wrote a letter for the Washington County Council of Governments supporting its efforts to get a grant to study the sharing software for municipal use.
- f. No more salt is available from Cargill. David Lee has some salt in reserve, enough to mix with about 150 yards of sand. He will check on what it would cost to drive to Bangor and pick up a dump load there (about 15 tons). He might then get more sand; he had mentioned the possibility of getting up to 300 yards total. The price will doubtless be a couple of dollars more per yard. Ronnie Flood mentioned that he used to be able to buy it directly from a salt mine in Woodstock, Canada. He also said that he used to get salt from the state in a pinch, but it seems amazing that the state would be doing that this year.
- g. Stuart briefly reviewed some of the current bills pending to patch up the school consolidation law, including one that would allow Towns to put off until 2009 the ratification of school budgets by election, a very onerous and unsatisfactory method.
- h. The Selectmen reconsidered the thought of signing a plowing contract extension. We were specifically asked by at least one Cooper resident to wait until after the March meeting. There is no great need to sign the contract now, so the idea was abandoned. There was a general discussion of the plowing to date this winter.

7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)

- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, March 11, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
- b. Downeast Coastal Corridor Management Plan Advisory Committee meeting at Clipper Lounge, UMM, February 28, 10:00 to 12:00. Stuart will attend.

- c. Washington County Council of Governments meeting, March 31, 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., "Forty-Four Degrees North," Milbridge
- 8. Road Commissioners' Report/Tasks
 - a. The RCs described the condition of the East Ridge Road ditches culverts as at this particular time fairly good, though considerable work has been done to keep them open.
 - b. The supply of calcium chloride is at about seven bags and is thought to be adequate for the rest of the winter.

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, March 4, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

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Present: Dan Ackley, Jeff Crowe, Ann Marie Flood, Joyce Myckleby, Doug Pelletier, Robert von Rotz, Stuart Shotwell, Betty Tibbets, Terry Viselli

1. The minutes of previous Selectmen's Meeting (February 19) were distributed. The minutes were declared approved through February 5.
2. Date of next Selectmen's meeting and Town Meeting: March 18, with the Annual Town Meeting to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Reports
 - b. Stuart and Terry had another conversation about the application for abatement that has been continually slipping administrative cracks. They will try once more to get the abatement request submitted and approved.
 - c. Terry submitted her reports for the Annual Town Report on hard copy and on disk.
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie has tried to get a call back from Terry Johnson without success. It was suggested that we find another plumbing inspector if there is one in the area, as Johnson's bookkeeping and record keeping is about as bad as it can get.
 - c. Ann Marie gave an update on the three liens that were due for foreclosure on March 14.
 - b. The Treasurer's Report for the Annual Town Report is shaping up and will be ready by the weekend.
5. Treasurer's Warrant # 1
(preliminary; TBD = To Be Determined)

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$125.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$507.60
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$6,232.43
David Lee Construction	Roads/Plowing	\$6,711.09
Calais Ace Home Center	Roads/Supplies	\$19.99
MMA Workers Comp	Admin/Insurance	\$1,027.00
	Total	\$14,623.11

6. Planning Board

- a. Joyce presented the proposed Warrant Article for a moratorium on subdivisions. She said that the Planning Board has not been able to get time to consider revamping the land use ordinances because of the continual supply of regular business at every meeting. The moratorium is for six months only, though it can be extended by another ordinance if substantive progress has been made toward developing new regulations. It was decided that the Article should be placed on the Warrant for consideration by the town.
- b. There was discussion of the possibility of using the \$10,000 reserve for tax reduction as part of the \$12,000 legal fee for Washington County Council of Governments to develop a Comprehensive Plan for Cooper. It was decided to at least put this on the Warrant for deliberation at the Town Meeting.

7. First Selectman's Report/Tasks

- a. There was a correction or clarification of minute 20 of 2007 Annual Town Meeting Minutes. The minute currently reads as follows:

Article 20: The town voted to raise and appropriate the carry-forward from 2006 (estimated at \$673) and the remainder to the total of \$2500 for maintenance for the Cooper Volunteer Fire department for the ensuing year.

To be perfectly clear, it should read as follows:

Article 20: The town voted to use the carry-forward from 2006 (estimated at \$673) and to raise and appropriate a further amount to the total of \$2500 for maintenance for the Cooper Volunteer Fire department for the ensuing year.

The purpose of the Article was to use the \$673 that has been carried under the Fire Department account for years, not to raise and appropriate it again. The original Article is quite clear on this point.

- b. Stuart attended the Downeast Coastal Corridor Management Plan Advisory Committee held in Machias on Thursday. There were about twenty others present. The Washington County Council of Governments has been hired by the Maine Department of Transportation to work with local municipalities to develop a general plan for transportation in the Downeast corridor. The committee will meet three more times over the next nine months. The initial meeting brought up some possible transportation goals for the region. The interesting thing was that most of the participants seemed to be agreed that getting rail transportation, particularly freight rail transportation but also eventually passenger rail, would be a huge boost to the region. This is at a time when the state is well-embarked on its program to dismantle the major rail line into the county.
 - c. Stuart also attended the Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority. There was little of major interest to report except for a significant change to the bylaws that will help keep the Authority from being controlled by a small number of people.
 - d. Progress on Annual Town Report.
- ## 8. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, March 11, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
 - b. Washington County Council of Governments meeting, March 31, 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., "Forty-Four Degrees North," Milbridge

**Minutes of the Meeting of Selectmen
Town of Cooper
Tuesday, March 18, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
15 Cathance Lane (House of Stuart Shotwell & Mary Dunn)**

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Present: Scott Jamieson, Terry Viselli, Bob von Rotz, Robert Smith, Stuart Shotwell

1. The minutes of the previous Selectmen's Meeting (March 4) were distributed but not approved.
2. Dates of next Selectmen's meetings are April 1 and April 15, and the Annual Town Meeting is to be held on the fourth Monday, March 24.
3. Clerk/Tax Collector's Report/Tasks
 - a. Terry has received a form concerning the CEO and returned to the state; she turned it over to the Selectmen
4. Treasurer's Report/Tasks
 - a. Ann Marie could not attend because of the birth of her new grandchild. She had previously delivered the School Warrants and other documents, though.
5. Treasurer's Warrant #2

Received by Selectmen: \$300 for West Ridge Plot #16

Payee	Category	Amount
BMV	BMV	\$309.00
School Payroll Warrant	Schools	\$547.74
School Accounts Payable Warrant	Schools	\$17,553.00
A.W.P.	A.W.P.	\$3.00
Registry	Admin/Registry	\$13.00
David Lee Construction, for 168 yards of sand	Roads/Stockpile	\$1680.00
David Lee Construction, for digging out ERR ditches	Roads/Plowing	\$320.00
David Lee Construction, for digging out ERR ditches	Roads/Plowing	\$585.00
Robert Smith, 5 hours defending ERR ditches at night	Roads/Noncap	\$92.35
Scott Jamieson, 5 hours defending ERR ditches at night; 1 hour on road posting and logging incident	Roads/Noncap	\$106.20
Scott Jamieson, reimbursement for gasoline used during road work	Roads/Supplies	\$100
	Total	\$21,309.29

6. First Selectman's Report/Tasks
 - a. In the course of preparing the Annual Town Report, it was found that it was necessary to correct three Treasurer's Warrants as follows:
 - #6, of May 15, 2007, because of a typo: the amount of School Warrant #10 should be \$18,465.08, not \$18,456.08.
 - #7, of June 5, 2007, because of a miscommunication about the School Warrants. The Treasurer's Warrant should show both School Warrant 11 for \$11,004.30 and School

- Warrant 12 for \$12,962.81. This would change the total for Treasurer's Warrant #7 to \$26,442.12.
- #22, of December 6, 2007, to change the category of Robert Smith's payment of \$461.75 to Roads/Capital instead of Roads/Plowing. The payment for plowing appears on Warrant 28.
- b. In the course of the last few weeks, a double lot in the West Ridge Cemetery has been sold (in Plot 2) and all of Plot 16. This leaves only one plot, Plot 1. The Town should confer with Justin Day to see if he can negotiate the purchase of more land. We could then put the item on the June Special Meeting Warrant.
 - c. Signing the Safe Storage agreement with Alexander. This document is an agreement among the stakeholders in the Safe Storage (Archival) Facility in Alexander. The storage space has been apportioned according to the relative contribution of each member. Cooper has a floor area of 84 square feet out of a total of 454 total. It was a good thing that we increased our donation by \$1500 last year; it bought us about another 28 square feet.
 - d. The Town has received a notice of FEMA "Assistance to Firefighters Grants." The information is available at www.firegrantsupport.com/afg/.
 - e. Report on the recent Marion Transfer Station Meeting. Stuart attended on behalf of the Town; Dan Ackley attended on behalf of Cathance Shores. The MTS board decided to pay Cathance Shores half of the cost of plowing the road it has been using this winter through Cathance Shores land to do the pump tests on the proposed Township 14 demo landfill site. The MTS lawyer, Dennis Mahar, presented the proposed new bylaws. These should be voted on by all member towns at their town meetings. On the new demo site, all the drilling is complete, but the pump tests are not finished. There was also discussion of renewing the purchase agreement that the MTS has with the Haynes family. The Hayneses have requested an additional \$25,000 to pay taxes on the property for the past five years, in addition to the \$10,000 that has been going into escrow annually against the purchase price of \$500,000 down and \$50,000 for ten years. The MTS board gave Mahar instructions on further negotiations.
 - f. Stuart showed a copy of an estimate the Town has received through the Assessors for assessment and tax collection software. It comes to over \$10,000 for the basic purchase, with a \$900 per year license. This means that paying an outside assessor who already has the software will be more cost effective in the short run; but as mentioned in a previous meeting, perhaps going in with other towns on the software will be a better long-term solution.
7. First Selectman's news (announcements requiring no decisions)
- a. Marion Transfer Station meeting, April 15, Tuesday, 6:30, at Pembroke School.
 - b. Washington County Council of Governments meeting, March 31, 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., "Forty-Four Degrees North," Milbridge.
 - c. Maine Municipal Association workshop: "Writing an Effective Grant Application." March 26, The Senator Inn, Augusta, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. There is \$60 per person fee.
8. Road Commissioner's Report/Tasks
- a. The Road Commissioners reported that the East Ridge Road ditches and culverts were clear. .
11. Executive Session to deliberate over two abatements pursuant to 36 M.R.S.A §841 (2).
12. The Selectmen returned to regular session and voted to grant two abatements: one an administrative abatement to relieve the tax collector from the responsibility of attempting to collect taxes on property now owned by the Town; the other a request pursuant to 36 MRSA §841(2) in a sum to be finalized on report of the Treasurer for the tax years 2006 and 2007.